

Université de Montréal

**A Critical Theory of Rhythm and Temporality in Film:
The Metamorphosis of Memory and History
in Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975)**

par

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Université de Montréal
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Cette thèse intitulée :

**A Critical Theory of Rhythm and Temporality in Film:
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in Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975)**

présenté par:

Tollof A. Nelson

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Résumé

L'étude critique du film *Miroir* (1975) de Andrei Tarkovsky est un site où se déploient un questionnement et une exploration, plutôt qu'une analyse de cas exemplaire greffée à un argument déjà donné. Ce film mérite d'être approché, non comme une monographie distincte, mais comme un chemin nous conduisant à la compréhension de « technics » --au sens Heideggerien--, à une exploration discursive et à une compréhension épistémologique du médium cinématographique. Cette thèse poursuit des arguments à partir de trois hypothèses : la matérialité dynamique du cinéma est toujours scellée par la matière et inscrite par la technique ; le cinéma, comme la technique, conduit la pensée et constitue l'expérience ; et finalement, la matérialité du temps (rythme) dans le médium de la cinématographie permet à la pensée de s'articuler et de cheminer à travers une série infinie d'expériences. Une considération attentive des durées et des ruptures temporelles dans *Miroir* nous mène vers la théorisation du rythme, l'investigation des approches au visible ou le questionnement explorateur au sujet de la médiation de la connaissance historique.

Un bon nombre d'articles et de livres continue d'être publié au sujet des films de Tarkovsky. La plupart des études essaye de corriger et d'authentifier la pratique méthodologique établie par l'institution des études cinématographiques ainsi que de se restreindre aux réflexions questionnant la poétique formelle du film ou l'histoire du film en faisant intervenir des catégories de l'esthétique, du genre, de la narration, du cinéma national et du cinéma d'auteur.¹ Tout en profitant de certaines perspectives offertes par ces études, cette thèse propose d'aller de l'avant, comme quelques penseurs remarquables l'ont fait, en se questionnant en dehors des champs de ces disciplines et en générant de nouvelles questions et considérations. Par exemple, les films de Tarkovsky ont été examinés comme une instance exemplaire d'une vision spécifiquement

¹ Ceci est discuté par la plus version critique récente de Vida T. Johnson et Graham Petrie. *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky : A Visual Fugue*. Bloomington : Indiana UP, 1994.

cinématographique des liens et des ruptures de l'Histoire (Marc Ferro), de la nouvelle modernité du cinéma contemporain et des pouvoirs (powers) de la métamorphose du temps dans l'image (Youssef Ishaghpour), et de la cristallisation matérielle de la mémoire dans le cinéma sémiotique de l'image-temps (Gilles Deleuze)².

À travers les différents thèmes et chapitres, je démontre comment le médium cinématographique dépasse les relations binaires qui opposent l'apparence et la réalité ; l'écran manifeste l'évidence du contact et constitue une membrane magico-mimétique entre le monde et le sujet dans lequel les plis et les pressions du temps peuvent être sentis, perçus, et traversés avant que le discours ne les nomme ou ne les définisse. Ceci nous permet de penser le cinéma au-delà de simples notions d'identification du spectateur, de séduction ou de consommation. La « peau » temporelle du film, étant composée de passages de temps toujours en devenir, résiste au statut d'objet fixe et assimilable en se laissant exclusivement éprouver par une série de relations mobiles. Ainsi, en considérant le médium comme une pratique signifiante, nous pouvons nous pencher sur l'action sociale du cinéma sans réduire les liens entre la production, la circulation, et la réception d'un film. Par ailleurs, ces liens continuent de générer d'autres expériences en reconnaissant la texture plurielle de la vie et des intervalles entre les mots, les silences et les images, ils invitent ainsi les spectateurs à suivre la trace d'un geste créatif qui peut, en retour, être défaite ou renouvelée³.

Les pratiques signifiantes du cinéma évoquent inévitablement la question concernant la figuration plus ou moins authentique du temps ; ceci nous confronte encore avec les paradoxes métaphysiques concernant l'essence du temps. Je fais référence à plusieurs traditions philosophiques et mon travail de réflexion s'inscrit dans la pensée qui va d'Aristote, Nietzsche, Bergson, Heidegger, à Benjamin et Deleuze. J'insiste par ailleurs sur la nécessité de penser le temps à côté de la technique audio-visuelle et avec le cinéma.

² Ces idées ont été élaborées respectivement par : Marc Ferro, *Cinéma et Histoire*. Paris : Gallimard, 1983 (pp.217-226) ; Youssef Ishaghpour, *Cinéma contemporain : de ce côté du miroir*. Paris : La Différence, 1988 (pp.17-51; 298-317); Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 2 : image-temps*, Paris : Minuit, 1985 (pp.60-61;101).

³ Trinh T. Minh-ha discute les implications de cette perspective dans "World as Foreign Land" dans *When the Moon Waxes Red*, p.195.

Les voies philosophiques de Bergson et de Nietzsche réarticulées par Deleuze, se démarquent déjà par leurs capacités de renouveler cette tradition philosophique tout en se connectant avec le cinéma, cette machine à voyager dans le temps. En démontrant que la pensée est elle-même une technique informée ou sculptée par une technologie, Deleuze critique la prétention métaphysique d'une exposition pure du temps et revendique la puissance conceptuelle de l'idée d'une pensée de l'image-temps. Pour ma part, bien que je suive les traces de cette conception, j'interroge plus spécifiquement comment une théorie du rythme réarticule ces problèmes et paradoxes fondamentaux au sujet du temps et de l'expérience temporelle. Quoique je prenne souvent une distance critique de deuxième degré sur les discours en utilisant la voix passive ou le pronom de la troisième personne, j'emploie la première personne lorsqu'il est nécessaire d'articuler les mérites et les limites de mon argumentation.

Dans la première partie de la thèse, j'esquisse une analyse discursive des études cinématographiques dans la formation moderne de leur institutionnalisation afin d'articuler une nouvelle conception du rythme. Il s'agit d'une critique se penchant sur le rythme analysé comme élément stylistique de la direction intentionnelle du sujet, un élément qui, aussitôt qu'il est stabilisé par les discours du « film-form » et « film-art », peut être interprété et « lu. » De ce fait, j'interroge les limites des approches spécifiques de l'étude du rythme. De plus, je remets en question la fondation de ces approches au regard du dispositif littéraire, c'est-à-dire, leur « literacy », la relation à la langue écrite qui a été consolidée par la culture de masse de l'imprimerie. D'un chapitre à un autre, j'indique la nécessité de *penser à travers* la matérialité du temps inscrite dans l'image (rythme) à l'intérieur du cadre d'une théorie non-linguistique de la langue ; je revisite certaines traditions sémiotiques des théories du cinéma, de Pasolini à Deleuze, dont je critique également les limites.

Ma thèse revalorise la théorie du rythme articulée et pratiquée par Tarkovsky lui-même, articule les limites de la notion d'une « poétique du rythme » et explore la possibilité d'étudier le rythme dans le cadre d'une poétique-politique-éthique d'action qui, tout en

brisant certaines conceptions modernes du sujet, reconfigure une autre conception de l'agencement et de la conscience historique. Je me suis grandement inspiré de la conception du rythme de Meschonnic, et j'ai transposé, dans le domaine des études cinématographiques, plusieurs de ses gestes critiques afin d'examiner des questions plus larges concernant la poétique, la subjectivité et la médiation de la langue.

Cette thèse défend l'idée que la temporalité rythmique du cinéma est une forme révolutionnaire de médiation car elle bouscule l'essor des technologies hégémoniques (l'imprimerie à caractères mobiles) dont l'influence, dans la culture collective de production de masse, est généralisée. Par exemple, le rythme fait rupture avec cette temporalité vide et homogène consolidée par la culture de l'imprimerie de l'état (l'ontologie nationale). Dans la perte de cette économie temporelle, le rythme introduit un autre état d'être et d'appartenance pour la subjectivité, une autre façon d'être historique, une autre manière d'agir à l'intérieur de l'expérience du passage temporel, là où la temporalité est hétérogène, discontinue et contingente.

Dans la deuxième partie, cette théorie se situe dans le contexte de la critique de l'historiographie. J'y interroge ce qui adviendrait de cette connaissance historique— toujours articulée et constituée par le travail de mémoire et de médiation de l'expérience dont elle est inséparablement liée—dans le médium cinématographique. J'articule l'hypothèse du rythme qui met à l'épreuve certains modes conventionnels de narration historique en proposant, dans le milieu historique des images, une nouvelle dimension de la médiation des événements modernes. Qui plus est, le rythme contamine potentiellement la culture de « literacy » et les pratiques institutionnelles de la langue écrite en produisant une économie électronique de l'oralité (electr-oralité) dans le passage de la durée de l'image. Cette considération m'amène vers une réflexion au regard de la matérialité du rythme dans le médium cinématographique. Cette matérialité transforme la connaissance historique par le bégaiement de la langue, l'évidence de la respiration et l'expérience du bruit du temps. Dans le cadre de cette poétique-politique-éthique du rythme, j'articule la dimension utopique de cette nouvelle conscience historique et je

démontre comment la poésie, en tant que pratique intermédiaire, permet une expérience singulière avec le mouvement de la parole (l'historicité de la voix du poète) qui interagit d'une manière dynamique et organique avec la matérialité du temps inscrite dans l'image.

Dans la troisième partie, je fais une analyse, plan par plan, des séquences du film *Miroir*. Je tente de démontrer comment les temporalités complexes des images si soigneusement composées par Tarkovsky peuvent générer et faire naître des idées à travers une expérience élémentaire avec la matérialité des phénomènes inscrits sur la pellicule. Quant à l'analyse du film, nous devons nous interroger sur la manière d'étudier les images sans les réduire aux effets et aux fonctions métaphoriques de symbolisation et d'interprétation. Les avertissements de Tarkovsky sur l'impossibilité de scruter l'inépuisable polysémie de l'image doivent nous servir de guide. Comment peut-on analyser les images sans en expliquer le sens et sans tenter de comprendre celui-ci dans le cadre de la représentation ? La langue et la pensée peuvent côtoyer la capacité magico-mimétique du cinéma, nous bousculant ainsi hors de ce geste quasi-inévitable d'interpréter l'image. Or, cette approche rend visible et audible les qualités imaginatives inhérentes de la technique audio-visuelle, puisque le médium du cinéma nous rapproche du « dehors », de l'« ouvert » et du « non-encore pensée ».

Summary

The critical analysis of Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975) is not to be secured in this dissertation as an exemplary case to be grafted onto a larger argument already given, but as a site through which a questioning unfolds. *Mirror* is not to be pursued as an object of film-studies, meriting a special monography; rather, it is to be engaged in terms of the path it builds leading to an understanding of technics—in the Heideggerian sense—to a discursive exploration and to an epistemological understanding of the medium of film. This means working under the three-fold assumption that the dynamic materiality of film is always informed and inscribed by technique; that film, as technique, conducts thinking and experience; and finally, that the rhythmic materiality of the time-based medium of film allows thinking to take place in an infinite series of experiences. An attentive consideration of the temporal duration and disruption of images in *Mirror* lends itself equally to the theorization of rhythm, to an investigation of approaches to the visible, or to an explorative questioning about the mediation of historical knowledge.

Although numerous articles and books continue to be published on the subject of Tarkovsky's films, most studies attempt to correct and to authenticate the methodological practice established by the institution of film-studies and restricts its reflections to questions of film-poetics, film-history, genre, narration, national cinema and cinéma d'auteur¹. While supported by many of the insights these studies have to offer, this dissertation proposes to follow the lead a few remarkable thinkers have taken to ask questions outside the purview of these disciplines and to generate new questions and considerations. For example, Tarkovsky's films have been examined as an insightful and exemplary instance of the specifically cinematic vision of the links and ruptures of

¹ This is attested by the latest version of critique by: Vida T. Johnson and Graham Petrie. *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky: A Visual Fugue*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994.

History (Marc Ferro), of the new modernity of contemporary cinema and the metamorphic powers of time in the image (Youssef Ishaghpour), and of the material crystallization of memory in the semiotic cinema of time-images (Gilles Deleuze)².

Throughout the dissertation I show how the film medium may be regarded, over against notions of the screen and the binary oppositions of appearance and reality, as a kind of evidence of contact, a magical-mimetic membrane between the world and the subject in which the folds and pressures of time may be felt, intuited and experienced outside of, or at least before, discourse speaks for them. This forces us to think about the time-based medium of film outside of any simple notion of spectator identification, seduction and consumption. For the temporal fabric of film, as a dynamic passage of time always in a state of becoming, challenges its fixed status as an object to be consumed by letting itself be experienced only in a mobile series of relations. The consideration of the medium as a signifying practice allows us to reflect upon the cinema as a social activity without reducing the dynamic links between film production, circulation and reception: continuously generating other experiences, acknowledging the plural texture of life and the intervals between words, sounds, silences, and images, constantly inviting viewers to follow the trace of a creative gesture that may be in turn restored, unmade or remade³.

The signifying practices of cinema inevitably evoke the question concerning the more or less “truthful” figuration of time and this would seem to confront us yet again with the metaphysical conundrums concerning the essence of time itself. My dissertation makes reference to several philosophical traditions, and inscribes itself in the philosophical

² These ideas are elaborated respectively by : Marc Ferro, *Cinéma et Histoire*. Paris: Gallimard, 1993 (pp. 217-226); Youssef Ishaghpour, *Cinéma contemporain: de ce côté du miroir*. Paris : La Différence, 1986 (pp.17-51; 298-317); Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 2: image-temps*, Paris: Minuit, 1985 (60-61; 101).

³ Trinh T. Minh-ha discusses this point in “World as Foreign Land” In *When the Moon Waxes Red*, p195.

thought that moves from Aristotle, Nietzsche, Bergson, and Heidegger, to Benjamin and Deleuze. I would like to insist on the necessity for *thinking about time with the cinema* and alongside audio-visual technique generally. Deleuze's "Bergsonian-Nietzschean" time-philosophy already paves a way towards this questioning because his inquiry shows how this philosophical tradition might renew itself by connecting its thinking to the time-machine of cinema. By insisting that thinking is always already a technique informed by a technology, Deleuze is at once challenging the metaphysical pretension to having a pure conception of time and also defending the idea that the inquiry into the time-image is a powerful modality of pursuing this conception, equal or even superior to metaphysical conceptions. While following this lead, I would like to ask more specifically how a theory of rhythm rearticulates these fundamental problems and paradoxes of time and temporal experience. While often taking a critical distance or second degree perspective on critical discourse by using the passive voice or the subject pronoun in the first-person plural, I will be employing the first-person in my dissertation when I believe it necessary to directly argue the merits and the limits of my inquiry.

In Part I, I lay out a critique of the modern institutional study of film and the subjection of "rhythm" to the subject-securing epistemology of representation. This is a critique of the way rhythm is regarded as a stylistic element of the intentional "direction" of the subject, an element which, once stabilized by the discourses of "film-form" and "film-art," can then be interpreted and "read." In other words, I critique specific approaches to the study of rhythm but also I critique that which grounds the field of these approaches to literacy, the historically determining relationship to language which has been consolidated by the mass culture of print. Throughout these chapters, I indicate the necessity of thinking-through the materiality of time inscribed in the image (rhythm) in terms of a theory of language that is non-linguistic. This foregrounds a critique of the semiotic traditions of film-theory from Pasolini to Deleuze.

My dissertation revalorizes Tarkovsky's own theory and practice of rhythm in the context of these semiotic traditions, it also articulates the limits of studying the notion of a "poetics of rhythm" within these traditions, and it defends the possibility of studying rhythm as a poetics-politics-ethics of action that shatters and reconfigures the agency and the consciousness of subjectivity. I owe much of the movement of this kind of thinking to Meschonnic's conception of rhythm, and I have deliberately carried over into the field of film studies many of his critical gestures in order to examine some of the larger questions about poetics, subjectivity, and the mediation of language.

I defend the idea that the rhythmic temporality of film is a revolutionary form of mediation because it potentially upsets the set-up of hegemonic technologies (the moveable type of the printing press) that have spread their influence into the collective culture of mass-production generally. For example, rhythm, intended as the materiality of time inscribed in the image, potentially disrupts the empty homogenous temporality consolidated by the print-culture of the state (national ontology). In the ruins of this absolute temporality, rhythm introduces another mode of being and belonging for subjectivity, another way of being historical and acting within the heterogeneous, discontinuous, and contingent experience of temporal passage.

In part II, I place this critical theory of rhythm in the context of the critique of historiography. I discuss the transformation of historical knowledge—always already articulated by the work of memory and the mediation of experience by which it is constituted—in the medium of film. The hypothesis is that rhythm challenges conventional modes by which history is narrated by showing how modern events are mediated by the work of memory in the historical milieu of time-images. More, rhythm potentially contaminates literacy and the institutional practices of written knowledge by producing an electronic economy of orality (electr-orality) in the duration of the filmic image. This consideration leads me to argue that the materiality of rhythm in the time-

based medium of film constitutes another form of historical knowledge altogether, one that makes language stammer and stutter in the “noise of time” passing through film. I argue for the utopian dimension of this poetics-politics-ethics of rhythm and show how poetry, as intermedial practice, allows the singular experience of and experimentation with the movement of the word (the historicity of poetry’s voice-over) to interact dynamically and organically with the materiality of time inscribed in the image.

In Part III, I have made a close analysis of the sequences and shots in *Mirror*. I demonstrate how the complex temporality of Tarkovsky’s carefully composed images generate the possibilities of ideas out of an elemental experience with the material phenomena inscribed on film. At the more immediate level of the analysis of the film itself, it might be asked how one should go about analyzing the images and sequences of the film without reducing its effects to mere symbolism or metaphor? Tarkovsky’s own remarks on the undecipherable or inscrutable polysemy of the cinematographic image receive considerable attention and exact from us a kind of methodological caution. Is it possible to think alongside film without reductively explaining it as meaning, without pretending to comprehend it as representation?

Language and thought can move alongside the magical-mimetic capability of film, taking us beyond the seemingly inevitable urge to interpret the image, when they productively embrace the path-building or networking already facilitated by the image as an image. By extension, this might make visible and audible those imaginative qualities inherent in audio-visual technique, the medium of film constantly bringing one into contact with the outside, the open, and the not-yet thought.

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- Shot 2, p.199 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 3, p.200 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 4, p.200 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 7, p.201 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 11, p.203 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 14, p.205 (photo-still) : Tarkvosky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.98
- Shot 16, p.206 (scanned photo-still) : Tarkvosky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.122
- Shot 17, p.206 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 19, p.207 (scanned photo-stills) : Tarkvosky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.115
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- Shot 23, p.209 (scanned photo-still) : Tarkvosky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.115
- Shot 26, p.211 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 30, p.213 (scanned photo-still) : *Andrei Tarkvosky*, Rivages, 1989, p.112
- Shot 39, 216 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 40, p.217 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 42, p.218 (photo-still) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>

- Shot 44, p.219 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 63, p.224 (scanned photograph) : *Andrei Tarkovsky*, Rivages, 1989, p.105
- Shot 86, p.227 (photo-still) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 92, p.230 (scanned photo-still) : Johnson and Petrie, *A Visual Fugue*, 1994, p.123
- Shot 94, p.231 (photographs) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 95, p.234 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 95, p.236 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 111, p.241 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 114, p.242 (scanned photo-still) : Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.242
- Shot 120, p.244 (scanned photo-still) : Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.242
- Shot 127, p.245 (scanned photo-still) : Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.242
- Shot 131, p.246 (photo-stills) : <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Village/4736/article2.html>
- Shot 143, p. 249 (scanned photo-still) : *Andrei Tarkovsky*, Rivages, 1989, p.109
- Shot 160, p.255 (scanned photo-still) : *Andrei Tarkovsky*, Rivages, 1989, p.121
- Shot 161, p. 255 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 161, p. 255 (photo-still) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 164, p.256 (scanned photo-still) : Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p.153
- Shot 167, p.258 (digital laserdisk) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 169, p.258 (digital laserdisc): <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 183, p.261 (digital laserdisc) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 186, p.261 (digital laserdisc) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 189 p.262 (digital laserdisc) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 194, p.263 (scanned photo-still) : *Andrei Tarkovsky*, Rivages, 1989, p.110
- Shot 202, p. 205 (digital laserdisc) : <http://www.skywalking.com/tarkovsky/tpics.html>
- Shot 206, p.267 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>
- Shot 207, p.268 (digital camera) : <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/Mirror/Mirror.htm>

Dédicace

I would like to dedicate this work to Geneviève Dénommée, my wife, for supporting my work and reflection beyond words and to my sons, Julien and Angémile, for taking me back to the time before words.

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Avant-Propos

To a great extent, the paradigm of medium analysis allows one to question the binary oppositions between *theoria* and *praxis*, and between the aesthetic categories of form and content, since the medium itself is that by means of which critical theory and technology converge¹ and resonate. In other words, the convergence of technology and theory in the medium of film shows the necessity for an interdisciplinary mode of analysis that is grounded in a method of epistemological critique and exploratory questioning.

This mode of critique and questioning is one of the hallmarks of Comparative Literature because this “inter-discipline” is constituted by a reflexive understanding of the way in which the knowledge practices of the “Human Sciences and the Arts” are themselves intimately related to and organized by what may be called, in Foucauldian terms, the literary “dispositif.” For example, I problematize the critical response to “read” a film narratively and to “decipher” the meaning of its image-surface by discussing the historical problem--in critique itself--of the hegemony of one technology over another : the modern institutionalization of film-studies in the twentieth century having been appropriated for didactic and political purposes by the culture of literacy and the discipline of art history.

My argument traces something of the recent breakdown of this belonging, the discursive shift unmooring film-studies from art history into the sphere of media studies, especially that study of the film-medium that treats the philosophical concept of mediation. Touching upon the historical conditions under which the rise of the media ushered in a radical transformation of thinking from aesthetic to epistemological categories, from a work-oriented to a medium-oriented conception of art and reality or

¹ For a particularly insightful instance of this paradigm, in which theory of the “medium” and the practice of the “media” cross and resonate, one might consult George P. Landow 1992. *Hypertext : The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*. Baltimore and London : The John’s Hopkins University Press.

technics and mediation², this dissertation calls into question conventional theories of rhythm in film and explores and creates other concepts of rhythm under the paradigm of intermediality³.

Is there a methodological and epistemological model for the pursuit of this kind of theoretical critique and invention under the paradigm of intermediality ? I have continuously returned to the refreshing and insightful work of Walter Benjamin as a model for this kind of research and reflection. Although Benjamin did not employ the term "intermediality," his thinking marks the moment of the possibility of theorizing a "thinking experience" which is caught between two epistemological systems, one already formed and one not yet formed, one the decline or twilight of which appears and disappears in the light of another; a thinking experience that can no longer be organized by the epistemological system that generated it and which must continue to work out another system of conceptions in the debris left behind.

This thinking experience is intermedial⁴ on at least three levels: it reveals the historical relationship between different media in the complex processes of mass culture

² In an erudite re-reading of Kant, Heidegger, and Benjamin, these concepts are explored by : Samuel Weber. *Mass Mediauras : Form, Technics, Media*. Ed. Alan Cholodenko. California : Stanford UP, 1996.

³ Under the direction given this concept by Silvestra Mariniello in current publications *CiNéMAS* (Vol 10/nos.2-3, printemps 2000) and interdisciplinary research seminars (HART/CRI, UdeM, 2000-2002), intermediality is an epistemological questioning concerning technology and modern experience; it is also a dynamic state of becoming flowing between media, essentially open to constant transformation, reappropriation, and relation, and apprehended most suggestively as the hybrid crossing of signifying practices.

⁴ I borrow these distinctions from the broad sketch given by Eric Mechoulan, founder and director of the new bi-annual and transdisciplinary review « *Intermédialités* » for the CRI (Centre de Recherche sur l'intermédialité) at the Université de Montréal, who made the following presentation of this paradigm : Le concept d'intermédialité opère alors à trois niveaux différents d'analyse. Il peut désigner, d'abord, les relations entre divers médias (voire entre diverses pratiques artistiques associées à des médias délimités) : l'intermédialité vient après les médias. Ensuite, ce creuset de médias d'où émerge et s'institutionnalise peu à peu un média bien circonscrit : l'intermédialité apparaît avant les médias. Enfin, le milieu en général dans lequel les médias prennent forme et sens : l'intermédialité est immédiatement présente à toute pratique d'un média. L'intermédialité sera donc analysée en fonction de ce que sont des " milieux " et des " médiations ", mais aussi des " effets d'immédiateté ", des " fabrications de présence " ou des "

within Modernity; it recuperates, critiques and re-invents categories and figures of thinking in the clash of opposing knowledge systems and institutional practices; and it analyzes the passage between media practices in terms of their potential transmutability and their material resistance to appropriation. Walter Benjamin's work on photography and the mechanical reproducibility of the image, autobiography and storytelling, the language and the image of allegory, the critique of historiography, the material passage of memory, and utopian awakening⁵ is trailblazing. In the radiant wake of Benjamin's insights, this dissertation attempts to fray a less-traveled path in film studies, by renewing the study of Tarkovsky's films and inventing a critical theory of rhythm.

modes de résistance ". L'intermédialité n'offre pas un " dépassement " des anciennes intertextualités ou interdiscursivités : elle insiste simplement sur ce qui fondait ces concepts, c'est-à-dire le sens privilégié alloué aux enchaînements, aux mouvements de dépropriation-appropriation, aux continuités tacites ou affirmées, aux résistances obstinées et aux recyclages diserts. (« Présentation, » juillet, 2002).

⁵ Although a more complete list of Walter Benjamin's work may be consulted in the bibliography, let me mention some of the English editions and anthologies of his work : *The Arcades Project* (1999); *Illuminations* (1968); *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1998); and *Reflections* (1978).



Introduction

Sculpting Out of Time

I think that what a person normally goes to the cinema for is *time*; for time lost or spent or not yet had. He goes there for living experience; for cinema, like no other art, widens, enhances and concentrates a person's experience—and not only enhances it but makes it longer, significantly longer (Andrey Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, 1986, p. 69).

For many years I have been tormented by the certainty that the most extraordinary discoveries await us in the sphere of Time. We know less about time than about anything else (Andrey Tarkovsky, *Time within Time*, [February 15, 1972] 1994, p. 53).

Andrei Tarkovsky's semi-autobiographical film *Zerkalo*, or *Mirror* (1975), projects such tormented certainties and extraordinary discoveries, recording the coming to consciousness of a change in the universe created by the cinema, a change in the conception and experience of time. This is what really astounds audiences and turns them into passionate admirers of films like *Mirror* according to Tarkovsky, for the development of this cinematic technology has "revealed hitherto unexplored areas of reality" (1986, pp. 83-84). Cinema-goers, searching for lost time, and drifting--encountering new forms of time.

At three separate moments in the argument of his book of reflections on the cinema, *Sculpting in Time*, Tarkovsky does allow himself room to comment upon the modern spectator's searching need for "time lost or spent, or not-yet had" (1986, p.63; pp.82-83; p.179). Each time Tarkovsky implicitly invokes the redemptive power of the cinema as that which compels cinema-goers to compensate for the gaps of modern experience. Tarkovsky makes it clear that the degree to which this "lost-time" is restored and restorative depends a great deal on the humanity and spirituality of the director who then

vicariously shares it, condenses it, and sculpts it in the uncompromisingly affective images of time printed on film (1986; 179). While this redemptive theory of time-compensation in cinema seems to be argued consistently, it is fundamentally at odds with Tarkovsky's materialist conception of rhythm and its relationship to the dynamic currents, pressures, and traces of life in film, as I will be arguing in Part I of the dissertation.

Moreover, the "search for time lost, spent, or not yet had," while motivated by the critical impulse to recover from an alienated form of modern subjectivity, only exacerbates such a crisis, seen in terms of losing, spending and not-yet having time. Even Tarkovsky is finally forced to admit that the rhythms of the time-machine of cinema undeniably belong to the rhythms of modern life and their inevitable "time deficiency." In other words, we are always "out of time" even in the halls of the cinema, for the attempt to make-up for time-lost is itself already determined by the position of always spending-time in order to gain it again. Moreover, this loss of the present, which is felt as nostalgia for what already was and can never return again, paradoxically produces another level of nostalgia for something that remains in a state of anticipated desire in a future endlessly deferred, a nostalgia for that which is not yet had. Paradoxically then, the cinema "produces nostalgia" even as it holds out the promise of recovering from the "spiritual vacuum" of modern conditions—conditions that have exacerbated the sense of not having a present onto which one might have a hold.

This insertion and dislocation in the passing-splitting of the present, however, is mediated by the virtual-actual economy of the image. In Bergsonian and Deleuzian terms, Tarkovsky's films—especially *Mirror*, explore and embody this "passing" of time as a kind of mobile mirror in which perception and recollection endlessly pass into one another in the medium or milieu of the time-image. The search for "lost time" accomplishes in audio-visual technique what Proust's stereoscopic economy of "writing

remembrance” accomplishes in *À la recherche du temps perdu* : another temporal experience of the phases of experience—buried and brought to life by the materiality of memory and forgetting. Lost-time can never be re-possessed; the phases of time can only be re-run and re-played in other mediations.

For these reasons, what Tarkovsky calls a “time-deficiency” is also a possibility for a different mode of being and belonging *in* time and also, *out of* time. To be “out of time” implies an acute lack of time and this produces the desire to measure, compress and accelerate the moments that we are in time; however, to be “out of time” also implies an intense yearning for suspension, for timeless drift, for remaining on the outside of time—for remaining motionless. This patience, paralysis, or suspension of judgment may itself engender a new ability to live in the phases of time; when boredom or mild suffering exposes us to the immediacy or drift of time and the sense of our own mortality is brought to the fore, the expansion or contraction of temporal experience allows something new to emerge—a moment of contact with otherness, words with which to speak, or perhaps, the silent openness to the time of waiting. Finally, to be “out of time” is to let oneself experience the visceral lure of the end of time, to allow the temporal extension and concentration of the viewing experience to open onto the explosive passage of catastrophe itself, to access—in the accelerated or slowed down duration of an image of disappearance--the epoch-ending moment of disaster.

In *Mirror* (1975), this lure of accessing the end of time is presented in the most banal and creative ways. For example, just after the child of the narrator, Ignat, has been visited by two mysterious guests and is asked to recite a fragment of Pushkin’s letter to Chaadayev regarding the Christian destiny of Russia, we witness the passing of the extraordinary in even the most domestic of shots: in the obsessive attention given to

recording the disappearance of a humid ring of vapor left by a cup of tea¹. As the camera cuts to a close-up of the vanishing ring, the electronic track of choral music rises in intensity. The voices of the low chant are drawn out, accelerated, and concentrated into the terminal pitch of alarm. This climatic pitch suddenly vanishes in the tremendous silence of the gradual dissolution of the humid mark, a silence that is not simply the absence of sound but its very implosion, pregnant and resonating with the momentous memory of the rise of voices—breaking the sound-barrier, irrupting and accomplishing itself outside of the material duration of vapor, it seems to pass “out of time.”

This disjunction between soundtrack and time-image allows for a new category of perception and cinema-goers literally stand suspended and gaping before the phenomenality of something so ordinary and yet usually unperceived, the inevitable collapse and the eternally fleeting sense of material being in time. This perception is accentuated by its being a natural, elemental mediation of vapor, its being between the elements of water and air, being between visibility and invisibility, and being between death and eternal metamorphosis/transfiguration. Audio-visual technique operates an allegorical inscription in the Benjaminian sense of the term, as allegory is distinguished from symbol: rather than symbolizing the eternal moment, it allows time to seep into and materially inscribe itself in the eternally fleeting nature of the work of art as a fragmented passage, ruin, and reminder of the immanence of death in historical being.

Paradoxically, the elemental materiality of the cinematographic image which is “sculpted in time” also “sculpts out of time” because it puts viewers into contact with something more, beyond, accelerated out of, invisible, yet accessible to, or in dialogue

¹ This analysis also appears later in Part III (Sequence X, shot 96). The argument concerning the temporal experience of vaporization discussed in this paragraph will be extended once again in order to nuance the materialist argument for an allegorical mediation of history. In other words, the obsessive attention given to vaporous implosion introduces a form of historical mediation which is strictly opposed to the ideological critique and discourse that Marxist film-critics and sociologists usually rely upon “to explain” the images of the Pushkin-recital sequence.

with that hope and that memory generating the more-than-mortal-being-in-time, and death is merely a function of this transformation. The heat-mark from the absent tea-cup evaporates the magical water of Lethe in order to remember the truth (a-letheia) of that eternal side of change and mortality, just as the rhythmic gap of the musical reverberation bears more than mere silence/absence of voices but continues to affirm the ontology of their tonal presence in the weight, lifted by the overtone, of their echoing memory.

The magical and mysterious aspect of this historical connection is made even more tangible since a series of aural and visual correspondences are generated between the “vaporous bodies” materialized on screen throughout the film. This image of the ring of vapor, its *implosive disappearance*, reverberates later and sets the tonality for the vision of the found documentary footage inserted into the diegetic environment of the film, recording the *explosive appearance* of the building pressures of the nuclear mushroom cloud rising above Hiroshima. Time breathes within the shots and sequences of the film like a series of hot expirations.

However, *Mirror* does not record this change in the experience of time by means of a mere projection of apocalyptic endings nor by means of prophecies of the end of history. In favor of this closing of consciousness this exemplary film relays to us, through the velocities of modern mass events, the rhythms of the life-world of experience, and the fictions of apocalypse, a visible and mysterious image of ourselves as mutants—of the way we inhabit and are inhabited by conscious and unconscious forces of time and powers of memory and forgetting.

Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, from this perspective, incarnates one of the cinema’s ultimate fantasies about time-travel in the medium of the cinematographic image. The subject (viewer, director, people), endlessly being stripped of the capacity to hold or to fix time, must relinquish this impulse to confer continuity upon existence by becoming inserted within the structure of homogenous, empty time. The subject must simply *pass time* in

time's multiple heterogeneity, discontinuity, and contingency. In the halls of cinema the time-passer is a contemplative observer who loses time in the middle of a world that materially passes at variable speeds, and this experience of no longer having a time to himself/herself is also the experience of the loss or the absence of an absolute temporality. This is the final, and most important, meaning of the "time deficiency."

No longer having the time of one's own, no longer being able to engage oneself in the temporality of an action, this negative suspension means that the time-passer has lost time in order to be able to open himself/herself to the temporal singularity of events, to bear witness to the rhythms of these traces, and to be available to becoming transformed by these traces. The temporal materiality of film, its rhythm, effects a serial metamorphosis of reality; in the attentive absorption to the alien rhythms of the film we witness the passage of time, from the intensity of its compression to the plasticity of its expansion—and in the inscrutable cipher of pressures of this historical material of duration—we relay the radical alterity of this serial-becoming of temporality through which we too must pass.

Tarkovsky's work reveals, in an exemplary way, how the temporal materiality of the cinematographic medium shatters the experience and perception of time itself and challenges many of the epistemological categories and conceptions by which historical knowledge is articulated and organized. This explains historically why all of Tarkovsky's films, and especially *Mirror*, have inspired as much critical resistance as they have inspired astonished fascination: they introduce a different, because less rational, order of historical experience and knowledge—in the temporal materiality of film. In Part II, I will be arguing that the terms of this irrational, because a-logical, knowledge and experience can be reformulated in other terms. For example, I will be concerned with demonstrating how the rhythmic temporality of film, out of the ruins of

narrative representation and historiography, introduces a poetic practice into audio-visual technique that is close to a mythical form of historical consciousness.

The Work of Memory and the Metamorphosis of Historical Material

Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975) is an implicit critique of historiography from this point of perspective, for the phases of historical time are transmitted outside of their setting and placement within an absolute temporality in the scriptural economy of a chronicle of events. Like many postwar films, *Mirror* demonstrates that when time is fragmented and chronology is pulverized--like so many pieces of a broken crystal shattering the past, present, and future phases of time--the merely chronological continuum of history and memory is flayed into a distinct series of discontinuous and incommensurable intervals. For when time is no longer derived from movement but eccentric and aberrant movement derived from time, then story, memory and experience are fundamentally transformed because they are mediated by incommensurable intervals and irrational divisions of time. As I will argue in Part II, the incommensurable and irrational divisions of time "pass" in the rhythmic temporality of film and bring about a narrative crisis which foregrounds a larger crisis in the form of knowledge and truth : for that which divides the inside from the outside, the mind from the body, the mental from the physical, and the imaginary from the real are no longer decidable qualities because a certain regime of truth, to use Deleuze's Nietzschean terms, has become "falsified" by the "irrational" powers of the time-image.

Clearly such a perspective on the filmic vision of history is pertinent to the analysis of the rhythmic temporalities of *Mirror* (1975), a film which is structured by the alternation between the multiple rhythms of collective and personal memory and between historical and fictional temporalities. *Mirror* reveals the fundamentally social character of memory, the way in which personal memory and collective memory mutually constitute

one another, and it is upon this mutually constituting work of memory that the historical narrative of the film is articulated in all of its complexity. The narrative “plotting” of history in *Mirror* makes its appearance in the film in the alternate exchange between the trans-generational story of a broken family (the narrator’s son repeating something of the story of the narrator as a boy) which is expanded onto the history of generations of other families (Soviet and Spanish) broken by the events of WWII. This alternating exchange is made intelligible in the complex visual structure of the chronotopes transmitted by the memories of a narrator and other members of his family (1930’s at the dacha; 1940’s events of WWII; 1970’s narrator’s apartment). *Mirror* is organized by the elliptical “emboîtement” set between two mirrors that, facing each other, reflect the infinite series of exits and entries set between the gaps of three generations of family—of the narrator as a child and the child as a narrator (DeBaeque, 1989, p.78). Although such an exchange of memory seems to make *recognizable* at least the semblance of a transhistorical destiny of a people (family/nation), it is itself uncertainly shuffled and “fabulated” between the historical and fictional temporalities of image-crystals.

If there is not any clear central Text/Law or eschatological narrative around which these multitemporal sequences are organized, we may at least say that they carry the burden of the absence of this law; in other words, they do not simply heretically reject this mythic-epic Law. They do not *lose it to memory*; rather, they are inscribed in the *memory of its loss*. A memory of loss already carried by the tropes of XIX century Russian literature (Dostoevsky/Tolstoy/Chekhov/Pushkin) and the prophetic word and utopian/dystopian vision of the poet, Arseny Tarkvosky the director’s father; this memory of loss organizes the intertextual-intermedial *work of memory* in *Mirror*. The religious impulse surging out of Tarkovsky’s *Mirror* organizes and transmits this mythic order of truth somewhat diabolically through the absence or loss of the father/Moses-figure.

However much *Mirror* models itself on the work of the passage of paternal tradition and the memory of its loss, still it should be emphasized that this work of memory in *Mirror* is not a clear transmission of any kind of memory but a passage into its oblivion also, a stammering through the gaps separating co-existing temporalities, the impossibility of re-unions, the opacity and difficulty of homecomings. These gaps are narratively imagined in *Mirror* through the divorce, misunderstanding, and absence of family relationships (the hyphens separating three generations of father-son, husband-wife, son-mother relations). More, these gaps are rhythmically inscribed in the medium of film, in the difference of time-pressures in scenes and between scenes, and in the different charge of historical and fictional temporalities. The material duration of the time-image and its multiple rhythms, always in a state of becoming, would remove the possibility of there being any rationalizing or stabilizing logic to manage the multiplicity and speed of temporal experience by which historical events might be chronicled.

Such an “irrational” and “a-logical” experience of time is heightened and intensified by the spiritual tenor and nostalgic tonality of Tarkovsky's cinematography. Commenting upon the historical ontology of Tarkovsky's time-images and their hallucinatory effects, Youssef Ishaghpour has observed: “Chaque fois, la « réalité » est métamorphosée par la temporalité d'un regard devenu vision” (1996, p.75). In other words, this transforming duplicity of the cinematographic image (gaze/vision) then becomes an experience of a transforming encounter between the fidelity of a realistically reflected double-image and the virulence of the powers of human projection to meet the terrors and hopes of the passage of death. As Ishaghpour suggestively argues, these magical and affective powers are the condition, the unconscious ground, for the possibility of having a “realistic” perception and they strengthen the powers of participation and identification: “L'image participe de la chose, le spectateur participe de la réalité sur l'écran, fasciné par sa puissance de suggestion totale et irrésistible, à cause

sa réalité. De là naît cette symbiose qui intègre le spectateur dans le flux du film et le flux du film dans le flux psychique du spectateur" (1996; 92).

The "participation in" in the thing-ness of the world (image/thing::spectateur/screen) becomes the condition for the possibility of a reciprocal exchange, creating a metamorphic membrane of contact between the film and the viewer. I will argue that this temporal and serial metamorphosis of reality is effected each time the historical reflection of the gaze transforms the hot expiration of time into an anamorphic spectre of death. The anamorphoses produced by Tarkovsky's *Mirror*, then, are not merely discursive reflections of a plurality of contesting ideological positions on History, Counter-History, and Popular Memory. Rather, on the level of the time-based medium of film, they effect a serial metamorphosis of historical reality by foregrounding the death-spectre in the multiple rhythms of the viewing experience, an experience that makes time visible at the horizon of the end.

The anamorphic effect is significantly mediated by the figure of the orphan-rebel who permits the passage from the personal memories of the narrator's childhood to the collective memories of the events of WWII. Afasyev—an orphan boy, having lost his parents in the Leningrad blockade, rebelliously disobeys the military discipline and commands of his "shell-shocked" instructor to turn about-face or to shoot on target; instead he turns about-face twice and shoots obliquely. The complexity, ambiguity, and contradictory nature of such a scene as it produces a discourse on the production of the temporal experience of history and memory cannot be underestimated. *Mirror* reveals that to transmit is also to transform this personal experience of rebellious refusal to speak in the name of the absent—a shattering of mirrors—refracted in the polemical and abandoned eyes of the child and reoriented as a will to face the dead in all their enigmatic opacity, silence, and irrevocable distance.

In other words, there is an ethics-poetic-politics in the tact of this counter-history; Tarkovsky does not contest official History for the purpose of skirting its authority with playful irreverence like some Dadaist modernist filmmaker; on the contrary, *Mirror* reverently reflects the utopian dimension of this History *negatively* in the anamorphic effects of the temporal medium of film. This is the importance of understanding the time-passer as a child, an orphan, hostile to instruction. This child is not merely an instance for the enunciation of a counter-history or vision but a figure of the very dislocation and transformation of time itself; through the blockade-boy we are put into contact with a kind of temporal transformation of experience, that through which the noise of time may be heard and that through which the breath of time may be felt.

As a figure of disorientation and dislocation, it is through his rebellious eyes that viewers are taken through a series of three separate apocalyptic sequences of war : the hand-grenade prank, the Lake Sivash crossing, and the end of WWII. This audio-visual drift and dislocation permits viewers to pass and become the passage of the historical traces of film, to witness a time to which they do not belong but which brushes up against them, activating memories and inventing another form of historical consciousness.

Stuttering and Flashing : Mediating Modern Events

What happens to the historical memory of catastrophic events when the “sense of an ending,” normally consolidated by strategies of narrative representation, can no longer contain the historical-material debris of time mediated by audio-visual technologies ? This question is central to the analysis of *Mirror* and but also to an understanding of the power of the tele-technic images of the mass-media generally. The fluid, unstable, phantasmagoric power of explosive images of catastrophes transmitted by the television, such as those pathologically replaying the events of September 11th, are--as images--impervious to explanation and resistant to narrative representation. Of course such

images must always be explained, interpreted and accompanied by the sense of an ending; this is the duty of telejournalism, to build an explicative frame of speech that might withstand and under-ride the images of historical events (like the running script on the screen of CNN), to give the distance and time “covered” by the image the coverage of a story (a story that has an identifiable plot and intrigue, in which the framing of events might index the ending of an epoch or a world with some trans-social and trans-historical significance). And yet, the images of events like these seem to overflow and to crumble the very edifice of speech and the indexical nature of story; no matter how frequently these images have passed on screen nor how much they have been exploited and manipulated for meaning, their serial repetition has never given mastery over the material speed and historical weight of time inscribed in these images; the rhythmic temporality of the motion picture has had the effect of making speech stutter.

This affirmation takes us into the heart of the problem concerning the mediation of the historical event in the multiple rhythms of film. As Walter Benjamin recognized, in what has practically become a commonplace in critical discourse, human experience retreated from the realm of its possible transmission in story due to the acceleration of the explosive forces of technological mediations such as those shocking the human body on the battlefields of WWI. If history can no longer be put into the narrativity of story, then it refuses to be mastered, breaks down into images that outstrip the potential structures of human comprehension, and can only be witnessed in its radical alterity.

Clearly the decline of storytelling as a cultural mediation of history-making has met with the popular rise of a kind of therapeutic practice of remembering, repeating, re-telling in the audio-visual techniques of television and cinema—techniques that point in the direction of obsession, trauma and fantasy (Elsaesser, 1996). However, there is a difference to be made between the kind of obscene repetition of the society of the “spectacle,” which Guy Debord has thoroughly critiqued for its self-enclosed circulation

of simulations, and the kind of repetition offered by the serial experiences mediated by films that are charged with the historical materiality of time. If we limit ourselves to the second form of serial-experience, the question then becomes: What motivates the compulsion to repeat? Can it in any sense be qualified as a redemptive impulse?

Most critical analyses suggest that historical horizon of the work of memory in Tarkovsky's *Mirror* is essentially "restorative" by pointing out the redemptive motifs and a few of the commemorative themes that structure the complex narrative; this is legitimated and even reinforced to some extent by Tarkovsky's writings and declarations of the film as an emblem of "historical sacrifice." The possibility of another perspective is precluded by the rather superficial attention to narrative/thematic patterns and authorial intentions which prevail over any consideration of the time-based medium of film itself.

I would like to argue for this other perspective by showing how the film calls attention to rhythm, the way the image *speaks* the melancholy work of memory and mourning *in time*. In Tarkovsky's *Mirror* the storyteller is orphaned from the home of memory; witnessing the clamorous noise of time the storyteller stutters. It is no accident that the prologue-sequence of *Mirror*, a brief television documentary about the hypnotic curing of a young man's stutter, introduces and initiates the complex work of memory in the film. From the point of view of the audio-visual critique of historiography to which the entire film responds, it significantly questions narrative capability itself. The prologue is more than the metaphorical springboard for the rest of the film but that which metonymically imparts a certain temporal tonality, tenor, and tremor to the various pieces of the shattered experience of memory to follow.

Beyond the *mise-en scene* of the stuttering boy, *Mirror* manifests this stuttering-effect of the historical event by pushing narrative principles (*mise-en-récit*, plot) to their limits, accelerating diegetic strategies so that they no longer regulate the periodic occurrence of events in a narrative structure but, in a kind of hyper-diegetic suspense, mark their arrival

in a flash of memory. *Mirror* does not employ the technique of “flash-back” ; events do not flash in order to receive retrospective causal explanation, nor in order to generate the narrative succession of action. I would like to argue that the “flashing” work of memory in *Mirror* marks the moment of the arrival of events in order to provoke a kind of startled “awakening” to their radical alterity. This concept may be applied to a great number of the moments of *Mirror* because it is a film concerned with the fullness of memory, not as it is recollected in a story, but as it is founded in loss and absence and dispersed in the fragments and traces of a story.

Allegorical Endings and Utopian Beginnings

Enigmatically enough, one of the key narrative moments of Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, featured towards the film’s ending concerns the death of the narrator². In this scene we witness, next to a wall of mirrors, the narrator Alexei hidden behind a screened curtain; as he is lying down on his deathbed (Postwar 1970’s), we are informed by a doctor that he is dying for personal reasons untreatable by medical science. In terms of the dying narrator Alexei, we witness the narrative trope or pretext that would anthologize as well as generate the heterogenous series of memories reflected throughout the film of a man acquiring a conscience on the edge of death. We do not hear the narrator speak of his feverish guilt of being unworthy as a father-husband in a family fragmented by war, misunderstanding, and divorce; his gesture and his breath however do generate the work of memory, opening out towards the luminous presence of the “child-figure” and to the half-remembered and half-forgotten experiences of his childhood projected in the last scene. Significantly, the hyperdiegetic work of memory, a moment of startled awakening to the figure of the “child” and the utopian memory of childhood—is founded in the respiring-expiring breath of the time-image.

² I deal with this scene at greater length in Part III (Sequence XXII, shots 204-206).

In Part II, I will discuss how the mechanics of this gasping of the last breath is sustained throughout the film, from the opening documentary clip of the stuttering fit. In this sense, *Mirror* is less interested in transmitting this story as a story, but in re-organizing it in terms of its gaps, send-backs and cancellations; introducing the pause, the hyphen, and the stutter to speech. Setting time loose from the structures of story, *Mirror* transmutes temporal experience. The sequential passage of one historical or fictional scene into the next must be seen as a function and configuration of this enigmatic transformation of temporality.

I will be arguing, in Deleuzian terms, that the time-images of Tarkovsky's *Mirror* are constituted by the powers of the false even in those sequences and shots that seem to seem to offer a kind of total narrative resolution and a return to the origins of a founding myth because they introduce "impossible" moments of time in the materiality of allegorical images. The images in this final sequence of shots, in which viewers are taken from the scene of the sick-bed of the dying narrator Alexei into the vision of his childhood, would provide an excellent test-case of this hypothesis. From the image of the hand of the dying narrator viewers are taken presumably back to the moment before the narrator's conception (dacha/1930's) where his young parents are pictured lying in the grass below the house wondering if they would have a boy or a girl. In the long duration of this shot, Maria's (Alexei's younger mother, played by Margarita Terekhova) face makes several expressive changes—as if in the pause of her husband's question her face were anticipating a lifetime of tremendous events: passing from anxious curiosity to warm surprise, from hopeful bewilderment to pure desperation. In the following shot, Alexei's mother Maria is pictured as an older woman (played by Tarkovsky's own mother, Maria Tarkovskaya) who steps into view from behind holding a wash basin. She is accompanied by a young child, presumably the image of the narrator as a child. Together they behold the image of the hill where the dacha used to be. The co-existence

of different temporalities reaches a climax in this image; for we have passed from the image of the young mother Maria in the last shot (early 1930's) to the image of herself as a old woman (1970's) and paradoxically, we have passed from the deathbed of the narrator who now remains the "ageless model" of the child—holding hands with his aging mother.

Critics like Johnson and Petrie find in this series of shots an extraordinary power of explanation for, in their words, they represent a "reconciliation of the conflicting forces in the hero's life" as the "tenuous borders" crumble between dream and memory, between past and present, between real and imagine characters (Johnson and Petrie, 1995; 129). However seductive and pertinent such an analysis may be, it does ignore that which is equally present in this shot : the persistent materiality of the time of the image and the historical ruins and debris of the "place of memory" that it inscribes. I will be arguing that the "tenuous borders" do not crumble but are in fact made even more "tenuous" and permeable as the complex temporalities of the major chronotopes in the film merge in phantasmagoric and allegorical images. Just as the images of the mother can never be unified but are radically disjoined in time, the narrator/subject is separated from himself by the impersonal form of time, by the "impossible" forking or splitting of non-chronological time. Invoking Deleuze's categories of the time-image, I will show how time is at once inscribed in the materiality of the medium and fabulated allegorically.

The historical subject of *Mirror* (the author, the narrator, the family, the people) is not an ideal image of unity that already exists and must only be awakened into self-consciousness, it is a profoundly historical image, re-membered in virtual and real circuits, on the basis of which a future might be invented. Remembering in Tarkvosky's *Mirror* is neither a psychological memory in which the individual narrator recalls a repressed past nor simply a historical memory that would represent the occluded story of

a people; the time-series of remembering, bifurcating throughout the film, shows how the inside and the outside, the public and the private, the individual and the collective can meet and generate a collective enunciation of history based upon the utopian potentials of the not-yet, the darkness of experience, the half-awakened slumber of the dream; a history that generates its remembrance around the figure of the child and the disorienting experience of dreaming about childhood. I will also be concerned with demonstrating how the utopian memory of childhood in *Mirror* invariably responds to the problem of the mediation of the catastrophic historical events; the pathology of the narrator is related to the traumatic remembrance of history, one in which individual and collective memories are transposed in the redemptive work of mourning or in the allegorical work of melancholy grief. The memories of childhood generate—out of the material pressures and repetitions of historical time—an awakening and an openness to the potentially radical alterity of the future.

When language stutters and “history breaks down into images” in Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, the child is the rebellious orphan-figure through which the velocities of catastrophic events must pass; however, the child is also the ageless model of innocence who inhabits the dacha of memory, the mobile symbolic space in which this history must be organized for the future. The narrator’s tortured journey back to childhood and his repeated effort to access the house of memory (seen in the last four sequences) takes viewers back to this possibility. In the dark-luminous visions of hope and desperation, the child is inevitably torn between the melancholy of a lost world and the utopian wish to generate a new world.

Part I

Cinema and the Mirror of Modernity

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- Questing After Technics
- Imaging Alterity
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- Imaging Time

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- Rhythm and the Written Language of Reality
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Chapter 1: The Question Concerning Technology in the Medium of Film

The relationship between the philosophical discourse of modernity and the institutionalized practice and study of film is extremely complex. In this section I would like to outline some of the implications of this relationship by reflecting upon some of those claims made by Martin Heidegger in his celebrated essays, "The Age of the World Picture" and the "Question Concerning Technology." The pertinence of these claims in the context of film studies may then be qualified in general historical and philosophical terms by briefly discussing three critical perspectives of the modernity of audio-visual technique. These claims set the groundwork on which my theory of rhythm in the medium of film is articulated, a theory emerging in relation to Andrey Tarkovsky's work.

The Time of the World-Picture

The most fundamental feature of modern times and of the modern spirit, according to Heidegger, is the conquest of the world as a picture. Hence the title of the essay, *Die Zeit des Weltbildes*, names the epoch or time in which the world is given only insofar as it presents itself as a picture. *Weltbild* does not refer necessarily to a picture of the world but to the systematic conception of the world as a picture, in its pictoriality. Common expressions like "being in the picture" or "getting the picture" or "putting oneself into the picture" capture the meaning of *Weltbild* because they imply a form of mastery and control of what gets into the picture and what the picture is a picture of. What does this mean ?

The first major implication of the assignment of Being under *Weltbild* is that the heterogeneity of beings and the totality of their relationships can only be accepted

insofar as they can be objectified and represented, or *vorgestellt*. This word, as Samuel Weber reminds us (1996; 78), has the original naming power to designate the double movement of literally setting things out in front of oneself (*vor-stellen*) and bringing things towards oneself (*her-stellen*). Entities are brought closer and also kept at a safe distance from the subject; above all, they are put into their place, as the German root “stellen” indicates, and this emplacement confirms and secures the place of the subject “as the reference point of all beings as such” (Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture”; 1977, 128).

When such a movement is understood as encompassing the totality of beings as such, the “world” itself has become a “picture” whose ultimate function is to establish and confirm the centrality of man as the being capable of depiction. The “Age”, or more literally, the “Time” (*Zeit*) of the World-Picture thus turns out to be that of the presentation, the *Vorstellung*, the bringing-forth-and setting-before (the subject) of all things. (S. Weber, 1996; 79)

In other words, the emergence of the modern World Picture or *Weltbild* involves a systematic decision about the Being of beings, for this Being can only be sought and found in the “representedness” of beings. This determination of the Being of beings in the World-as-Picture correlatively determines the human as the founding, constitutive subject (the Greek conception of “*hypokeimenon*,” meaning “what lies under” and which was later translated in Latin as “*subjectum*” or “what is thrown under,” and also “the human subject”). This philological and epistemological transformation of the *hypokeimenon* into the *subjectum* has the extraordinary power to explain the advent of Humanism in the Age of the World-Picture, “a philosophical interpretation of man that explains and assesses beings in terms of man and with a view to man” (1976; 133). According to Heidegger, with the dispersion of a fallen Christianity in early

Renaissance Europe, man himself, the human subject, came to equal the subjectum, or the underlying substratum of any and all predication and inquiry.

Heidegger outlines five constituent features of modernity that help to usher in and consolidate this discursive shift: mathematical science; machine technology; the reduction of art as experience; the concept of human activity as culture and the realization of values, as well as the rising concern with cultural politics; and finally, the loss of the Gods in the modernized Christian World-View. This configuration of constituent features distinguishes modern man as a subject and radically sets him apart from medieval and ancient man. *Weltbild* is unknown in Medieval times, Heidegger argues, for men were assigned their place by God in a specific order of creation; the Greeks had no conception of *Weltbild* either, for man was at the beck and call of Being not the subject or ground of its predication and inquiry.

Modernity is not to be characterized simply as the continuous substitution of new visions of the world, something captured by the German word "Neuzeit," nor is it to be equated with worldviews or "Weltanschauung," a word incompatible with what Heidegger sees as the essentially free and open relationships of philosophical inquiry. *Weltbild* or World-Picture does, however, name the condition for the possibility of having a Worldview. This is why Heidegger can make the sweeping claim that "Humanism" is moral-aesthetic anthropology; for even in a strictly historical sense, humanism marks the advent of that systematic conception of the world of being in which things find an entire explanation and evaluation from the standpoint of man and in relation to man. In other words, "once the world has become an image, the human position grasps itself as a *Weltanschauung*" (1976; 134).

The determination of the world as picture is coterminous with the determination of the human as subject. Once again, this positioning of the subject is structural to the essence of technology, considered as a command over place, emplacement, or *Ge-*

stellen. The connection between the *Question Concerning Technology* and *The Age of the World-Picture* becomes clearer at this moment. Henceforth the subject takes a stand over things, gets into calculating and commanding position, assumes a posture and an attitude with respect to himself and others in accordance with this essence of emplacement. The chief characteristics of this positioning are the “planetary” ambitions to totality, transparency, and universality, the reduction of knowledge into the “organized exploitation” of research and experiment, and the pretension to systematically challenge the world to report itself within a uniformly representational structure.

One might say that the Global Positioning System (G.P.S.) of telecommunications satellites developed by the U.S. military for the pentagon in the 1990’s, to which the entire planet is subjected these days, technically materializes these essential traits of the modernity of the World-Picture (Weber, 1996; 5). Not only do we live in a world overseen by sophisticated techniques of military surveillance, not only are we more infinitely and minutely localizable on the surface of the planet, but a calculating and instrumental relationship to the totality of the beings of the world is predetermined in the televisual availability of a picture of such a planetary scale. In this instance, the World-Picture of the GPS is both the potential to picture the planet in the totality of its detail as it exhibits itself, but also, more fundamentally, to technically materialize the driving ambitions of Western Metaphysics—to secure the position and consolidate the “World View” of a master subject by objectifying the Being of beings in an epistemological structure of representation.

At the same time, beyond the model of the GPS, it is clear that the daily framing of the world and the positioning of subjects through the sets and screens of cinema, television, and video has fundamentally changed the relationship humans have to time, space, self and other. We are ourselves televised and transported, seeing through space

over immense distances and moving in time at greater velocities, positioned and positioning, framed and enframing, in a world of accelerated transmissions.

This brings us to the paradox, formulated very suggestively by Weber, in the following words, "the subject-securing function of the world-picture raises the question of what might be called the kinetic or "cinematic" structure of that picture" (1996; 81). On the one hand, it might seem proper that the *Weltbild* be characterized by this kind of dynamic movement because it is always setting things out in front of the subject (*vorstellen*) and bringing things towards the subject (*herstellen*), the subject always mastering the critical space and time between the near and the far. On the other hand, this very dynamic and kinetic movement, made possible by the proliferation of the audio-visual technologies of reproducible images, would seem to displace or to destabilize the centralizing reference of the subject in relation to an object-world. This displacement would then put into question the centrality and the mastery of the human as subject and also the modern grounds for knowledge of the world as picture. I will be defending the claim that the reproducibility of the image would then be related to a form of displacement by which the position of the subject, rather than being set over against the world, might be said to dissolve in the middle or milieu of the world.

To recapitulate then, it may be argued that the cinematic structure of the world-picture would seem to materialize the culminating trait of modernity and Western metaphysics, discovered in the essence of technology: the conception of the world as representation for a calculating subject. Yet this culminating trait of technology and metaphysics, of *stellen* or emplacement, because it is founded in a cinematic structure of displacement that decenters the subject, would seem to dissolve under the pressure of its own internal ambivalences. After all, Heidegger concludes, following the determination of the world as picture and the human as subject "an invisible shadow is cast over all things". This shadow, as Weber argues, does not designate a lack of light

in the World-Picture nor indicate its negation; “it designates that which escapes and eludes the calculating plans of representation” (1996; 81). Such a dual perspective then might allow us to move in the shadows or the concealed glows of a questioning concerning technology, or a questing after technics, that refuses to give itself over to that critical spirit that would merely negate technology but instead would move in-between critique and open inquiry.

Questing After Technics

It is from such a perspective that I would like to consider Tarkovsky’s films as a cinematic modality of pursuing the “Question Concerning Technology,” a questioning in which the Heideggerian concepts of technics, poesis, and phusis come to light. How would such a perspective begin ? Briefly stated, it would begin by recognizing that Tarkovsky’s film practice and theories articulate the experience of a “questing concerning the goings-on technics,” a questing through a field of conceptions regarding time, memory, nature, world, and subjectivity that all converge around a philosophical inquiry into technology. This questing or questioning consistently takes place in the ruins of the modern representation of technology as instrument; in the field of these ruins, another conception of technology becomes possible. Clearly, Tarkovsky’s films thematically and narratively figure a kind of quest through the wastelands of the modern world of technology, as in *Stalker* (1979). The critical modernity of his films consistently raise this thematic and narrative figuration to a philosophical height in which the human relationship to technology is put into question. More than this, or beside this, I would argue that the very materiality of the image of time, emerging from the skin of the film in the haptic and hypnotic contact it makes with the film of the world (as it does in the marshes of the nuclear war zone in *Stalker*), also constitutes another experience (Erfahrung), another crossing, risking, or passage with the goings-

on of technology itself. For example, the “zone” in *Stalker* is not merely the scene of a ruined wasteland to be denounced and redeemed by a kind of Dostoevskian anti-hero, but a milieu in which a crossing into danger is made possible—a zone of experience with the mediations of technology itself. The quest through the zone is also an experience of complete disorientation in time and space: disorientation in time because the future is in the here and now of the dystopian present, a present in which terror and disaster, even the otherness of the sacred, might break out of the ordinary footstep at any moment; disorientation in space because the “what” of the film’s action is entirely subordinated to an audio-visual questioning of “where”, to the shifting nature of the “thereness” of being in the landscape/mindscreen of the camera¹.

In other words, films like *Stalker* are not constituted by a nostalgic desire to return to life before modern technocracy, nor by a humanist lamentation against the vices of war. It is never simply a question of getting technology “spiritually in hand.” As Heidegger notes, even this response is conditioned by the anthropological representation of technology as instrument or instrumentum to be controlled: “The will to mastery becomes all the more urgent the more technology threatens to slip from human control” (1976; 5). I will be defending the idea that Tarkovsky’s theories and film-practice in *Mirror* (1975) are grounded in a questing that seeks to overturn the modern representation of technology as an instrument in the service of a subject and open alternatives towards a non-instrumental conception by which the “subjectivity” of the subject is shattered and rearticulated; an overturning and an opening that needs to be explored by examining and extending Tarkovsky’s theory of rhythm and the category of language.

This reversal of the instrumental representation of technology may, in Heidegger’s words, be characterized by the inter-animating relationship between the concepts of

¹ See John Orr’s essay on “The Sacrificial Unconscious” *Contemporary Cinema* (1998; p.45)

technics, *pöesis*, and *phusis* ; concepts the uncanny familiarity and strangeness of which tease thought into a different kind of wondering and questioning, in the oppositions of the modern to the ancient Greek world. For example, causality is not thought of as an effecting of results—for this would be equal to reducing the world to reporting itself as standing-reserve ; instead causality is thought of as a bringing-forth of material relationships of indebtedness or co-responsibility (Heidegger, 1977, pp. 6-8). A silversmith does not simply stamp out the shape of the chalice in some resistant material but in his making of a work, harbours-forth the material, formal, final, and efficient modes of occasioning ; this preserves and opens, in the dynamic materiality of its substance, a net-work of relations to space, time, self, and world.

Pre-modern technics is not thought of as a setting-upon or a challenging as modern technics, but as a matter of being entirely at home in a craft of the fine arts or of the arts of the mind ; related to the notion of *episteme*, technics is explored as « a mode of revealing » or “unconcealing” (*aletheia*) less technical than scientific expertise and less formal than artistic mastery. In the sphere of traditional, pre-industrial agriculture, for example, technics is closer to the ordering of a relationship between humans and nature (*phusis*) which can be understood in the movement of a making (*poesis*) that brings things out into the open. Nature is tended, cared for in the tilling and working, rather than being transformed into a storage of energy or goaded and maneuvered into “standing reserve” as in the modern technics of industrial agriculture. Premodern technics belongs to bringing-forth, the arising-of-something-out-of-itself in *poesis* and *phusis* ; in this, technics has the character of dynamic becoming and reveals its affinities to the way a flower bursts into bloom (*phusis*) or in the way a silversmith brings about the making of the chalice (*poesis*). This is why the essence (*wesen*) of

technics or the goings-on² of technics, as Heidegger emphatically declares, is not itself anything merely technical or technological.

Perhaps the best example of the difference between premodern and modern technics, between the bringing-forth and goading-forth, is in his discussion of man's relationship to the nature of the Rhine river.

The hydroelectric plant is not constructed in the current of the Rhine as was the old wooden bridge that joined bank with bank for hundreds of years. Rather, the river is obstructed; dammed up in the power plant. The river is what it is now, as river, because of the goings-on of the power plant. (1976; 15-16)

The wooden bridge reveals pre-modern technics as the milieu that bridges and allows the dynamic current of the natural world to flow. The bridge joins bank to bank and brings about a lasting relationship to place. The bridge therefore is not only the material support of easy travel since its materiality is already informed by technics, and as such, organizes a relationship to phusis that brings things out into the open (poesis). By contrast, the being of the river, what the river is as river-current-bank, becomes the standing reserve of hydroelectricity; for the dam of the hydroelectric power plant obstructs and blocks the river; it exploits its current, extracts it as energy, and expels it elsewhere. Just as it imposingly stands in place over against the river, it is that which absolutely displaces its current and upsets the lasting relationship to place between the two banks; for all of its gigantic mass, the power plant confers an unlasting or unsecuring relationship to place.

² As Weber remarks, the German word "wesen" has a verbal etymology from which the noun "das wesen" is derived; instead of being construed as genre or *essentia*, essence signifies "to hold sway", to "stay in play", or "to go on"; the essence of technics may be translated as the "goings-on" of technics. "As something that *goes on*, technics moves *away* from itself in being what it is. By determining the goings-on of technics as radically different from technics itself, Heidegger leads his readers in a quest after something that is not simply equivalent to technology, although it is that without which technology would not be" (Weber, 1996; 63).

What shall we make of this comparison concerning the goings-on of technics ? It should be recalled that the decisive difference between premodern and modern technics serves above all to foreground Heidegger's main concern with the modern subject and the operations of subjectification within Modernity : the attempt to understand how and why the movement of displacement, "a movement of unsecuring comes to evoke as response its diametrical opposite—the frantic effort to establish control and security" (Weber, 1996; 70).

How do these problems stand with the study and practice of film, television and video ? Does audio-visual technique ambivalently embody the paradoxes of place-setting and unsecuring, as in the example of the bridge and the modern power-plant ? In other words, is the medium of film involved in the emplacement of the subject and at the same time constantly undermining or unsecuring this place ? I would like to argue this is *the* fundamental defining question to be pursued in relation to the critique of the modern institutional study and practice of film. It is a fundamental and definitive question because it touches upon many of the discursive underpinnings and epistemological tendencies that determine the "objectivity" or object-ness of film and film-study; this objectivity then determines a relationship to language that inevitably favors certain approaches and axes of pertinence; a relationship that articulates the disciplinary structures that frame film and the inquiry into film. For example, I would argue that the concern with fixing and stabilizing the place of modern subjectivity has historically determined the modern study of film as the "seventh art" with comparable aesthetic forms to other plastic arts; or again, that it has promoted the modern inquiry into the narrative strategies of film with comparable poetic practices to the literary arts. These disciplinary structures and aesthetic-poetic discourses have traditionally precluded the inquiry into film as a medium. This is a question to which I will be

will be returning periodically throughout the dissertation as it relates to a critique of the subject and a theory of rhythm.

The implication of the question concerning the place-setting or unsecuring of subjectivity may be surmised in the following words: the practice of audio-visual technique generally, as a questing after the goings-on of technics, may hold out the possibility of overcoming its own determination in the representational structure of the Time of the World-Picture. At a very particular level, and for the purposes of brief exposition, it may be argued that were these principles of technics, phusis, and poesis taken seriously by film-critics, even critics of Tarkovsky's films, the hermeneutic pursuit of deciphering symbols or the cognitive pursuit of narrative analysis would be precluded in favor of an opening to the medium of film as a mediation of life liberated from representation. For audio-visual technique, as a bridging contact with material reality, would bring-forth a world uncontained by the rhetorical effects of literacy and the matrix of representational thought by which the subject/object relation has been institutionalized, an a-logical world that « [...]retains all its agential capability without being mediated by us ...a world that has been subjected to the workings of language and has come out unaffected » (Godzich, 1993, p.20). Does this signify a general withdrawal of meaning or a loss of certitude? Perhaps; this may also explain why the modern, institutional study of film resists such a perspective. Yet it has its predecessors; for it bears the trace of an ontological rethinking of what Siegfried Kracauer has called « the affinities » the film medium has for unstaged reality, attracted as it is to the indeterminate, the fortuitous, the fragmentary and the endless aspects of everyday life (1960, p.303). These affinities are images harboured-forth in film: the metamorphic, apparitional medium of the life-world moving and breathing in light and in shadow.

Before engaging more directly with Tarkovsky's work in the interstitial zone of this kind of thinking concerning the cinematic structure and subject-securing/displacing function of the *Time of the World-Picture* and as it traces paths into the *Question Concerning Technology*, it would be helpful to briefly discuss and compare the work of Marc-Henri Piault, Youssef Ishaghpour, and Walter Benjamin. For each of these thinkers helps to qualify and to deepen Heidegger's claims in terms that contribute to a critical theorization of cinema and modernity; the first concerning the imaging of alterity, the second concerning the imaging of reality, the third concerning the imaging of time³. To disclose how audio-visual technique problematizes the imaging of alterity, reality, and time is finally to allow my reflection on the theory of rhythm in Tarkovsky's work to emerge as a critical perspective on the modernity of film practices and the institutionalization of film studies.

Imaging Alterity

Marc-Henri Piault's important essay on the modernity of visual anthropology, "Du colonialisme à l'échange," while never referring directly to Heidegger's argument in the "Time of the World Picture," may be read as a fairly rigorous application of the claims that might be made on its behalf in the domain of cinema⁴. Read in the light of Heidegger then, Piault's thinking may be crystalized in the following thesis: the goings-on of audio-visual technics, while attempting to secure the subject of "man" (anthropos) as the universality of man's designation and placement in the totality of beings (Weltbild), fundamentally unsecured this subject by periodically calling into

³ I use the term "imaging" in order to intimate the philosophical conception of the image (Heidegger and Benjamin's conception of *Bild*), the reproducibility of the image, and the rhetorical *figuration* involved in thinking through images.

⁴ It be mentioned, however, that Marc-Henri Piault's analysis is supported by the reflection of Leroi-Gourhan, an anthropologist and zoologist whose entire work, according to Bernard Stiegler (1998), was grounded in a consideration of the history of technics.

question the constituent grounds of anthropological knowledge, its representational structure (Vorstellen), and its will to being a model of systemic transparency.

Sans aucun doute, l'anthropologie visuelle est encore en son enfance, mais l'anthropologie elle-même est une science du XVIIIe siècle ! Elle cherche à tout appréhender en un système ou s'attache aux inventaires sans fin d'une réalité innombrable dont l'apparence est d'autant moins soupçonnée qu'aucun instrument n'en perce l'opacité et n'en distingue les unités constitutives. (1992; 65)

How does Piault trace this argument ? First he discusses how the contemporaneous birth of cinematography and anthropological field work, in their concerted efforts of analytic scientific research, both participated in the same process of scientific observation. The reduction of knowledge to the systemic attitude for the exploitation of analytic research, Heidegger reminds us, is one of the characteristic traits of the modern World-Picture. Rather than problematize this process of systemic exploitation of research within the academy or analytic philosophy, Piault suggests that this process grew out of the larger social-political-economic context of other forms of exploitation : for the colonial conquest of the Other, the de-realization of otherness in the discourse of exoticism, and the industrial expansion and modernization of the 20th century, allowed the emergent field of visual anthropology to "justify" and render "operable" the larger enterprise of domination and exploitation, necessary in order to secure various discourses and institutions.

Les images rapportées des "pays lointains" renforçaient l'ensemble des représentations et des discours sur le progrès et les missions « civilisatrices » de l'homme blanc. Cinéma et ethnographie, enfants jumeaux de l'esprit de collecte, d'identification et sans doute d'appropriation, caractéristique du développement européen, contribuaient ensemble à la tentative d'assimiler toute l'histoire à l'histoire de l'Occident. (1992; 59)

Piault also qualifies the modern spirit behind this immense collation of the diversity of the world as it put into the perspective of a total picture all of the cultural variations of

the human according the Darwinian principles of social-evolution, such as his mastery of the environment, the conditions of his adaptation, and his comprehension of the world and his limits within it. This justified the enterprise of salvage-anthropology, of recoding and collecting any and all traces of the vanishing primitive races, themselves considered as steps towards--or deviations from--an evolving humanity marching forwards towards higher forms of superiority. The primitive and the savage quickly became objects of study for film and field work in the effort to designate the place of the human from "the dawn" of history: Regnault and Lajard's turn of the century project of imagining a comparative ethnographic history born out of ethnography ; even the later mid-century birth of "urgent ethnology," was informed by this spirit in its effort to preserve its own objective productions and classificatory archives of the "vanishing people".

While recognizing the anthropological critique of this spirit and the numerous debates surrounding ethnographic representation, Piault argues that no effort has been made to give a cumulative effect to the old arguments nor enough attention given to more fundamental problems which are lost largely to lyrical polemics, disciplinary anathemas, and methodological disputes over the "place" given to ethnology on the one hand and the nature of cinema on the other (1992; 59). Consequently, very little attention is paid to the epistemological question of mediation, an interdisciplinary mode of thinking about the pertinence, the specificity, and the potential hegemony of the audio-visual inscription of culture in the age of writing-culture (ethno-graphy).

For example, it could not be noticed how the materiality of the moving images (color, sound, gestures, face, rhythm, etc.) of even the earliest series of ethnographic films (produced by Maré, Edison, or the Pathé Society) had transgressed or renewed the rules of perception and the structures for thinking in language. Piault's argument implicitly suggests that this mode of questioning was ignored in the more urgent need

to make legitimating claims about the modes of filmic production (1992; 62). The implication is that this crisis of legitimation brought about the need to instrumentalize audio-visual technique generally for disciplinary ends in order to determine and to define its own methodology of fieldwork-filmwork: the relations between professional filmmakers and professional anthropologist; the relations between fictional mise-en-scene and reality; the limits and conditions of restitution in post-production interpretation or museology; or technological experimentation and methodological reflection on the technical capacities of the apparatus (62). These problems, posed before WWI and determining in advance the major topics around which a century of critical reflection would be articulated, did not bring about any immediate changes; for example, the question of whether and how technology might fundamentally transform the relationship between knowledge and life, between the subject's place before the world and the technics for apprehending reality, went unasked.

In a similar way, the question concerning technology in cinema could not be posed, for even when at the time of the birth of cinema on December 28th, 1895, at the Grand Café in Paris during the moment of August Lumière's projection, *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat*, the presentation of the film itself was presaged by Henri Langlois' presentation of Monet's tableau, *La Gare Saint-Lazare*. From the beginning, the medium of film was tamed or put into picture by the medium of "oil-painting" and the potentially unsecuring position of the spectator secured by the position of the painter⁵. Piault's words problematize the question of mediation in the following reversal between the "frames" of film and painting:

[...] il ne s'agissait plus en effet de faire entrer la vie dans un cadre, ce que s'efforçaient déjà de faire peinture et photographie, mais d'entraîner par le

⁵ Such a statement is not meant to defend the history of the filmic image as a development out of painted image, but only to trace Piault's argument regarding the problem of the mediation of perception, i.e. the subject's relationship to the frames and framing of the "visible".

regard le spectateur dans la vie innombrable de l'écran devenu fenêtre sur le monde. (1992; 62)

The goings-on of technics, articulated and constituted by this intermedial series of frames (painting, photography, and film), carries the radical potential for rethinking the relationship between subject, life, frame and world. Piault, however, does observe how this radical potential did bring about an important change : “dans le dispositif filmique c'est la place même du sujet qui se définit autrement et rend compte d'une transformation dans l'ordre des préoccupations intellectuelles” (1992; 62). Again, while transforming the order of intellectual preoccupations, the radical epistemological-ontological question concerning the place of the subject in the world brought about by the transforming encounter with audio-visual technique cannot be pursued. Piault implies that this question could be asked only insofar as this encounter with technics indicated a critical consideration of the ideological position of an ethnocentric subject behind a technology put to particular discursive uses; for example, the uses in which local interpretive communities of anthropologists had commented, voiced-over, interpreted, and “given meaning” to the “voiceless and classified natives” on behalf of whom they founded their professional research and position.

Next, Piault sketches the two principle divergent orientations of visual anthropology as they were born at a historical moment of institutional crisis during WWI, 1914-1918 (63). The films of Vertov and Flaherty set the scene in which and through which modern visual anthropology would act out its internal ambivalences, as it staged something of its own theatricality in the “gallery of portraits” and “stereotyped discourses” of these “founding fathers.”

[...] on peut considérer que le cinéma anthropologique restera partagé, depuis ses origines symboliques, entre les fantasmes d'un enregistrement systématique, quasiment naturaliste, du fait humain socialisé et les tenants hollywoodiens d'un spectaculaire généralisé. Entre les deux vont se développer des tentatives plus pragmatiques pour situer l'instrumentation cinématographique dans la démarche ethnographique.(1992; 63)

This seminal ambivalence at the heart of visual anthropology, or what may be called its phantasmagoric and spectacular encounter with the fictive-magic of the filmic image, marks the moment of a dissolving trust in an essentially realist epistemology which conceives of knowledge as the reproduction, for a subjectivity, of an objectivity that lives outside of it⁶. What happens when this mirror theory of knowledge is threatened by the other side of the mirror encountered through audio-visual technique ? What happens, in short, to this mirror-theory by which Truth is always the measure of the subject's capacity for adjusting the accuracy and adequacy of observation to the principles of analysis ? As Piauxt implies, this is the defining moment of pragmatics, or what may be qualified as the moment of the restitution of certain regimes of belief in scientific-analytic Truth by which the subject might grasp him/herself in the position of a World-View. Not surprisingly, this pragmatic moment of restitution also subjects audio-visual technique to the operations of a more rigorous instrumentation in the service of several fields of cine-research (ethno-musicology, ethno-linguistics, social morphology, etc.) modeled on empirical tendencies and shaped in the development of positivism and narrative approaches.

Dans ces secteurs, l'instrumentation audio-visuelle peut, ou plutôt pourrait devenir, à condition d'une démarche systématique, ce qu'a été le microscope pour les sciences de la nature . Néanmoins l'anthropologie hésite à fonder une approche programmatique dans l'ordre expérimental : elle oscille entre un repérage philosophique de l'universel humain et l'ordonnement (sinon l'inventaire) des procédures inhérentes aux différentes formations sociales. (1992; 63)

In historical and institutional terms, this suggests that the goings-on of technics--or the essence of audio-visual technique--escaped being reduced to the univocal and

⁶ F. Jameson argues in these terms in order to qualify the postmodern moment of critique in the preface to J.F. Lyotard's *Postmodern Condition* (1984; viii). R. Rorty, in a different context but similar vein of argument, also qualifies the modern model of knowledge under the Enlightenment in these terms in Chapter 1, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979).

programmatically purposes of a definitive methodological discipline of visual anthropology but instead pluralized its practices. As a praxis, it would seem that audio-visual technique inevitably surpassed its subjects (intentions of filmmakers and anthropologists), eluded its subjectification (neo-colonial practices of ethnography, industrial expansion of Third-World exploitation and de-realization of other peoples), and escaped its instrumentation (filmic apparatus of coverage and scientific classification). What is the major implication of this triple movement of surpassing, eluding and escaping ? That the practice of audio-visual technique upset the “set-up” of the image of alterity by allowing the question of the Other⁷ to intervene constantly in the problematic thinking of subjectivity and cultural difference.

This is the direction Piault’s thinking takes, as he qualifies the succeeding generations of visual anthropology and experimental ethnography from the 1950’s – 1970’s; Leroi-Gourhan (cine-notes) Jean Rouch (cine-transe), Mario Ruspoli (cinema-direct), and John Marshall (first-person cinema). Each time the experience and experimentation with audio-visual technique imposes upon the anthropologist-filmmaker the necessity of defining his position in the spatial-temporal field of observation and of asking the question : Is it the subject who defines the Other or does the Other define him/her/itself ? Or, on the contrary, is the definitive subject to be located in the relation between the one and the other as they mutually observe and interrogate one another (1992; 64) ? Piault suggests that this kind of reflexive questioning makes the institutionalization of visual anthropology problematic because the debates and contested methods never really progress but always refer back to an indefinite object of anthropological study : the Other and the subject. Yet this is also

⁷ This may serve as a preliminary distinction between alterity and the Other which are not to be considered mere differences in the degree of otherness. Whereas alterity does not unsecure the subject-securing frames of representation but is subject to being inserted and understood as a representable image within this framework, the Other would be that which fundamentally upsets or defies this kind of systemic figuration.

the promise of audio-visual technics, since it makes the discipline of anthropology all the more conscious of itself as a problematic configuration of questions.

En réalité, l'anthropologie visuelle renvoie à une situation qui est précisément ce qui devrait être l'objet de l'anthropologie : comment est-il possible de penser la relation de l'un avec l'autre, de l'unique avec le multiple, de la vie avec la substance, de l'individu avec la société, de la société avec la Nature ? (1992; 65)

It is in this final sense that the goings-on of audio-visual technics potentially undermines its determination in the Time of the World Picture, for it does not need to bring a totalizing World View of alterity into the frames of an image to be adjusted and managed in order to secure the position of the subject. According to Piault, "L'objectif n'est plus en réalité de décrire des faits et des objets mais de rendre pensable la possibilité de toute relation⁸ » (1992; 65). In this sense, the essence of audio-visual technique reveals another way of knowing and coming into contact with the world, one in which the potential of living substance and action is never fixed and objectified in the substrates of representational knowledge, but "productively embraced"⁹ in that movement of knowing by which the subject yields to the unknown, a movement in which a dynamic poetics of relation and immanent being becomes thinkable.

Imaging Reality

The "World Picture" materialized by modern technologies of G.P.S "give us" or confirm for us a World Viewed, a world the "reality" of which would seem for most to

⁸ I will be returning to this idea in the third part of the dissertation when discussing Edouard Glissant's ideas of the tout-monde, oralité, opacité, and the poétique de la relation.

⁹ Laura U. Marks (2000) discusses this possibility in these terms. Marks is able to sustain the critique of instrumental "subject-centered" knowledge while defending mimesis as a tactile epistemology by invoking the work of cultural critics like Benjamin, Auerbach, and Adorno; anthropologists like Michael Taussig; and phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty. Marks nuances the concept of mimesis as a responsive and metamorphic relationship between maker and made; a sensuous knowledge made possible by the co-presence of body and world; a productive embrace or contact between beings; a compassionate and immanent way of being in the world; a yielding and mirroring form of the knower in the unknown (p.138-145). This kind of theoretical groundwork allows her to show how cinema has the power to reconfigure rather than to shatter subjectivity.

be unquestioned. Yet what would happen if the “reality” of this world-view were suddenly revealed to be a “discursive construct,” the “archaeology” of which might be undertaken¹⁰? Not only would an extreme “legitimation” crisis be provoked about our ontological relationship to the economy of truth defining “reality”, but the immense sphere of possibility—might end up getting into the picture, distort the frames of the picture, and render the fictional and the imaginary “images of worlds,” in their multiple heterogeneity, coterminous with the “real” make-up of the world we seem to be so comfortable in naming as our own.

Something close to this has already happened in the world(s) viewed¹¹ by cinema. Youssef Ishaghpour’s essay, *Le cinéma*, opens up the possibility for discussing the permeability of these fictional and real world-views. Ishaghpour introduces a philosophical rhetoric in the historical description of film by discussing the magical-mimetic and mythical-symbolic powers exerted by the *reality of the image* and the *image of reality*. These powers of the image open the space for an epistemological inquiry regarding the way we know the world and the way in which the world discloses itself to us through audio-visual technique. Each topic or topos concerning the status of the image (image of reality/reality of the image) constitutes the persuasive ground for the discussion of the other perspective concerning the powers of the image (magical-mimetic or mythical-symbolic). Ishaghpour constantly holds a mirror to this profound duality in the image *as an image* and plays in the rhetorical space opened between the so-called “oppositions” of the fictional and the real in cinematography. In this way, he is able to move beyond the generic debate of documentary versus fiction, of purely

¹⁰ One might take the work of Foucault’s “panopticon” in *Surveiller et Punir* as a model for this type of investigation, for it is a paradigmatic “dispositif” of the microtechniques and institutional practices the knowing subject employs in the vision and visibility of the given world, in this case—of that which needs to be mastered/governed in a optical-political structure.

¹¹ This is a deliberate play on the title of Stanley Cavell’s “reflections on the ontology of film” in *The World Viewed* (1971).

objective versus subjective art, and also can avoid the traps of writing an historiographical history of cinema by opting for a more fundamentally philosophical, phenomenological, and anthropological history of film within the continuum of the history of images and image-making (cave paintings, mirrors, photographs, cinematography, video, digital technologies, virtual reality, etc.).

This is accomplished through an understanding of how the cinematographic image gradually revealed itself as an image and its relationship to our imagination of reality. For example, instead of seeking to erase an intrusive subject behind the cinematographic apparatus he seeks to reconfigure the problem of human presence: “Dès le cadrage, l’art s’affirme dans l’image de la réalité, et dans les dispositifs du réel, on retrouve la présence humaine et son activité. Le cinéma n’est pas la révélation de la nature grâce à l’objectif en absence de l’homme, mais une création » (1996; 87). This productive power to create worlds, magically real and fantastically unreal, does not situate the cinema on the side of the apparatus nor on the side of the director but in the material-phenomenal agency that passes through them.

A similar logic characterizes all of Ishaghpour's writings, in which the concern to revalorize the new modernity¹² of contemporary cinema takes the form of a

¹² Throughout his writings, Ishaghpour inscribes the historical development of the cinema and its success in the larger portrait of the transition from medieval culture to modernity in which the rise and fall of popular opera, for example, holds a privileged place in defining the role of the arts and tradition in relation to the national culture and historical consciousness of the modern state (See: *D'une image à l'autre: la nouvelle modernité du cinéma contemporain*, 1982; pp.13-80) . The term “new modernity”, while referring to a conception of film-history that may be outlined with the advent of particular films and directors in contemporary cinema from Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* onwards, designates more than a modern aesthetic or modernist style. In fact, Ishaghpour's term “new modernity” of cinema carefully avoids a periodic conception of the modernist styles of film-history like those promoted by Orr (1995; pp. 3-11). Rather than systematically insert films in periods, he always explores only a series of examples which are “possibilities of newness” emerging outside of the hegemony of the Hollywood Mode of Representation in the Age of Television. Their newness does not consist in getting beyond or outside of modernity, as the term “post-modern” might suggest and which Ishaghpour is careful to avoid, but rather the newness of these examples engages in a critical mode of reflection in which the modernity of cinema productively fights against some of its

philosophical discussion of the generalized disenchantment with the image in the age of television and new image-technologies. Three general topics emerge from an opposition with the themes of two major sources and discourses of this disenchantment, Guy Debord's discourse on the *Société du Spectacle* and Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacres et Simulation*. From the perspective of a critical and creative engagement with Ishaghpour's work, I have formulated these topics in the following terms :

- The new modernity of contemporary cinema recovers the magical and illusionist powers of the image as an image by transforming the ordinary materiality and phenomenality of the world in the metamorphic powers of the mirror-screen. This sets it apart from the discourse on the simulacrum (image of a reality without origin) for these magical-mythical powers are grounded and constituted by the participation of the image in an original, albeit transformed, relationship with the real. In the light of Heidegger's theory of the modern subject, Ishaghpour's concept of metamorphosis allows us to think about what founds our relationship to the image as an image, metamorphosis being that which, always underlying the subject (hypokeimenon), remains in the medium (milieu) of the image in a state of dynamic potentiality.
- The new modernity of contemporary cinema is critically aware of the way its images are constituted by the symbolic distance and separation with the world that it reproduces and recreates. This cinema does not privilege that form of knowing structured by re-presenting since it allows the identity-principles of its knowing (subject/object; object/image) to be transformed by this fundamental principle of difference and deferring; this sets it apart from the televisual proliferation of

own tendencies and myths. Instead of being a "negative" mode of critique this new modernity in contemporary cinema positively reclaims and revalorizes the specific, but repressed, powers and functions of the film medium (See: *Cinéma contemporain: de ce côté du miroir*, 1986; pp.7-13).

images, in which the pretension to abolish this distance and to cover things in their immediateness pre-defines the modes of the presence, visibility and occasioning in the image.

- The new modernity of contemporary cinema puts viewers in touch with the opacity of the non-representable; in the symbolic distance or breach between the world and the image it introduces the infinite possibilities of fiction in addition to the limit-experience of the confrontation with death. This principle is at odds with the pretension to transparency and the will to obscenity in the images transmitted in the society of the spectacle, an age of generalized information that only produces indifference.

By emphasizing the metamorphic powers, the symbolic distance and the opacity by which the cinematographic image is constituted, Ishaghpour moves film theory outside of the facile and sweeping gestures of "Marxist media-ideology" theory and "postmodern" critique. Creating new concepts and rhetorical arguments concerning the relationship between knowing and imaging reality, Ishaghpour nuances how the reproducibility of the image transforms what it means to know and also changes the conditions under which reality cedes itself to being known. For example, Ishaghpour celebrates the aura of the dark room of the cinema as a place for the emergence of a particular perception of the world, itself a cultural construction that makes possible a new phenomenology in the conditions of the spectator and the screen; for it is a modern collective return to the necessities of the primitive cave, to that retreat away from the empirical order of experience, to that ostentatious contact with the unreality of images, to that possibility of seeing without being seen, to that physical immobility and relaxation and that mental mobility and unrest, to that state of active and regressive perception that makes of the screen a hallucination between conscious wakefulness and half-awakened reverie; in short, that this dark room for the experience of an aesthetic

distortion and elevation might be the necessary condition for the possibility of gaining access to the visibility of the world, in order that the world might cede itself—give itself over to being seen, realistically, in the intense attention and suspension of all other interests, in those perceptive modes privileged by audio-visual techniques.

Such techniques remove the substance of the world and keep only its photogenic and aural traces, that magical mirror-like duplication of the world, immaterial and absent in one sense and materialized and present in another. Ishaghpour argues that spectators are not fascinated by the mirror-correspondence between the image and the object mirrored; rather, they are taken in by the “otherworldly, luminous, brilliant, unattainable” presence-in-absence in the image *as an image* (1996; 89). Ishaghpour reminds us, in André Bazin’s terms, that this mirror-image, a prefiguration of the magic of the screen-image, embalms time, mummifies presence organically, makes of it something more than the memory of change: for as we view film we witness the material co-existence of the past in the image projected in the present, a coterminous presencing of what was once before the camera. The cinematographic image is coterminous with the “thereness” of beings with this exception: that between the material world in itself and the quasi immaterial world viewed, the specter or phantasm of death imposes itself on viewers :

Tout image photographique est ainsi la trace d’une absence, de quelque chose qui a été et qui n’est plus. Entre souvenir et fantôme, le deuil et la nostalgie sont inhérents à la photographie...La photographie est la mort sans phrase, signification et rituel, sans promesse d’immortalité. (1996; 90)

The photographic units of cinema bring us the world of the dead to light but hides death by always showing « beings in action » or by attempting to exorcise time altogether as we participate and identify in its immortal wish : to allow the plastic art of reproducing appearance save Being from only ephemerally being in time and disappearing forever. Yet the cinema introduces another decisive difference in this deferral of time : instead

of being immortalized, this being is preserved in its ephemeral-ness and this passing or passage is also the life-force of the image.

Again, the cinema is related to the principles of life and death because of its connection to the archaic¹³ powers of the double and metamorphosis, but these terms are inseparably intertwined:

Ainsi, l'image double liée à la mort est investie par les pouvoirs de désir et de crainte qui font du double la métamorphose, la projection par le rêve, le mythe et la fiction, dans le monde magique qui vainc la mort. C'est à travers la duplicité profonde de l'image cinématographique que l'image reflet de Lumière s'est métamorphosée en l'image fantastique de Méliès. (92)

The entire heritage and history of cinema may be surmised in the profound duplicity of the image as an image, Lumière and Méliès being understood both as precursors but more importantly as emblems of the two poles of the image and of the duality of imaging-reality. This duplicity given by the cinematographic image then becomes an experience of a transforming encounter between the fidelity of a realistically reflected double-image and the virulence of the powers of human projection to meet the terrors and hopes of the passage of death. More, these magical and affective powers are the condition, the unconscious ground, for the possibility of having a "realistic" perception and they strengthen the powers of participation and identification: "L'image participe de la chose, le spectateur participe de la réalité sur l'écran, fasciné par sa puissance de suggestion totale et irrésistible, à cause de sa réalité. De là naît cette symbiose qui intègre le spectateur dans le flux du film et le flux du film dans le flux psychique du spectateur" (1996; 92). The "participation in" in the thing-ness of the world (image/thing::spectateur/screen) becomes the condition for the possibility of a reciprocal exchange, creating a metamorphic membrane of contact between the film and the viewer.

¹³ By archaic I mean primitive but also, more importantly, the law of the originating powers of images.

Such a symbiosis is heightened and intensified by the spiritual tenor and nostalgic tonality of Tarkovsky's cinematography. Commenting on his films, Ishaghpour remarks, "Chaque fois la *réalité* est métamorphosée par la temporalité d'un regard devenu vision" (1996; 75). This idea is extremely rich and will deserve more attention than can be given it in this section¹⁴. Suffice it to say that it crystallizes that dual relationship of the image of reality and the reality of the image: for in Tarkovsky's *Mirror*, reality is constantly re-imagining and re-imaging itself through those capable of stalking, collecting, drifting in reverie—its temporal traces: photos, repeated gestures, found footage of documentary newsreels, mirror images, ambient sounds, orchestral traces, and voice-overs of poetry. The image as an image may transcend the reality of that of which it is an image without being abstracted from it—for through this very materiality a different level of temporal, spatial and subjective-collective mediation is made thinkable and possible. Such an observation frees us from seeing the cinema in the context of representation, or in the framework of semiology, for we are no longer interested in the adequate or true correspondence to the original referent or in the authentic identity of the signified. Images that reveal a mirror-world present in absence bring forth a world liberated from standing-for, from signifying, from re-presenting. Watching *Mirror*, and perhaps all films as films, the temporality of our gaze may be changed into vision when the materiality and phenomenality of world and the subject undergoes a metamorphic change.

This perspective also allows Ishaghpour to articulate a modern theory of the subject in which the theory of the image holds a special place. For the subject, Ishaghpour suggest, does not pre-exist the images of the world, setting the world in its place and framing it in its pictoriality. Instead, audio-visual technique reveals how the subject is constituted by the image-fluxes that promise a contact with a world at once more direct

¹⁴ I address this idea more thoroughly in Chapter 3, Part II.

as the distance disappears between the image and the thing in itself, and yet more spectacular, as that insurmountable distance multiplies images infinitely. The world is not pictured as an object in order to secure the place of the subject but the subject is unsecured and displaced, stretched across the surface of the world and dissolved in its traces, constituted as one privileged site of image-flux among others¹⁵.

Yet in order for this magical and mythical contact and projection to be made possible, the "reality of the image" must be guaranteed, not by the precarious place of the subject, but by the subject's relationship to the "image of reality." This brings Ishaghpour to reconsider the historical emergence of theoreticians like Vertov and Bazin, contemporaries of the rise of the Socialist Machine and of Italian Neo-Realism respectively; both men having institutionalized cinematic practices and approaches to this "society of the spectacle" in an age seeking to defend an ontological connection in cinema, privileging that relation between the image and the reality of which it is an image, a "revelation of reality" made possible by the thaumaturgical virtues of the camera—virtues that liberate individuals to a utopian vision of the world because objectively reproduced.

Accepting the importance of these ideas concerning the revelation of reality, Ishaghpour decides to revalorize them in terms of the "myth of total cinema," not only because they still project something of the utopian promise of cinema but also because they allow an ontological and epistemological questioning concerning technology to take place. However, in order to open free relationships to the Bazin's conception of magical-mimetic property or ontological connection to the photographic image, Ishaghpour must nuance the conception of the "reality of the image," themselves

¹⁵ This argument is not explicitly argued by Ishaghpour but may be traced, in the implications it raises, to Henri Bergson's treatment of the subject and the image, in the first chapter of *Matière et mémoire*. Gilles Deleuze's commentary on this chapter of Bergson's work (*Bergsonism*, 1991) demonstrates how several of the premises outline a radically different philosophy of the subject.

reformulations of the notions of the "image of reality". By critically engaging with his text, I would like to end my discussion of Ishaghpour's text by formulating the five following paradoxes regarding the potential for "imaging reality":

1) While producing new mythical relations to the world through the metamorphic-double powers of the image, in which the frame is no longer merely a window onto the world but a mirror of mental projections and an off-scene space of pure fictional potential, the cinematographic image is nonetheless constituted by the resistance of the material inscribed in it, the unavoidable participation and emanation of the faces, colors, lights, and rhythms inscribed in it. This would explain the attraction of the star-system, for even though we may be fascinated by Greta Garbo in the infinite but only partial metamorphosis of her off-screen life, her life as actress in a role and her life as a star, we are nonetheless always enamoured by the faithful materiality of her face.

2) While the cinematographic image reveals the reality of the world of which it is an image before any intention, abstraction or enunciation, giving us an image of a world that in our absence we could not know nor see, this image does not reveal the presence that we might have expected but confronts us with the spectre of death, a spectre that haunts the practice of audio-visual technique. The photographer in Antonioni's *Blow-up*, in the successive magnifications of an image taken by chance, would seem to stretch the ontological materiality and presence of the image to its limits as it discloses the apparition of a corpse; every photograph as a photograph would seem to be founded by this possibility of finding an original scene of crime and death.

3) Historically, the ideas behind the ontological realism of cinema are founded on a facile illusion about the nature of Truth, for this notion of Truth is nothing else than an order of certainty confirmed by the belief in the principle of visible-verisimilitude. In this respect, it is worth considering how the tradition of "realist" films (from Flaherty to Kiarostami) are themselves the result of an extreme intention and violence to manifest

the real in the absence of man, ironically observing a sublime natural world exempt from the confrontation with a world contaminated by modernization. However documentary the approach, this tradition of film is also constituted by its distance with the "real" world of nature it reproduces in its audio-visual traces; this is because it can never coincide with an image of nature which is not always already touched by its reproduction in technology.

4) While we may have been educated by the modernist crisis, in which the image of reality was contested as a technological artifice (calling into question the so-called "neutrality and objectivity" of the apparatus since it is itself founded upon the Western conception of the laws of perspective in which subjectivity is at the heart of representation, contesting the status of the "realist" narration and the sutures of an "invisible" montage, etc.), the cinema nevertheless constantly exposes us to that which has never been seen before, making visible the unpredictable, affirming itself as a medium in which a revelation of the unexpected may take place at any instant. This promise of cinema also exposes it to its potential demise, to becoming something closer and closer to the direct and obscene treatment of the image that may continuously be played "live" in televisual psychodramas.

5) The final paradox is articulated by resuming the problem around which Wim Wenders' film, *Lisbonne Story*, is articulated. In order to conserve the utopian myth of total cinema for posterity, in order to assure the belief in the world recreated in the image of cinema, in order to preserve the memory of the archaic powers of the cinematographic image and resist the commodification of these powers in film-gadgets and film-trash, nobody must film the film, nor anyone see the film, and the film must be stocked in the ruined cinema of Paris. Only on this condition can this myth be saved, only under these circumstances can the celluloid-magic powers of the modernity of contemporary cinema be re-invented.

Imaging Time

This life-world of film has a cosmic and temporal character worth qualifying in relation to the question concerning technology, a cosmicity and a temporality which is so apparent in Tarkovsky's relationship to the cinematographic image as to be overwhelming. Walter Benjamin's fragment, "To the Planetarium" in *One-Way Street*, sketches out the stakes of the question concerning technology with impressive clarity¹⁶. Benjamin's statement begins in a portentous but ironic gesture. The wisdom of antiquity, inscribed in a fragment and delivered by a man who can stand on only one leg, reveals that the connection or experience of absorption between "anthropos" and "cosmos" has been irrecoverably lost.

Benjamin explains that the waning of this experience is coterminous with the flowering of the science of astronomy in the modern age : "Kepler, Copernicus, and Tycho Brahe were certainly not driven by scientific impulses alone. All the same, the exclusive emphasis on an optical connection to the universe, to which astronomy very quickly led, contained a portent of what was to come¹⁷". One would suppose that Benjamin is referring here to the essence of technics; for the goings-on of telescopic technologies, even as they refined the powers of the astrolab by exclusively delimiting the human experience of the cosmos to an extension of optical measurement, inevitably dissolved a certain "physis" and portended a certain disaster. This ancient "physis" is what Benjamin calls the ecstatic trance : "For it is in this experience alone that we gain certain knowledge of what is nearest to us and what is remotest to us, and never of one without the other" (1986; 93).

¹⁶ Benjamin's ideas, while never referring to Heidegger's arguments or essays, may be read in the light of Heidegger's questing after technics.

¹⁷ This and the following citations from "To the Planetarium" are taken from the excerpted edition of « *One-Way Street* », found in the collection of Benjamin's critical writings in *Reflections*, 1986; pp.92-94.

The knowledge of the remote and the far, very close to the movement Heidegger describes in the “stellen” of technics, rather than securing the centrality of the subject takes the subject outside of a stable positioning (ec-stasis) into a trance that Benjamin qualifies as fundamentally communal. Benjamin correlates the cosmic shocks of World War I to the catastrophic recovery or inevitable return of the ecstatic trance in terms of warning and sacrifice :

It is the dangerous error of modern men to regard this experience [the ecstatic trance] as unimportant and avoidable, and to consign it to the individual as the poetic rapture of starry nights. It is not : its hour strikes again and again, and then neither nations nor generations can escape it, as was made terribly clear by the last war, which was an attempt at a new and unprecedented commingling with the cosmic powers. Human multitudes, gases, electrical forces were hurled into the open country, high-frequency currents coursed through the landscape, new constellations rose in the sky, aerial space and ocean depths thundered with propellers, and everywhere sacrificial shafts were dug in Mother Earth. This immense wooing of the cosmos was enacted for the first time on a planetary scale, that is, in the spirit of technology. (1986; 93)

Such an immense and planetary scale of technological-ecstasy hurls human multitudes just as it does electrical currents, the masses of generations and nations of people being themselves organized and subjectified by a movement that propels them through sky, ocean and earth. As Benjamin explains, “technology is not the mastery of nature” as the imperialists would teach. Just as education is “above all the indispensable ordering of the relationship between generations and therefore mastery, if we are to use this term, of that relationship and not of children,” so too “technology is not the mastery of nature but of the relationship between nature and man.” Here again we may see how the mastery of place or emplacement is undermined fundamentally because the subject is hurled out of this securing and regulating relationship to the natural world. Rather than un-secure the place of the subject, however, this movement of un-securing demands an ever more furious and imperial control which leads to a political “bloodbath” of class-war instead of leading to an act of consummation in which the

cosmic powers are experienced in the “bridal bed” of the communal ecstasy of technology.

After picturing this immense vision and failed promise, Benjamin returns to qualify the meaning of nature, physis and technology. The essence of technology, or the goings-on of technics, belongs to the ordering of a physis much greater than the “tiny fragment of nature that we are accustomed to calling Nature,” a physis “through which mankind’s contact with the cosmos takes a new and different form from that which it had in nations and families.” The fundamental units of collective human existence are shattered, dislocated and annihilated in this “paroxysm of genuine cosmic experience.”

The implication is that this cosmic-technological paroxysm, as it shatters the traditional social organization of humans in families and nations, disturbs a profound sense of ontology, of the essentiality or inevitability of being and belonging by virtue of the family or of the nation, or what may be called national/familial¹⁸ ontology¹⁹. Benjamin implies that the history of technics indicates how the human species (men) recognize through technology their capacity as a species to mutate into different “kinds” (mankind). As an example of this mutation Benjamin declares:

One need recall only the experience of the velocities by virtue of which mankind is now preparing to embark on incalculable journeys into the interior of time, to encounter there rhythms from which the sick shall draw strength as they did earlier on high mountains or at Southern Seas. Luna parks are the prefiguration of sanatoria. (1978; 94)

¹⁸ Benedict Anderson prefaces his critical theory of *Imagined Communities* (Verso, 1992) by discussing the failure of Marxist analysis to take into account the “*Origins and the Spread of Nationalism*” and argues that the study of Nationalism should integrate the anthropological notions of the structure of kinship and the organization of families.

¹⁹ Homi Bhabha proposes this kind of reading of Benjamin, via another reading--against the grain of Derrida’s affirmations (*Spectres of Marx*, 1994) concerning the transnational power of “tele-technic media apparatuses” of communication, in his introductory essay “Arrivals and Departures” to the anthology edited by Hamid Naficy, *Home, Exile, Homeland: Film, Media, and the Politics of Place*, 1999, p.viii)

Three things may be emphasized from this statement. First, the physis organized by the goings-on of technology transforms or mutates human experience; neither “nature” nor “mankind” can be thought outside an immanent relationship to the transformations brought about by technology. Second, this experience of transformation, while potentially disastrous, is also potential curative, it holds out a saving power. Third, the strength of the saving power is already encountered outside of place and inside of time, outside of the repose of high-mountains or the low-seas of the far away natural world and into the experience of “velocities by which man is preparing to embark on incalculable journeys into the interior of time, to encounter there rhythms from which the sick shall draw strength.” The lunaparks prefigure the preparation of such incalculable journeys. I would like to suggest that the powers of the cinema render the preparation of such journeys even more figurable—for the time-travel made possible by cinema is all the more palpably real and magically suggestive as it unsecures our place before and hold upon the world, by suspending us through the time of images into the milieu or middle of the world.

As Benjamin has intimated in his celebrated essay on “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” the forces of distraction and shock located in the cinema and in the processes of mass-reproducibility generally, have transformed the conventional “presence” of the human body, its integral “hereness and togetherness” and its capacity for interior concentration, voluntary memory, and organized self-consciousness. The presence of the body is “dis-integrated” in distraction and shock and the general category of subjectivity shattered and reconfigured. This dis-integration is due not only to the forces of an “optical unconscious” and the intervention of “involuntary and non-human” memory in the image but also to the tremendous experience of velocities released by the image. Benjamin claims that the velocities released by the images of modern film have also contributed to the shattering

of the public spaces in which the body defined itself, the spaces of the “prison-world” of modern life, its factories, taverns, railroad stations, streets and offices which were explosively “burst asunder” by the rhythm of film, that “dynamite of the tenth of a second, so that now, in the midst of far-flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go traveling” (1968; 236).

If this is what happens to the body and to subjectivity then we are certainly qualified in asking, with Tarkovsky: “Why do people go to the cinema ? What takes them into a darkened room where, for two hours, they watch the play of shadows on a sheet ? (1986; 63). He answers this question finally by remarking, “...I think that what a person normally goes to the cinema for is *time*; for time lost or spent or not yet had. He goes there for living experience; for cinema, like no other art, widens, enhances and concentrates a person’s experience—and not only enhances it but makes it longer, significantly longer” (69). His answer betrays a characteristic ambivalence which goes directly to the heart of Benjamin’s theory concerning the experience constituted by the technology of film, an ambivalence which will help to situate the affiliation of Tarkovsky’s and Benjamin’s insights and also the opposing directions their thinking takes.

To begin with, in the space between the question and the answer, Tarkovsky is moved to deplore the “search for mere entertainment.” Then after denouncing the orientation of exploitation in the spectacle-culture of television and cinema, he goes on to affirm the value of the “essential principles of cinema” which have to do with the “human need to master and to know the world” (1986; 63). This remark is repeated at another point in his argument when the question of the place of cinema in the history or art is raised. Tarkovsky immediately responds by tracing this “vital need for knowledge” from the Italian Renaissance artists of the Quattrocento to the technical innovation of the twentieth century, claiming that the art-form of cinema, “was the

instrument which humanity had to have in order to increase its mastery over the real world" (1986; 82). Clearly, the instrumental and "anthropological-humanist" conception of the audio-visual technique frames the history of the cinema in the epistemological horizon of Art History, the art of the cinema being the inheritor and cultivator of unbroken traditions of optics and aesthetic forms of art that have been progressively increasing knowledge as mastery of the world.

If we read against the grain of this tendency in Tarkovsky's writings, we will notice that this critical gesture to secure the subjectivity of cinema or "to subjectify cinema in the age of the world-picture" seems to be evoked every time Tarkovsky comes close to exploring the definitive trait of film-making and film-viewing experience: the emergence of new forms of time consciousness in the un-securing moment of subjectivity.

Indeed, before making *Mirror*, Tarkovsky portends in his journal of reflections: "For many years I have been tormented by the certainty that the most extraordinary discoveries await us in the sphere of Time. We know less about time than about anything else. (Tarkovsky, Journal "Time within Time" [February 15, 1972] 1994; 53). *Mirror* is about such tormented certainties and extraordinary discoveries, recording the coming to consciousness of a change in the universe created by the cinema, a change in the conception and experience of time. This is what really astounds audiences and turns them into passionate admirers of films like *Mirror* according to Tarkovsky, for the development of this cinematic technology has "revealed hitherto unexplored areas of reality" (1986; 83-84). Unexplored, not because this technology renders things more precise or visible. As Benjamin claims, the technical possibilities of snap-shots, close-ups, actually "reveal entirely new structural formations of the subject"; and within familiar qualities of movement, slow motion images reveal entirely unknown qualities of movement, which far from looking like retarded rapid movements, give the effect of

singularly gliding, floating, supernatural motions" (Benjamin, citing Rudolf Arnheim, 1968; 236).

Cinema-goers, searching for lost time, and drifting--encountering new forms of time. At three separate moments in the argument of *Sculpting in Time* , Tarkovsky does allow himself room to comment upon the modern spectator's need and response for "time lost or spent, or not-yet had" (p.63; pp.82-83; p.179). Each time Tarkovsky implicitly invokes the redemptive power of the cinema as that which compels cinema-goers to compensate for the gaps of modern experience:

As he buys his ticket, it's as if the cinema-goer were seeking to make up for the gaps in his own experience, throwing himself into a search for 'lost time". In other words he seeks to fill that spiritual vacuum which has formed as a result of the specific conditions of modern existence: constant activity, curtailment of human contact, and the materialist bent of modern education. (1986; 82-83)

Tarkovsky makes it clear that the degree to which this "lost-time" is restored and restorative depends a great deal on the dimension of humanity and spirituality in the director who then vicariously shares it, condenses it, and sculpts it in the uncompromisingly affective images of time printed on film (1986; 179). While this redemptive theory of time-compensation in cinema seems to be argued consistently, it is fundamentally at odds with Tarkovsky's materialist conception of "rhythm and film-life" as I will argue in the following chapters. Although this theory of time-compensation/redemption seems to be affiliated with Benjamin's conception of the "saving power" of technology from which the "sick may draw strength," it occludes the problem of the ontological unmooring of subjectivity in time.

The "search for time lost, spent, or not yet had," while motivated by the critical impulse to recover from an alienated form of modern subjectivity, only accentuates the crisis of losing, spending and not-yet having time. Even Tarkovsky is finally forced to admit that the rhythms of the time-machine of cinema undeniably belong to the rhythms of modern life and their inevitable "time deficiency." It is a commonplace to say that

we are “overwhelmed” by the technological pace of modern life, not only because we cannot master its accelerations but also because it makes us anxious for having more time. Even with all of the time-saving machines of modern life we never seem to have saved enough time. These machines also produce the desire to make up for even more time lost and we are attracted, and made more anxious, by the possibility of managing and planning the time we do have in order to make room for spending it elsewhere—like the leisure time spent going to the cinema. This paradoxical relationship to the production and consumption of time even organizes the experience of the body. In Marxist terms, our body—normally the measure of time, gets subordinated to technology and the industrial forces of labor in order to make the production of capital more time-efficient; conversely film, however much it belongs to these processes of mass-production in the industry of cinema, seems to give at least the promise of temporal experience back to the body. As a medium embodying uncompromisingly affective images of time, film expands, contracts, accelerates and compresses our own sense of the measure and the passage of time .

Yet this sense of being “in time” is also determined by another sense that we are always “out of time” even in the halls of the cinema, for the attempt to make-up for time-lost is itself already determined by the position of always spending-time in order to gain it again. Moreover, this loss of the present, which is felt as nostalgia for what already was and can never return again, paradoxically produces another level of nostalgia for something that remains in a state of anticipated desire in a future endlessly deferred, a nostalgia for that which is not yet had. Paradoxically then, the cinema “produces nostalgia” even as it holds out the promise of recovering from the “spiritual vacuum” of modern conditions—conditions that have exacerbated the sense of not

having a present to hold onto²⁰. The cinema shows us, renders visible, and viscerally attractive the nature of inserting oneself in passing time: we see passing time split or shatter into an “event” that is simultaneously constituted by the distinct and incommensurable moments of the present of the past, the present of the present, and the present of the future. In other words, we are somewhat dispossessed of our being “present” to our perception, memory and experience because we are inserted and disjoined, even in the passing present, into the continuous clash of an infinite future and past.

This insertion and dislocation in the passing-splitting of the present, however, is mediated by the virtual-actual economy of the image. In Bergsonian terms, Tarkovsky’s films—especially *Mirror*, explore and embody this “passing” of time as a kind of mobile mirror in which perception and recollection endlessly pass into one another in the medium or milieu of the image. The search for “lost time” accomplishes in audio-visual technique what Proust’s stereoscopic economy of “writing remembrance” accomplishes in *À la recherche du temps perdu* : another temporal experience of the phases of experience—brought to life by the dynamic materiality of

²⁰ In his very suggestive essay, “Consumption, Duration, and History” (In *Modernity at Large*), Arjun Appadurai traces the production of nostalgia to consumer culture and the forces of fashion and mass merchandising in the transnational public sphere. The production of *ersatz* nostalgia and the production of *patina* on commodities produces a desire in consumers for memories that they, or their social class, have lost. The production of “armchair nostalgia” takes this logic of the loss of the present to a new level : « Rather than expecting the consumer to supply memories while the merchandiser supplies the lubricant of nostalgia, now the viewer need only bring the faculty of nostalgia to an image that will supply the memory of a loss he or she has never suffered » (1996; p.78). This perspective on the “commodification of time” while related mostly to the advertising and publicity of the fashion-world could be extended to all practices and modes of production of nostalgia in the cinema—even those that claim to be more “spiritual”; the originality of this perspective does not lie in the Marxist critique of consumer culture but in the compelling observation that the production and consumption of time as a commodity, in whatever form, has become a social practice of the imagination—a political act of identification with the global flows of capital by which people are drawn into the work of fantasy.

memory and forgetting. Lost-time can never be re-possessed; the phases of time can only be re-run and re-played in other mediations.

For these reasons, what Tarkovsky calls a “time-deficiency” is also a possibility for a different mode of being and belonging in time and, also, out of time. To be “out of time²¹” implies an acute lack of time and this produces the desire to measure, compress and accelerate the moments that we are in time; however, to be “out of time” also implies an intense yearning for suspension, for timeless drift, for remaining on the outside of time—for remaining motionless. This patience, paralysis, or suspension of judgment may itself engender a new ability to live in the phases of time; when boredom or mild suffering exposes us to the immediacy or “drift²²” of time and the sense of our own mortality is brought to the fore, the expansion or contraction of temporal experience allows something new to emerge—a moment of contact with otherness, or perhaps, words with which to speak.

Finally, to be “out of time” is to let oneself experience the visceral lure of the end of time, to allow the temporal extension and concentration of the viewing experience to open onto the explosive passage of catastrophe itself, to access—in the accelerated or slowed down duration of an image of disappearance--the epoch-ending moment of disaster. In *Mirror*, this lure of accessing the end of time is presented in the most banal and creative ways, engendering a series of aural and visual correspondences between the “vaporous bodies” materialized on screen. For example, we witness the passing of the extraordinary in even the most domestic of shots, in the obsessive attention given to

²¹For the thoughts animating this paragraph I am grateful to Laura U. Marks for sharing her draft-versions of programme-notes for the special program “Out of Time” featuring works of experimental video and film which she co-curated with Robin Curtis at the 2001 Oberhausen Short Film Festival.

²² « Drift », or the « inability to locate a stable sense of the present » is an epistemological concept of the modernity of experience articulated by Leo Charney in *Empty Moments : Cinema, Modernity, and Drift*. Durham and London : Duke University Press, 1998. Charney suggestively identifies “drift” with the constellation of problems and possibilities presented by twentieth-century philosophy, physics, and modernist arts.

recording a humid ring of vapor left by a cup of tea which gradually vanishes into a wave of heat, a ring of vapor which before disappearing extends itself into the awesome silence following the “imploding” sound of a chorus of heightened voices; this ring of vapor, its “implosive disappearance,” reverberates later and sets the tonality for the vision of the found documentary footage, inserted into the diegetic environment of the film, which records the “explosive appearance” of the building pressures of a nuclear mushroom cloud.

As I will be arguing in the second part of the dissertation, *Mirror* does not record this “coming to consciousness” of a change in the universe and in the experience of time by means of a mere projection of apocalyptic endings nor by means of prophecies of the end of history. In favor of this closing of consciousness this exemplary film relays to us, through the velocities of modern mass events, the rhythms of the life-world of experience, and the fictions of apocalypse, a visible and mysterious image of ourselves as mutants²³—of the way we inhabit and are inhabited by conscious and unconscious forces of time and powers of memory and forgetting.

Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, from this perspective, incarnates one of the cinema’s ultimate fantasies about its rhythmic potential for the middle-passage of time-travel. The subject, endlessly being stripped of the capacity to hold or to fix time, must relinquish this impulse to confer continuity upon his existence by inserting himself within the structure of homogeneous, empty time. In Heideggerian terms, even Nature and History become “un-secured” from this structure of time, for the calculable

²³ As Schefer suggests : « Le cinéma, en le sachant très peu (attentif pour le mieux à ses singularités formelles), a créé un autre monde. Ni le cinéma ni le roman ne sont pour cela moribonds ou en crise. Nous en percevons pour l’instant un effet de retour dans une espèce de conscience d’univers : et cet effet de retour dû à la multiplication d’images de toutes sortes est de cet ordre : nous percevons comme une chose notre *qualité* de mutants historiques, notre *qualité d’espèce*. L’image nous a montré que nous sommes une espèce *mutante*. Nous sommes, depuis la première image projetée, l’impossibilité réelle des hommes-images; ils se sont depuis lors multipliés, ils occupent la surface du monde (1997; 21).

predicatability of Nature's future phase of time, and the *rational verifiability* of the past phase of time given by Historiography can no longer be "set in place" (1977; p.127) . Instead of frantically attempting to secure the con-temporal setting of the subject in the representational structure of the modern scientific view of Nature and History, the subject must simply *pass time* in time's multiple heterogeneity. The subject would experience time as the body must experience its own generation and corruption and *become* that "middleness" or medium/milieu through which time passes and makes its passage. Finally, by passing time in the furrows, gaps, and drifting suspensions of these temporal traces, the subject would become both a witness and an assembler of these traces, a time-passer.

Sylviane Agacinski has made a compelling argument in favor of this conception of the time-passer or "passeur du temps" when discussing the importance of Benjamin's figure of the "passeur" in the "Book of Passages" which is *The Arcades Project*, a figure that belongs both to the *flâneur* and the *ferryman*; to the *flâneur* because it is a gratuitous way of getting lost and an inefficient way of losing time, and to the *ferryman* because it is a way of taking passengers across different shores of time :

Notre *passeur du temps* évoque ces deux significations: il ouvre au temps sans essayer de le maîtriser, il est disponible pour faire passer, pour ménager un passage d'un temps à l'autre en se laissant solliciter par les traces du passé dans la ville, traces écrites des livres. Il est *temoin*, observateur passif, mais sans lequel le temps ne serait pas. En tant qu'il est à la fois passif et actif, le passeur est aussi celui *par qui* quelque chose se passe, lui-même « lieu » de passage. Il est enfin l'impossible contemporain de lui-même ou de *son temps*, habitant une époque où chacun fait l'expérience aiguë du passage. (2000; pp.57-58)

In the halls of cinema the time-passer is a contemplative observer who loses time in the middle of a world that materially passes at variable speeds, and this experience of no longer having a time to himself/herself is also the experience of the loss or the absence of an absolute temporality. This is the final, and most important, meaning of the "time deficiency."

Perhaps this is why Tarkovsky's films not only enhance, widen, and concentrate the experience of time, but that they also makes the passage of time "significantly longer." Even in films like *Mirror* the 106 minutes of the "actual chronometric time" of film unrolling before spectators eyes seems to outstretch the normal experience of this interval or period of time because the multiple registers of rhythmic duration inscribed in the material passage of the film pull them hypnotically out of and into the difference of co-existing temporalities, one image after another. This also explains the strange pleasure and difficulty the spectator faces when leaving the projection of Tarkovsky's films, for he/she must also "lose the temporalities" of the film to which his/her thought is already intimately tied and bound in order to "wake up" from that ostentatious contact with the half-awakened state of reverie induced by the film's rhythms. For a "heady" moment, the spectator as time-passer remains suspended between the different orders of temporal experience, this experience never being reducible to one or the other shore but rather in the gulf that opens "in-between" each.

This suspension of interest before, during or after the film does not render the time-passer passively expectant and mute but opens up an attention to this gulf "in between" temporalities, creating an availability to becoming "charged with time" (Agacinski, 2000; 63). No longer having the time of one's own, no longer being able to engage oneself in the temporality of an action, this negative suspension means that the time-passer has lost time in order to be able to open himself/herself to the temporal singularity of events, to bear witness to the rhythms of these traces, and to be available to becoming transformed by the radical alterity of these traces.

The figure of the time-passer is the emblem of this cosmic-technological paroxysm encountered in the rhythms of film, exposing humans to another mode of being and belonging in time, an "experience of the velocities by virtue of which" the mutating

species of mankind “is now preparing to embark on incalculable journeys” (*One-Way Street*, 1986; 93).

Chapter 2: Interrogating Modernity through Haiku-Technics¹

When extending Heidegger's questioning concerning technology to the question concerning audio-visual technique, how does one begin to put into question the instrumental conception of technics and explore another, non-instrumental relationship? Heidegger indicates a way by suggesting that technics belongs to poesis, the shaping and making activity of poetry. In the following sections, I will be arguing that Tarkovsky is questing after a non-instrumental relationship to cinematography through his reflections on haiku poetry and that this questing comes to light in his practice of audio-visual technique. For this reason, haiku is not to be understood in relation to the traditional literary conventions of Japanese verse, nor to questions of formal poetics. Before its determination in conventions of verse, haiku is above all a practice of writing, a technique of language, related to a specific kind of knowing. For Tarkovsky this practice, technique, and form of knowing exemplified by haiku allows him to explore a relationship to the medium of film which is always carefully articulated within the constellation of concepts of language, image, and life.

Cinema and Ideogram

Créer n'est pas déformer ou inventer des personnes et des choses. C'est nouer entre des personnes et des choses qui existent, et telles qu'elles existent, des rapports nouveaux (Bresson, 1975, p.27).

Robert Bresson's *Notes sur le cinématographe* reads like a well-thumbed, pocket-sized book of haiku: short notes of aphoristic wisdom and austere simplicity that speak less

¹ The following chapter is a direct continuation of an article published initially under the title, « Theoretical Apparitions of Haiku: An Intermedial Interrogation of Modernity » *CiNéMAS*, Vol 10; nos.2-3, printemps, 2000, pp. 185-203, and altered as a conference, « L'intermédialité du haiku: au delà de l'écriture de vers, vers une autre pratique, technique et connaissance » given at a round-table seminar at the CRI (*Centre de Recherche sur l'intermédialité*, Université de Montréal, le 21 novembre, 2000).

of aesthetic principles than of a way of being between the world and audio-visual technique. This duality, of aesthetic principle versus a way of being-between, suggested by different ways of practicing haiku poetry as audio-visual technique, may be more richly explored by pitting Tarkovsky's ideas against film-director and theoretician, Sergei Eisenstein. Eisenstein, in the article « The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram, » proposes a dialectical understanding of film form in the theory of montage, a theory that might prepare the way for an intellectual cinematography. Montage theory is developed by constant analogy to the haiku, «[...] the most laconic form of poetry...hieroglyphs transposed into phrases...montage phrases. Shot lists» (1957, p.92) . : « The simple combination of two or three details of a material kind yields a perfectly finished representation of another kind—psychological » (p.93). This psycho-genesis of meaning and abstraction is achieved by means of a chain of signaletic material, a mise-en-scène of image-conflicts : conflicts between a series of graphic distortions, scales, volumes, masses, depths, lights, and durations. Shots are conceived as montage cells in the total make-up of film form ; they are always subordinated to a tertiary organization of movement, action, and narration.

This ideogrammic principle echoes Ezra Pound's Imagist and Vorticist manifestos before WWI (1908-1914), preoccupied with forging the principles that might meet the future capacities of a dynamic "imaging" of ideas, a kinetic poetry diagramming the dynamic forms of Nature, an ideogrammic Image². Pound explained the principle of the Image as a kind of speech in itself, beyond the ornamental or formulated use of speech, a direct treatment of things. However, the image is not simply concrete but phenomenological : it is "[...] that which presents an intellectual and emotional

² Reed Way Dasenbrock distinguishes this early poetics of the parataxis of concrete images from Pound's more generalized and epic poetics informing *The Cantos* in the 1930's through an "the ideogrammic method." "The Cantos in the Context of Vorticism," from *The Literary Vorticism of Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis*. (Baltimore : Johns Hopkins UP, 1985, p.205)

complex in an instant of time ” (Pound, 1970 [1913], p.4). Nor is the one-image poem simply visual but generates a kind of paratactic superposition, as in the following poem “In a Station at the Metro.”

The apparition of these faces in the crowd ;

Petals on a wet, black bough. (Pound, 1957 [1913], p.35)

Such a superposition is heard as the semantic double of the word “ apparition, ” meaning both flashing appearance and ghostly flash, suggesting the pallid/pure double of commuter faces and fallen petals ; it is also felt as the juxtaposition of the acceleration and the solitude of modern urban experience to the mythical repose of the Oriental garden. It captures and combines “[...] the essentiality of the conceptual image with the definiteness of the perceptual image[...].” (Schneidau, 1969 , p.45).

Like Pound, Eisenstein thinks of film-form in these quasi-Hegelian terms, the poetics of images in montage holding the power to arrest and to synthesize conceptual and perceptual images³. Yet the will to systematize a dialectic of strips and cuttings, to found all film phenomena according to the blocking and the building of montage, and to produce psychological abstractions out of the empirical clips and collisions of images, while in conformity with the ideogrammic principle, is radically at odds with the less willful spirit of haiku poetry. This perhaps forms the central irony of Eisenstein’s *Film Form*, that the immense, architectural edifice of film montage would be imagined in the fugitive atmosphere of the haiku idiom. For haiku is on the side of movement, becoming and multiplicity, not formal, abstract and fixed blocks of univocal Being.

³ The term « quasi-Hegelian » is used here in order to make a comparison, however facile, between the Hegel’s systematic conceptions of History and Spirit and Eisenstein’s theory of film-form. Although both thinkers accord a privileged place to movement itself, movement is only made intelligible under a logic of synthetic propositions.

Tarkovsky challenges the formalist idea of the haiku idiom as ideogrammic montage by discussing haiku as a poetic practice of audio-visual technique. The broader implications of this theoretical shift are enormous, for this would not merely question the ideogrammic aesthetic but would put into question the institutional framework of film studies imagined by Eisenstein, particularly insofar as its principles are grounded in and constituted by the subject-centered epistemology of modernity. In this instance, Eisenstein's ideogrammic principle of montage reveals what Heidegger has called the culminating trait of Western metaphysics, the discursive organization of the instrumental representation of technology⁴: the means of framing, empowering and engendering complete control over the reproduction, ordering and emplacement of the object-world-as-picture for a governing subject (artist, party, State).

Andrey Tarkovsky's *Sculpting in Time* (1986) offers one of the most illuminating critiques of Eisenstein's theory of the haiku idiom and his argument may be followed in the light of Heidegger's questioning. Although Tarkovsky constantly re-inscribes his critique of Eisenstein's montage as a foil to his own search for the aesthetic specificity of cinematography, his experience may be characterized as a « questing after technics.⁵ » His film-theory and film-practice does not seek a cognitive-informational definition for film-poetics or film-aesthetics; rather, moving like techné itself, this theory and this practice open a free relationship to the matter at hand—by exploring the inter-animating relationships between film and life.

For example, Tarkovsky displaces the idea of montage as the essential organizing element in film by discussing how montage is already presupposed, given by things as

⁴ This is my own paraphrastic thesis of the primary thrust of Martin Heidegger's related arguments in "The Question Concerning Technology," and "The Age of the World Picture," from *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. Trans. William Lovitt. New York : Harper & Row Publishers, 1977.

⁵ I borrow Samuel Weber's equivocal title to Heidegger's famous essay in order to explore the questioning process itself. See: "Upsetting the Set-Up," from *Mass Mediauras : Form, Technics, Media*. California: Stanford UP, 1996.

they present themselves in time and in the rhythm and intensity of their duration through film. Rather than producing a third sense, invisible and abstract, from the collision of images, montage can organize a unique threshold of perception in which and through which time is sculpted and materially inscribed in film through the rhythmic expression of the becoming of things.

Cinema and Life

Something of the transforming reaction between the figurative power of language and the phenomenal agency of the world is captured in the practice of reading and writing haiku, a practice very close to the essence of audio-visual technique according to Tarkovsky. For haiku belongs less to form and film-form than to the formlessness of film, or at least, to that quality of film-form which is always in formation, re-formation, and un-formation and which leaves its traces in the film of form, the residue or skin of form in its emergence. As Trinh T. Minh-ha argues,

The basic urge to manifest (*not* to arrest) the formless in form, seems, indeed, to be what Tarkovsky yearns for...What Tarkovsky tries to retain and “make it incarnate, new each time,” is the Formless, or as he said it, the life principle itself, *unique* in each moment of life. Thus, form is not intended to express form, but rather, formlessness. The non-consumable relationship between form and formlessness or between art and life defies every binarist attempt at reducing it to the old dichotomy of form and content. In Tarkovsky’s definition, “the image is not a certain *meaning* expressed by the director, but an entire world reflected as in a drop of water.” (“Bold Omissions and Minute Depictions,” *When the Moon Waxes Red*: 1991; 161)

Tarkovsky does articulate something of this irreducible or non-consumable relationship between film and life in the consistent comparison he makes between the experience of reading haiku poetry and the practice of audio-visual technique, or what may be called «haiku-technics.» It is important to understand that the analogy between haiku and film is not a mere flight of poetic fancy nor a belletristic embellishment regarding the

necessity of the interdisciplinary study of poetry and film. It is through this analogy that Tarkovsky's central remarks concerning the mediation of rhythmic pressures of time come to light. As I have been arguing and will continue to argue, Tarkovsky's consideration of rhythm as the primary cinematographic principle of the time-based medium of film is always articulated within the constellation of relationships between image, language, and life. In this instance, the cinematographic image displaces or upsets the relationships that subject life to the workings of symbolic language, especially those operations of interpretation⁶. Tarkovsky writes,

What captivates me here is the refusal even to hint at the kind of final image meaning that can be gradually deciphered like a charade. Haiku cultivates its images in such a way that they mean nothing beyond themselves, and at the same time they express so many things at once that it is not possible to catch their final meaning. The more closely the image corresponds to its function, the more impossible it is to constrict it within a clear intellectual formula. (1986; 106)

The double condition of the cinematographic image, as irreducible to a definite meaning and as undecipherable polysemy, overturns Eisenstein's notion of the haiku as a laconic shot-list, to be subsumed under the generation of psychological montage-effects. Haiku, like the cinematographic image, resists the operations of interpretation. As Barthes remarks,

Deciphering, normalizing, or tautological, the ways of interpretation, intended in the West to *pierce* meaning, i.e., to get into it by breaking and entering...cannot help but fail to understand the haiku ; for the work of reading which is attached to it is to suspend language, not to provoke it [...] (p.72)

Audio-visual technique repeats the experience of reading something as intelligible and yet as inscrutable as haiku poetry, not as a formal consideration of how it invests a

⁶ It should be noted that Tarkovsky's writings often highlight the symbolic importance of the image and its iconic nature in quasi-theological terms; he did, after all, film the life of Andrei Rublev in order to explore this relationship. For the purposes of the argument in this section, I am less interested in defending the integrity or consistency of Tarkovsky's conception of the image than I am in outlining some of the epistemological implications of one of his most firmly held convictions regarding the interpretation of the cinematographic image.

wealth of meaning in terse form, but because it has the « negative capability⁷ » to suspend meaning anything at all, avoiding interpretation and eschewing the operations of symbolic representation.

Again, Tarkovsky's remarks may be apropos here: "In cinema—as in life—the text, the words are refracted in everything apart from the words themselves. The words mean nothing—they are like water" (1994; 92). In an interview, perplexed by the reactions of misunderstanding to his film *Mirror*, Tarkovsky confirmed the autobiographical nature of its episodes by turning the question around and remarking:

The facts are so simple, they can be taken down by everyone as similar to the experience of their own lives. But here we come up against something that is peculiar to cinema: the further a viewer is from the content of the film, the closer he is; what people are looking for in cinema is a continuation of their lives... The purpose of *Mirror*, its inspiration, is that of homily: look, learn, use the life here as an example. (1994; p.367)

This practice of auto-bio-graphy, as a reflexive instance (auto) of life (bio) writing itself (graphy), takes people into the heart of their own lives the more they accept film as a mediation of living examples rather than a chronological representation of the life of a particular person. Tarkovsky was often asked about what kind of mirror *Mirror* really was, what kind of "faithful or truthful" reflection it really provided. He usually would reply that the film, from the building of the set to the casting of his family, reproduced his memories in quite an unexpected and uncanny way, especially because these memories, in their life-like repetition and singular difference, paradoxically belonged to many other people as well⁸.

⁷ This term, while alluding to Keat's own formula regarding one of the potencies of poetry, is not meant to answer to his poetics nor to the reflections of a whole host of critics of Romantic poetry.

⁸ In the Stockholm interview ([1985] 1987; *Res Publica*) Tarkovsky remarked, "Consider for example my childhood home which we filmed, which you see in the film — this is a set. That is, the house was reconstructed in precisely the same spot where it had stood before, many years ago. What was left there was a... not even the foundation, only a hole that had once contained it. And precisely at this spot the house was rebuilt, reconstructed from photographs.

In the interview mentioned above, Tarkovsky was asked whether or not there was any symbolism in *Mirror*—to which he emphatically replied, “No! The images themselves are like symbols, but unlike accepted symbols they cannot be deciphered. The image is like a clot of life, and even the author may not be able to work out what it means, let alone the audience” (1994; 369). In the context of the problematic of mediation, the undecipherability of the image has enormous epistemological implications, for the cinematographic image would no longer be legible, definable, nor assignable under that regime of knowledge and that relationship to language brought about by the hegemony of literacy. This contact with the excess of the image and suspense of language would be an experience that largely escapes the hermeneutic gestures of film-criticism, for the cinematographic image would not be conceived as the adequate and accurate representation or reproduction, for a subjectivity, of an objectivity that lives outside it, nor as a merely symbolic screen around a secret to be constantly deciphered.

In favor of these conceptions, the cinematographic image would be considered a medium of contact which--in its middle-ness (milieu)--opens itself to the outside in a

This was extremely important to me — not because I wanted to be a naturalist of some kind but because my whole personal attitude toward the film's content depended upon it; it would have been a personal drama for me if the house had looked different. Of course the trees have grown a lot at this place, everything overgrew, we had to cut down a lot. But when I brought my Mum there, who appears in several sequences, she was so moved by this sight that I understood immediately it created the right impression. One would think: why was such an elaborate reconstruction of the past necessary? Or not even the past but what I remembered and how I remembered it. I didn't try to search for a particular form for the internal and subjective memories, so to speak; on the contrary — I strived to reproduce everything the way it was i.e., to literally repeat what was fixed in my memory. And the result turned very strange... It was for me a singular experience. I made a film with not a single episode composed or invented in order to interest the viewer, to attract his attention, to explain anything to him — these were truly recollections concerning our family, my biography, my life. And despite the fact — or perhaps because of it — that this was really a very private story, I received a lot of letters afterwards in which the viewers were asking me the rhetorical question: "How did you find out about my life?"

state of active and intransitive becoming. Clots of life: an active and intransitive becoming that mobilizes a series of relationships in the metamorphic powers of contact between the material membrane of the screen and the memories and experiences of viewers. While the word “clot” may suggest something counter to “free circulation and flow,” it does not designate stoppage but calls attention to the materiality of time in the cinematographic image; it is a clot of life because it releases the residues of experience and the layers of memory recorded and deposited in its enduring traces. If cinematography, like poetry, has its bloodlines of life clotted in the abundant and inscrutable circulation of the image then, instead of asking questions about authorial intentions, symbolism or surrealism, Tarkovsky proposes, it would be more interesting to ask about the organizing principle of the medium of film itself: to question film rhythms; the densities, pressures, and speeds of time; the way that cinematography, in its elastic sculpture of time, in the plasticity of light and shadow, materially mediates the world as an example to be returned, repeated, and endlessly continued.

Haiku and the Exemption of Meaning

Haiku, as a practice and a technique translated into the audio-visual medium of film, by exploring another relationship between language, the world, and the subject (Aristotle’s hypokeimenon), questions “that which lies under” modern knowledge and that which “constitutes the grounds of the subject.” As a questioning, haiku-technics also “builds a path” into a different kind of knowing, perceiving, and being. As Barthes remarks, for example, the « exemption of meaning » in haiku poetry marks the possibility of attaining in language the measure of the Zen satori, an empty, spherical and pure echo of nothingness⁹. Barthes sees in this practice of nothingness the possibility of

⁹ One may, like Lisa Lowe “The Desires of Postcolonial Orientalism” question this critical gesture in Barthes thinking which, in the utopian image of the Oriental other, would pretend to

transcending the binary semiology of signifier and signified in a language of self-effacing traits and traces. In this sense, the practice of the Zen satori is less like the search for an echo of nothingness in language and more like a kind of active “emptying” of the entitihood of language¹⁰. For poet, novelist and critical thinker, Gerald Vizenor, the practice of writing haiku allows one to experience something closer to the movement of memory in “postindian” literature¹¹. He writes, “Haiku is the intuition of shadow words : a concise mediation of sound, motion, memories, and the sensation of the seasons ” (p.65). Next, Vizenor cites R. S. Blyth, himself notable as a critic for linking Zen thinking to haiku poetics in *Haiku* : “Haiku is the result of the wish, the effort, not to speak, not to write poetry, not to obscure further the truth and such-ness of a thing with words, with thoughts and feelings” (p.65).

Between these two affirmations there is a problem that goes beyond the purview of the aesthetic search for the “not juste” and which poses an epistemological questioning on the way the subject is set into language. The condition for the possibility of shadow words circulates in the strange relationship the subject has to the scene of language, a scene that both reveals and conceals things in darkness and in light, between landscapes and a word-events. For Blyth, this is the scene of an impossibility to which haiku poets are sensitive because they do not constitute themselves as subjects

“ transcend the semiology and the ideology of the signifier and the signified, to invent a place that exceeds binary structure itself ” (1991, p.154).

¹⁰ I owe this insight to remarks made by Krishnan Venkatesh who points out that Barthes misunderstood or misrecognized the correct translation as “emptiness”. According to real Buddhists (i.e. Nagarjuna) emptiness designates an emptying of entitihood, not a denial of existence.

¹¹ Gerald Vizenor, author of *Manifest Manners : Postindian Warriors of Survivance* (Wesleyan, 1994), writes about the cultural strategies of survivance for a people constructed by a racial and colonial discourse, designated in the categories of simulated representations, and observed and interpreted by the surveillance of ethnological practices. In the chapter entitled “ Shadow Survivance ” Vizenor discusses the central problematic of postindian literature. How does one inherit and generate a tribal presence originally mediated by an ancient form of orality, the dynamic, mobile and holophrastic nature of which has been contaminated, flattened, and misinterpreted by the literacy of an anthropological institution that has transformed its life-world into folk literature ?

in order to integrate thoughts and feelings ; instead they hold onto a threshold of attention at the limits of language, a threshold that does not reduce but marks the gesture where silence, distance and self coalesce.

For Vizenor, this opens up the possibility of finding another relationship to language through haiku since it is “ a concise mediation ” generating a field of action into which, through which, and out of which, the dynamic materiality of the world and the motions of memory run. This is consistent with Barthes’ remarks of the privilege the haiku poem enjoys of escaping the rhetorical excesses of definition and description, not as a motif of “ illumination ” or “ symbolic hyperesthesia ” in which the subject is swollen with sense, nor as a gesture of “ heavy, full, profound, mystical silence ” through which the emptiness of the soul might be filled by the divine, but as an immense Zen praxis, of which haiku is only the literary branch, “ to *halt language*” (1987 [1970]; 74).

le haïku, au contraire, articulé sur une métaphysique sans sujet et sans dieu, correspond au *Mu* bouddhiste, au *satori* Zen, qui n’est nullement descente illuminative de Dieu, mais « réveil devant le fait », saisi de la chose comme événement et non comme substance, atteinte de ce bord antérieure du langage, contigu à la matité (d’ailleurs toute rétrospective, reconstituée) de l’aventure (ce qui advient au langage, plus encore qu’au sujet). (1970)

Barthes’ remarks suggest that this practice of haiku is not simply a question of « halting » language, but of suspending a certain relationship to language. In other words, language, under the zen *satori*, would be arrested as a mere vehicle of communication and information and this would place the instrumental relationship to language in abeyance. In this instance, language would be neither possessed nor possessing, neither sent nor sending, language would be “that towards which we are always on our way”. In these Heideggerian terms, language would be the medium of an awakening to the world, not an end that could be mastered vertically. The substantive relationship to language would be reversed because the accidental

eventfulness of things would be experienced in their happening, and writing haiku as that activity of invention and adventure that introduces the unknown into language. We might characterize this « bord antérieure du langage contigu à la matité de l'aventure » in the light of Vizenor's argument:

Postindian consciousness is a rush of shadows in the distance, and the trace of natural reason to a bench of stones ; the human silence of shadows, and animate shadows over presence. The shadow is that sense of the intransitive motion to the referent ; the silence in memories. Shadows are neither the absence of entities nor the burden of conceptual references. The shadows are the prenarrative silence that inherits the words ; shadows are the motions that mean the silence, but not the presence or the absence of entities. (1994, p.64)

According to Vizenor, the subject must inhabit language as on the ruins of a threshold, standing-under the shadows of the intransitive motion to the referent, and moving into contact with the prenarrative silence that inherits words before they are invested with the power to name, to define, and to describe. The subject would not command language but become its medium of transit by tracing the seasons of daily life in a language paradoxically mobile and intransitive. A subject in touch with the motions and the incidents of the life-world “ that mean the silence in memories ”, an intransitive silence that, while surviving virtually in the mobile traces of shadows, cannot be reduced as the substrate of the representational knowledge.

Returning to Tarkovsky's remarks on haiku poetry, this exemption of meaning in haiku permits the plunging dive through a salient language of pure events beyond the barrier dividing thought and cosmos, intellectual life and nature. “The reader of haiku has to be absorbed into it as into nature, to plunge in, lose himself in its depth, as in the cosmos where there is no bottom and no top” (p.106). This form of absorption and plunging dive is also related to the magical-mimetic experience afforded by the cinematographic image; both haiku and the cinematographic image envelope and dissolve the place of the subject before language; the subject is not set outside or before the world, working a sense of direction to this world through a command of language,

rather the subject “plunges into” the world through the medium of language, being touched by things from all sides.

Haiku, in other words, while promising a kind of immediate and cosmic contact and communion with things is not that which escapes, because it suspends, language; instead haiku, by moving the subject into the world through a special relationship to language, calls attention to the way the subject inhabits and is inhabited by the medium of language. Haiku would be that which indicates “the idea of language” which, according to Agamben, is the first principle of political philosophy, the only un presupposed principle: “language, which for human beings mediates all things and all knowledge, is itself immediate. Nothing immediate can be reached by speaking beings—nothing, that is, except language itself, mediation itself” (1999; 47). Since language, in these Heideggerian terms, is not linguistic in itself, not being an object but a medium, it necessarily misses itself even when it speaks and presupposes “something” on which or about which it might speak. By raising the problem of the mediation of language to this metaphysical height I mean only to suggest that audio-visual technique does not replace nor compete with language, but moves us even more closely to the very idea of language, as that which *lies under* the subject, and this alone provokes a kind of philosophical wonder.

In the second part of the dissertation, I will touch upon the problem of the speed of images as they upset and scramble this ground, especially the ground of historical knowledge. Before making this argument, however, I would like to insist on emphasizing the notion that audio-visual technique moves us into a different relationship to language than that by which we are accustomed to speak in literate culture; this explains, in part, all of the plunges into the salient mystery and suspension of haiku-technics. The biggest mystery, of course, is not that we have recourse to haiku-technics in order to describe audio-visual technique, but that the modernity of

audio-visual technique discloses a more ancient and cosmological relationship between the subject and language, being and knowledge.

Auragraphy

While Tarkovsky suggests that the cinematographic image reveals this first principle of mediation in language, it is also always created through a special form of observation, « made incarnate, visible, and four dimensional ; » it embodies « a glimpse of the truth permitted to us in our blindness, » an « indivisible and elusive » correlation and contact between human consciousness and the palpable world¹². How can we characterize this “correlation and contact” in terms of mechanically reproduced images ?

Haiku poetry, like the camera, holds the power to arrest, to suspend, and to inscribe historical movement itself in the complex production of the image¹³. For Barthes, haiku poetry is a kind of photographic act because it performs the deixis of the interjection « so » and writes with « a flash or a slash of light » that illumines without revealing, « it is the flash of a photograph one takes very carefully (in the Japanese manner) but having neglected to load the camera with film » (p.83). Yet for Benjamin the scene of what I am calling “haiku-technics” haunts photography, and rather than

¹² In light of these remarks on haiku poetry, I will be arguing in the third section of the dissertation, how well Tarkovsky continued something of the post-symbolist modernism in the “Acmeist” impulses of Russian poetry (as embodied in the works of Anna Akhmatova and Osip Mandelstam etc.), having inherited the explosion of poetic forms that took place even beyond the haiku form, extending for many generations and into the traceable influence of the film-maker’s mentor-poet, his father, Arseney Tarkovsky. In this sense, Tarkovsky’s cinematography, like the Acmeist “Guild of Poets”, continued the search for a revolutionary economy of the image in the dynamic, concrete materiality of the world and in the search for the clarity and austere simplicity of the word.

¹³ Eduardo Cadava, in the preface to *Words of Light : Theses on the Photography of History* (New Jersey : Princeton UP, 1997), recalls how Benjamin’s writings, as « photographicallythetic » writings, are faithful to the search for this kind of relationship : « Like the gaze of the camera that momentarily fixes history in an image, the thesis condenses a network of relations into a frame whose borders remain permeable » (p.XX).

captivate a technical impossibility of reproduction and a necessary absence of film in the apparatus, this scene is thought of at a particular historical juncture in his essay “A Short History of Photography.”

On a summer noon, resting, to follow the line of a mountain range on the horizon or a twig which throws its shadow on the observer, until the moment or hour begins to be a part of its appearance—that is to breathe the aura of those mountains, that twig. (Benjamin, 1980 [1931], p.209)

This snapshot cliché, which may seem to be a belletristic gratuity, emerges also out of Walter Benjamin’s later essay, « The Work of Art In the Age of Mechanical Reproduction ». It was written and recycled in another essay in order to elaborate a response to the question, « What is aura ? » and the ambiguous metaphysical claim, « A strange web of time and space : the unique appearance of a distance however close at hand » (1931; p.206). It does not define a principle except insofar as it explores a haiku-like action carried on between an observer and a landscape in a summer season at the peak of the sun’s cast of light. In the scene of this action a specific duration and distance inscribe themselves, or breathe into, the material appearance of a shadow or a line; an aural light glowing and fading through an apparitional medium and into which a material process(ion) of time and space casts a shadow¹⁴; or what may be called, auragraphy¹⁵. Who is the observer ? He is the haiku poet as photo-grapher, writing words of light.

“Apparitional medium” may be understood as the duality of André Bazin’s notion: to take a picture is to mold a death mask of the life-model as it is sculpted in the

¹⁴ Garrett Stewart opposes these terms helpfully in : « Modernism’s Sonic Waiver, » from *Sound States : Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*. Chapel Hill : The University of North Carolina Press, 1997, p.239.

¹⁵ Alain Buisine, in *Eugène Atget ou la mélancholie en photographie* (Nîmes : Éditions Jacqueline Chambon, 1994, pp. 115-122), discusses the Latin etymology of aura as air or breath, the physical laws of light-refraction producing the aural-effect, as well as the theoretical notion of aura informing the writings of Walter Benjamin.

plasticity of light¹⁶. In this instance, the photographic medium does not merely liberate phenomena from their temporal succession. By “embalming” them, it marks a ghostly falling-away, a hazy glow, in the very emergence of their appearance¹⁷. The “material process(ion)” is not given immediately as a distance between two points in space; rather, the distance is perceived as a mediation of a rhythm, a material inscription of time accentuated periodically by a shadow or line.

The notion of photography as apparitional medium may be corroborated by Benjamin’s remarks on the magical value of photographs since they irresistibly compel viewers to seek the coexistence of the future anterior in the flash of the here and now :

In such a picture, that spark has, as it were, burned through the person in the image with reality, finding the indiscernible place in the condition of that long past minute where the future is nesting, even today, so eloquently that we looking back can discover it. (p.202)

The notion of photography as material process(ion) is suggested by Benjamin’s comments on a special relationship revealed by early time-lapse technique : « The procedure itself caused the models to live, not *out of* the instant, but *into* it ; during the long exposure they grew, as it were, into the image » (p.204). Photography, as a medium of time-passage, radically re-organizes the conditions for being in time and for thinking through time. The instantaneous flash in which the present is produced and burned in the photographic image may also hold, as in a nest, something of the shaped anticipation of the future. This is to assert something different than what is normally admitted by theorists of the indexical trace of photographic images, according to whom

¹⁶ Andre Bazin. « The Ontology of the Photographic Image, » from *What is Cinema? Voll.* Trans. Hugh Gray. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1967, pp.12-15.

¹⁷ Samuel Weber, in the chapter « Art, Aura and Medium in the Work of Walter Benjamin » (*Mass Mediauras : Form, Technic, Media.* California : Stanford UP, 1996), connects this phenomenon intimately with Heidegger’s essay, « The Age of the World Picture » by discussing how the aura returns even in the age of televisual reproduction as the irreducible appearance of self-detachment : « The aura would then be something like an enabling limit, the *emanation* of an object from which it removes itself, a *frame* falling away from its picture and in its fall, in its *Verfall*, becoming light : a *bright shadow* » p.88.

the “present” in which the photograph was taken may re-appear as materially coterminous with the future moment of the gaze of the photograph, relaying two historical moments in the passage of light¹⁸. Benjamin claims that photography does more than fix and arrest historical movement; instead it reconfigures the conditions of the appearance of this movement by “finding the indiscernible place in the condition of that long past instant where the future is nesting.” Neither the iconic characteristics of the photographic image, nor its indexical quality is quite as interesting as the interval of time marked by the exposure of the image. In this sense, photography, however much it is marked as a mechanical reproduction by an irrecoverable, aural, ghostly “falling away,” however much it is constituted by a kind of indexical death mask, however much its photo-chemical traces inscribe the experience of melancholy and nostalgia in shadows and light, is more fundamentally a transformer of the temporal conditions of life than it is a mere witness of a process of death and decay.

The auragraphy of photography intimates something of this “correlation and contact” between life and audio-visual technique, or what I have been calling Tarkovsky’s “haiku-technics,” and I think it is here, on the other side of the thoughts of theoreticians like Bazin, Benjamin, and Barthes, that the questing after technics must be pursued. The auragraphy of photography, to borrow Aristotelian terms, might be best understood as a kind of physis within which the continuum of mobile relationships between generation and corruption makes its appearance : in the singular and irreversible processes of life which persist in the photo-chemical traces of light and shadow, another kind of organic temporal connection between beings is made possible. The time-lapse and duration of their passage is preserved in the processes of the image as a passage; in its ephemeral appearance and singular alteration, it continues to burn as

¹⁸ See : Barthes, Roland. *La Chambre Claire*, p.126 ; Stiegler, Bernard. « Mémoires gauches », p.364.

it passes. Something of the temporal materiality of the appearance of beings lives on, impresses itself in the medium, in order to continue making connections with the living. Borrowing Ovid's more poetic terms, the human contact with nature in the technique of writing light (photo-graphy) undergoes a metamorphosis.

Recapitulation

How might this metamorphosis be qualified? We began this chapter by discussing the way in which haiku-technics challenges the rational organization of modern knowledge. We explained how the materiality of the photographic and cinematographic image defies or resists its placement within the substrate of the subject-centered epistemology of representation. By loosening the strict adherence between the image-appearance and its linguistic referent or symbolic signifying function, we have opened up the possibility of inquiring into the reproducible image as medium/milieu for the experience of a different relationship to language and to the grounds of knowledge. The medium of the reproducible image opens a relationship that halts, suspends, and negates the transcendental aspiration to the fullness of being and meaning. Emptying this aspiration, the reproducible image, calling attention to the way it indexes the organic and singular breath of life in the medium of its inscription, moves alongside the immanent eventfulness of the adventure of language.

The relationship opened by the medium of the cinematographic image has a temporal materiality worth qualifying in terms of the theory of rhythm. In the next chapter, I will be concerned with articulating a critical and exploratory theory of rhythm in the medium of film : it is at once a critique of the metaphysical conception and exposition of time and a critical discourse-analysis of some of the semiotic-linguistic paradigms and narrative and cognitive approaches to the signifying practices of film. In the wake of these conceptions and approaches, it extends the constellation

of Aristotelian conceptions (*techné*, *physis*, *poesis*) as they link this medium-theory of rhythm to the dimension of ethics and politics.

Chapter 3: Rhythm and Film-Life

Rhythm and the Written Language of Reality

The critique of the Hegelian conception of knowledge begins on the premise that there is no identity equation between knowing and being without the intervention of a third term that mediates between them; this is also a critique of the transcendence of ideas because it suggests that there is no immediate instance of intelligence thinking itself. V.N Voloshinov and M. Bakhtine, in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, argue that “consciousness itself can arise and become a viable fact only in the material embodiment of signs.” There is no such thing as thinking in any immediate sense but only a kind of thinking-through, a thinking through images, concepts and signs, and this thinking takes place in time. The medium of film offers several possibilities for thinking with audio-visual technique, and the materiality of film may itself be described as a “semiotics of action.” As Pier Paolo Pasolini has forcefully argued in *Heretical Empiricism*, the cinema constitutes a written language of reality in images and sounds.

Pasolini clearly indicates that he does not mean to suggest that audio-visual technique is some kind of primitive language, nor a written or spoken language comparable to what is common to Italian and Bantou. Instead, he suggests that audio-visual technique introduces a different kind of language altogether, a language which for all of its international and universal character is incomparable to other languages and language systems. For Pasolini, audio-visual technique is a language that, in its material contact with the reality of the living world, expresses the becoming of objects in their movement; a language in which the images and sounds of objects have become integral to that which presents them, a moving picture that does not “stand for” things but conducts their very material action or agency. Cinema, which according to Pasolini

is more appropriately identified with audio-visual technique, is on the side of existence and pragmatic action because it is made by the acting of the living; in this, it reveals what he calls the “written manifestation of a natural, total language, which is the acting of reality” (1988; 205). In his quasi-tautological words, the cinema “expresses reality with reality”; the objects, colors, faces, rhythms of the material world with which it deals are inseparable from the cinematographic image. This material dimension of film, the irreducible persistence of the historical present, is often compared by Pasolini to the way a kind of orality persists in written language; a relationship to language that is never completely eliminated with the advent of literacy and the movable type of the printing press; a relationship, finally, that contaminates the “literate” pretension to a stable, certain, and transparent form of historical knowledge founded upon the modern concept of representation. Just as orality contaminates literacy, so too material reality intervenes in the medium of film and radically calls into question the conditions for writing history and representing the historical event in the medium of film¹.

Gilles Deleuze returns to the semiotic/semiological tradition behind this argument concerning the written language of reality in the cinema (Eisenstein, Pasolini, Metz, Hjemslev and Jakobson). However, Deleuze does this not in order to discuss the economy of orality in audio-visual technique but rather with the purpose of showing how the process of signification (semiosis) is itself grounded and conditioned to work with the kind of plastic signaletic material inscribed in the movement-image of film.

Ces composés de l'image-mouvement, du double point de vue de la spécification et de la différenciation, constituent une *matière signalétique* qui comporte des traits de modulation de toute sorte, sensoriels (visuels et sonores), kinésiques, intensifs, affectifs, rythmiques, tonaux, et même verbaux (oraux et

¹ I will return to this argument in Part II. For a more thorough treatment of the epistemological implications of this comparison in Pasolini's films and critical writings, see the following works by Silvestra Mariniello: «Oralità e scrittura nella linguistica pasoliniana». *Eutopias*, 15, 1993. Valencia ; *Pier-Paolo Pasolini*. Madrid : Catedra, 1997; « Techniques audiovisuelles et réécriture de l'histoire. De la représentation à la production du temps au cinéma ». *CiNéMAS*, automne, vol. 5, n.1-2, 1994.

écrits). Eisenstein les comparait d'abord à des idéogrammes, puis, plus profondément, au monologue intérieur comme proto-langage ou langue primitive. Mais, même avec ses éléments verbaux, ce n'est pas une langue ni un langage. C'est une masse plastique, une matière a-signifiante et a-syntaxique, une matière non linguistiquement formée, bien qu'elle ne soit pas amorphe et soit formée sémiotiquement, esthétiquement et pragmatiquement.(1985; 43-44)

For Deleuze this means ultimately that the images and sounds in film do not exist as do the utterances of language, for they have not been organized yet to signify; they are the material potential of utterances (l'énonçable) insofar as they are a kind of non-linguistic matter in reaction to which language exists. This is why, for Deleuze, the filmic utterance and instance of narration, while founded in the cinematographic image, is not given by the image but rather by the reaction resulting from the transformation of non-linguistic material and language itself.

Deleuze is interested in this transforming encounter between the phenomenal materiality of the world and the agency of cinematography insofar as this encounter challenges or escapes the figural power of language, something very similar to haiku-technics. This explains also why the Metzian model of "discursive" signification is rejected in favor of the idea of "material agency" of the thought-machine of cinema. The cinematographic image is at odds with its systematic insertion in a structural order of discourse; in its materiality or "matière signalétique", the cinematographic image is fundamentally opposed to being reduced to a linguistic code, or that which produces discursive units (paradigms and syntagmes) in various discursive modes (narrative, descriptive, poetic, or reflexive). As Marion Froger has suggested in reference to this opposition in Deleuze's semiotic thinking, « les images sont moins la représentation des choses que leur précipitation dans une solution où entrent toutes les composantes de l'image » (2000; 16). These quasi-chemical terms suggest a way of investigating the relationship between the cinematographic image and the act of thinking outside of an

analysis which categorically pretends to describe the co-occurrence of thinking operations with discursive enunciations and logical deductions (Froger, 2000; 18).

Indeed, these terms would seem to offer another way to explore film as a medium of contact in which the material becoming or agency of the world, unaffected by the operations of discourse, transforms the conditions for thinking and experience in the infinitely reproducible phenomenal presences of sound, light, color, and rhythm, etc. For Deleuze, the materiality of film ultimately has the power to restore and to invent certain modes of thinking and belief in the world which are unattainable by discourse. This is not merely to see in the cinema a way of recovering a lost, because unpracticed, form of faith or cognition. In the words of Bonitzer and Narboni, it has more to do with that power or potential in the cinema to bring about an embodied form of knowing: “[...] rendre le discours au corps et , pour cela, atteindre le corps avant les discours, avant les mots, avant que les choses soient nommées » (Bonitzer et Narboni, p.38). This is also the power of haiku-technics, the way that film brings us back into the world, not through the spatio-temporal structure of linguistic presupposition in which everything--including language itself--is objectified into discursive units, but into the very utterable potential of language, in reaction to the material of which we exist as thinking beings.

If thinking can arise only in the materiality of a medium, then we are entitled to ask: what is the organizing principle of the medium of film ? According to Tarkovsky, the fundamental principle of the medium of film is rhythm; the capacity of film to take an impression of time. Rhythm is not understood merely as one component among others in the signaletic materiality of the motion picture. While related to motion, rhythm is irreducible to that which moves in the motion-picture since rhythm makes time visible by suspending sensori-motor action. Nor can rhythm be said to be determined exclusively by the innovations in the techniques of the cinematic apparatus (lighting,

sound, color) to which it belongs historically. According to Tarkovsky, the rhythmic principle of the time-based medium of film became evident in even the earliest of films, the day Auguste Lumière projected *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat*. In other words, Tarkovsky would probably agree with Deleuze that the rhythmic principle of the film medium, its capacity to take an impression of time, is the phantom that has always haunted the cinema from its inception; it only took a special kind of critical modern cinema to give a body to this phantom.

According to Pasolini, however, the critical practice of modern cinema gave a body to the written impression of reality. Can Tarkovsky's conception of rhythm be reconciled with Pasolini's conception of the written language of reality? In other words, *is* rhythm the written language of reality? This question begs many others concerning the nature of time, language, and action as they are revealed by audio-visual technique. The following sections on rhythm will set out the terrain for such a questioning. An initial comparison would suggest that Pasolini's conception lends itself to Tarkovsky's insights since the idea of "the written language of reality" must be qualified in temporal terms; the "writing" is itself always already an "impression of time," taking place, passing, and enduring in the historical present of its impression; the materiality of this temporal impression, its trace, dynamic flow and organic breath, could then be said to be its rhythm. Similarly, Tarkovsky qualifies his idea of rhythm in very material terms:

For the first time in the history of the arts, in the history of culture, man found the means to *take an impression of time*. And simultaneously the possibility of reproducing that time on screen as often as he wanted, to repeat it and go back to it. He acquired a matrix for *actual time*. Once seen and recorded, time could now be preserved in metal boxes over long period (theoretically forever). (1986;62)

This idea echoes and reinforces Pasolini's ideas concerning the revolutionary potential of film as that which ushers in a new form of historical consciousness: the matrix for

recording, reproducing, stocking, preserving, experiencing and repeating actual time on the screen introduces another way of being historical.

In retrospect, the modernity of Tarkovsky's cinema might be qualified as a critical revalorization of this rhythmic principle, a principle which was discarded, suppressed, or lost in the commercial development of the film industry during the decades following Lumière's experiments. For the film industry, with its "philistine interest" and orientation towards "profit", its systematic devotion to adapting world literature and theater to the screen, subjected the medium of cinematography not only to a fatal subservience to the commercial market of entertainment and the "society of the spectacle" but also to the hegemony of earlier technologies of literacy as they were institutionalized and practiced. However, in Tarkovsky's words, the worst was not the reduction of cinema to the illustration of a literary culture in a commercial world but the failure to notice the possibility of exploiting its real potential as a medium for the material inscription of time, its potential for experimenting with duration and for offering us, through its affects and effects, other worlds of temporal experience. This is close to Jean Louis Schefer's suggestive words:

Le cinéma est une machine à varier des affects expérimentaux, c'est-à-dire essentiellement à nous faire éprouver en l'absence d'objets des effets de durée comme telle : celle du suspens d'action. Il y emploie tous les moyens techniques par lesquels il expérimente des hypothèses ou des formes de narration : montages, fondus enchaînés, accélérations, cadres, gros plans intercalés...L'expérimentation sur le temps est ainsi l'objet du cinéma : à elle seule elle constitue une altération du monde. Le cinéma ne peut que produire (il l'a su dès son début) des diversifications de mondes et d'univers. (1997; 84-85)

Tarkovsky qualifies this experimentation with time on a material level as "the possibility of printing on celluloid the actuality of time" (1986; 63). What does this actuality mean? Tarkovsky also refers to its "factuality". The material nature of this actuality and factuality becomes clearer when he compares the impression of time in cinema to its expression in music. Time is central to the expression and performance of

music, its “life force is materialized” at the same moment that its harmonic nature is expressed in a series of contrapuntal moments. By contrast, “the virtue of cinema is that it appropriates time, complete with that material reality to which it is indissolubly bound, and which surrounds us day by day. *Time printed in its factual forms and manifestations* (1986; 63). Time, together with material reality, is printed as it makes its appearance in motion-pictures of film: these three terms describe the temporal ontology and phenomenology of the cinematographic image and constitute the principle of rhythm. If this principle of rhythm is present in all of its “signaletic materiality” as a plastic mass, a non-signifying and a-syntactical material to borrow Deleuze’s words, a material which is not formed linguistically, we must wonder whether, to what extent, and for what purpose, language and discourse must constantly transform it? And does rhythm, and with it—life, come out unaffected by this operation? Or must the investigation of rhythm always be circumscribed within the ontology and epistemology of linguistics in a way similar to that by which the principles of editing, montage, and screen-story have been traditionally studied?

Rhythm as a Critique of the Subject

Tarkovsky has a different relationship to cinematography as audio-visual technique since the director is thought of as a kind of collector assembling time. At the same time, he aestheticizes his discoveries and the director is finally seen as a kind of “sculptor” carving his own sense of rhythmic design and developing an artistic author-like signature. This moral-aesthetic discourse of Modernity saves him from pushing his questions of time further into a theory of mediation or a critique of the subject-centered epistemology of representation, a subject that sets or frames the world as object under its ground. In this sense, his insights must be read “against the grain” of his modern

moral-aesthetic discourse of art² because his observations of rhythm are suggestive of such a critique. For example, Tarkovsky discusses how the director in the assembly-editing process must be attentive to the inner necessity and the organic relationship binding the time frames together. He often speaks of the time-frames in terms of water pressures running through the sequences of images from “brook, spat, waterfall, ocean” the director would become essentially this—one who directs time-pressures like water-flows, one who feeds and joins them.

Although Tarkovsky speaks as if this director were an artist-author-architect attentive to carving out an individual sense of rhythmic design, his metaphors more often than not betray the editorial figure as something more like a engineer or plumber capable of blocking, damming, filtering, elbowing, and accelerating the flows of time already inherently flowing out of and into shots. The temporal fabric of the world is prior to montage and materially transforms the place of the subject. The « director » is not an architect-genius who, on the editing table, re-creates the world in his image through the clips and collisions of images ; rather he is one who, in « directing » the pipelines of time pressures that inhere in shots like water flows, becomes fluid and continuous with the temporal materiality of a world cooperatively creative and dynamic (1986;113-115). Editing is guided by the successful fitting or assembly of time-pressures and time-intensities imprinted in the frame, yet “one cannot, for instance, put actual time together with conceptual time, any more than one can put water pipes of different diameter” (1986; 117).

Nowhere is this clearer than in Tarkovsky’s own experience of the prodigious amount of work that went into editing *Mirror*, for which there were over twenty

² While I am suggesting that Tarkovsky’s writings are not necessarily self-consistent I am not proposing a deconstructive reading of the cancellations and interruptions of his thinking. It is enough to make a broad discursive analysis which indicates the directions which his thinking takes.

variants of the final film: "I don't just mean changes in the order of certain shots, but major alterations in the actual structure, in the sequence of the episodes" (1986;116). Realizing that the film did not "hold together" by some kind of "inner necessity," at times revising scenes altogether, adding sequences, doubling narrative structures and the roles of actors/actresses, at other times wondering how to work documentary fragments into the network of autobiographical instances and lyric memories without disturbing the distinctive time running through the shots and between the shots, Tarkovsky writes about the desperate efforts of mounting the shots, piecing together anatomical structures from different temporalities and attempting to fuse them with some current of life.

And then, one fine day, when we somehow managed to devise one last desperate rearrangement—there was the film. The material came to life; the parts started to function reciprocally, as if linked by a bloodstream; and the last despairing attempt was projected onto the screen, the film was born before our very eyes...Time itself, running through the shots, had met and linked together (1986; 116-117).

Witnessing the emergence of the film *Mirror*, its birth through the plastic circulations of over two-hundred shots, Tarkovsky takes a decidedly different position on what it means to direct as director, one very much outside of Eisenstein's dialectic conception.

Tarkovsky has been notorious for setting himself and his films over against the glory and fame of Eisenstein³. For the purposes of argument, this opposition may be

³ Even when Tarkovsky acknowledges the revolutionary pathos of Eisenstein's films and his respect for cultural traditions and their continuity, as in the following excerpt of an interview this interview, he still admits that Eisenstein "didn't absorb it, in his heart, he was over-intellectualised, he was a terrible rationalist, cold, calculated, directed only by reason. He tried his constructions on paper first. Like a calculator. He drew everything. Not that he drew film frames but that he would think everything over and then he'd cram it all inside the frame. He didn't draw from life, life didn't influence him in any way. What influenced him was ideas which he constructed, transformed into some form, as a rule completely lifeless, rigid as iron, very formal, dry, devoid of any feeling. Film form, its formal features, photography, light, atmosphere — none of it existed for him at all, it all had this thought-out character, whether some quotes from paintings or other contrived compositions. This was in a sense a typical

explored, outside of the battle of directors and even outside of a particular comparison of their films, as a distinction related to a critique of the modern subject. Briefly stated, Eisenstein's dialectic director is one who organizes actions and reactions into a scheme of conflicts, oppositions and final resolutions, the movement of which derives from a kind of ideology of will, a belief that one can infinitely master and extend mastery over environments, actions and opponents. The cinema is henceforth an instrument in the service of a "subject" in order to reveal a "world" already defined and given ("The People", "Reason", "History"). This scheme of composition supposes a kind of Hegelian conception of knowledge in which image, world, and viewer may be identified and fused harmoniously in a total image of Truth. Montage and its open spiral of commensurabilities and attractions, would be that principle empowering a director to subject the world and its continuous movement in the motion picture to the workings of a instrumental and calculating relationship to language, a relationship that co-ordinates the operations of seeing, saying, and being; this relationship may be named logical because it supposes that the cinematographic image corroborates a rational order underlying words and things; grammatical because it treats the materiality of the image as secondary to its insertion into and comprehension by a linguistic and systematic ordering of elements; and dialectical because it builds, out of a logical and grammatical treatment of the image, a series of totalizing propositions.

Tarkovsky's practice of audio-visual technique may be seen as "modern" precisely because it constitutes a critique of this more "classical" or "dialectical" regime of knowledge and truth. Tarkovsky's theory and practice suggests a distinct transformation in epistemology, a form of knowing through audio-visual technique that

concept of synthetic cinema, where cinema appeared as a union of graphic arts, painting, theatre, music, and everything else — except cinema as such wasn't there. As if the sum of all these parts were to result in this new art. (Stockholm, March 1985)

is very much outside of Eisenstein's theoretical models and adaptations of scientific positivism, behavioral psychology, and dialectical history. For Tarkovsky, to know is not to assume some immediate self-identical relationship to oneself, confirming the division of the world as an object to be brought before a knowing subject, nor does knowing involve some relationship to ideals and abstractions outside of the world in the belief that the world is an imperfect copy, fallen from a higher order of Truth.

To know is instead to place oneself in the heart of the life-world, to be a part of a continuum of existence capable of touching and transforming us in return. In his words, "Our knowledge is like sweat, or fumes, it's a function of the organism inseparable from existence, and has nothing whatever to do with Truth" (1994, p.284). This constitutes Tarkovsky's principal attack of "intellectual montage cinema", because it is entirely preoccupied with presenting the audience with symbols, puzzles and riddles, canceling the film's capacity to continue beyond the edges of the screen; the film is only a kind of screen around a secret to be deciphered and never a material membrane of contact which inspires, respites and aspires-- allowing beings to breathe⁴. Such a conception of knowledge does not necessarily preclude or militate against the possibility of thinking about the revelation of the unknown and the invisible; yet in the image the purview of the unknown and the invisible can only be explored at the limits of the visible and the known, just as the swaying leaves of the trees disclose the presence of the wind. Audio-visual technique opens another form of knowing the world, one that is internal to its very organic breathing, its inscrutable opacity, and its endless openness.

In defense of his critique of Eisenstein, Tarkovsky gives the example of the famous scene of the battle on the ice in *Alexander Nevsky*, a sequence in the film which ignores

⁴This may be inferred from Tarkovsky's remarks (1986, 118), but the idea of the screen as a "membrane of contact and transformation" I owe to the work of Laura U. Marks (2000).

the need to fill the shots with “appropriate time-pressures” but instead attempts to achieve the inner dynamic of the battle with “excessively short shots”; these shots give the impression of being “sluggish and unnatural” or “static and insipid” because the “precipitate” style or “false and strident” editing itself bears no relationship to the time-processes within the shots (1986; 119-120). Tarkovsky critiques this systematic lack of attention to the rhythmic properties of the medium. This is not merely a question of the film poetics and stylistics regarding the representation of the event. Tarkovsky must radically challenge the role, the work, and the place of director as the subject traditionally defined in the institution of film studies: for to direct film is not to direct the discourse of representation but to be directed by a force outside of this organization of shots and locutions.

The work of montage has less to do with building meaning than with allowing things to breathe, being more concerned with the “pneumas” than with the “logos”. Here the cinema is not an instrument in the service of a subject to reveal a pre-given and rational order of the world that the image would “identify” and “repeat” but a dynamic medium of material contact with a world that resists its rational and linguistic given-ness, a world that escapes linguistic identification altogether. This form of knowing has a radically temporal character, and audio-visual technique, by blurring and dissolving the distinction between the phenomenal temporality of the world and the noumenal temporality of thought, holds out the possibility of putting thought in touch with something else, the virtual properties of the world : the “not-yet”, the “open”, the “unthought”, and the “other”⁵.

This does not mean that thought is abstracted from the material contact with the world for it is always linked to its very organic processes as they unfold in what Tarkovsky calls the “inner necessity” and “endogenous development” of rhythm.

⁵ These terms will receive a fuller treatment in the course of my argument.

“Rhythm, then is not the metrical sequence of pieces; what makes it is the time-thrust within the frames” (Tarkovsky, 1986; 119). Once again Tarkovsky compares this rhythm to the force of life itself:

Rhythm in cinema is conveyed by the life of the object visibly recorded in the frame. Just as from the quivering of a reed you can tell what sort of current, what pressure there is in a river, in the same way we know the movement of time from the flow of the life-process reproduced in the shot. (1986; 120)

The analogy is suggestive: cinematography, insofar as it indexes this living and moving being, conducts and makes visible the passing of time. More, the image-trace of this life-process also irresistibly suggests the pressure of the current underneath the quivering reed. Despite the regularity of the moving picture of cinematography itself, 24 frames per second, the recorded pressures of time are irreducible to a common measure but contain a unique inscription of duration, of passing and flow.

This explains why Tarkovsky's opposition of editing to rhythm is not simply a formalist concern : “Editing entails assembling smaller and larger pieces, each of which carries a different time...Editing does not engender, or recreate, a new quality” (1986; 119). Strikingly enough, Tarkovsky would not do away with film editing altogether but only Eisenstein's conception of it. In Tarkovsky's words, “Editing brings out a quality already inherent in the frames it joins. And their assembly creates a new awareness of that time, emerging as a result of the intervals, of what is cut, carved out in the process” (1986; 119). Or again, “Assembly, editing, disturbs the passage of time, interrupts it and simultaneously gives it something new. The distortion of time can be a means of giving it rhythmical expression. Sculpting in Time!” (1986; 121).

Editing is not a primary principle of creation and engendering but an intermediary principle of assembly; editing is a bringing-about, a harboring-forth of time as it is made perceptible through technique; and insofar as it generates a new awareness of time it is as much concerned with what is omitted in the intervals between shots as it is

with what inheres in and flows through shots themselves. In other words, editing belongs to the Heideggerian constellation of concepts of *technics*, *poesis* and *phusis*. Editing does not produce and assign meaning, nor order the orderable, nor reduce the temporal passing of the world to reporting itself as that which progresses dialectically. In its attention to the dynamic properties of film as a “making” of thresholds of perception, as a “working-in” the folds and the intervals of time, and as a “bringing about” of new temporal relationships, editing allows time to emerge outside an instrumental relationship to language.

The rhetorical pressure of being placed before the passing of time in the suspended time-images of film, takes us outside of the logical and grammatical predication of time as movement and action. Indeed, Tarkovsky’s critique of Eisenstein might be described in these traditional terms of the trivium. The subordination of the logical-grammatical treatment of the time frame in favor of the rhetorical figuration of time shows how the cinematographic image transforms the modern subject’s relationship to language. The image of time as a force or a pressure, unconcerned with producing meaning or logical sequence, produces the presence of pure passage; “passage” because we are “being placed before” the force of time passing continuously in the ephemerality of its process of passing. The presence of this process, according to Wlad Godzich, shows us how we are “in the midst of a pre-logical affirmation of the world” because the world, in the magical material repetition of the image, “[...]speaks itself in its own terms. Such a world is a world defined without us, a world altogether other, with co-ordinates that do not come from us, a world in which time is not our time [...]” (1993; p.19).

In this sense, by subordinating the montage and movement of shot elements to the more original inner rhythm of the image within the shot, Tarkovsky’s cinema allows the pre-logical and a-grammatical forces of time to upset the logical-grammatical-dialectical treatment of the image. It remains to be seen to what extent these forces

resist or exceed rhetorical figuration. After all, the rhythmic speeds, currents and pressures allow Tarkovsky to speak of a more “authentic”, “dynamic”, “necessary” and “appropriate” figuration of time, one intimately related to the “truthfulness” and “infinity” of the cinematographic image.

How does time make itself felt in the shot? It becomes tangible when you sense something significant, truthful, going on beyond the events on the screen; when you realize, quite consciously, that what you see in the frame is not limited to its visual depiction, but is a pointer to something stretching out beyond the frame and to infinity; a pointer to life. Like the infinity of the image...a film is always bigger than it is—at least, if it is a real film. Just as life, constantly moving and changing, allows everyone to interpret and feel each separate moment in his own way, so too a real picture, faithfully recording on film the time which flows on beyond the edges of the frame, lives within time if time lives within it; this two-way process is a determining factor of cinema. (1986; 118)

To assert that the cinematographic image lives in time only if time lives within it is to consider film as an organic medium where a genesis in the temporal phenomena of life “takes place” as these phenomena make their appearance and move, live and “persist” in the presence of their materiality (bodies, colors, gestures, rhythms, etc.). As film indexes the traces of life, it simultaneously allows things to breathe in time and time to breathe into things. It would seem that this “truthful” or “faithful” figuration of time is never bounded by the visibility of the frame because its passing presence and material tangibility in the finished and edited roll of film is never itself entirely objectified and fixed but only crystallized to continue itself as an infinite dynamic process, one that might link itself to the multiple layers of other temporalities in the shots and sequences of the film itself, or even in the memories and experiences of spectators.

Breathing in Time: The Aristotelian Critique of Kant

A brief segue in to the philosophical question of time and its relationship to experience is in order at this point, even though it must be somewhat reductive and necessarily brief. I would like to begin by discussing the classic opposition between Aristotle and

Kant, an opposition which has recently received attention in the work of Sylvian Agacinski's reflections, *Le Passeur du temps: modernité et nostalgie* (2000).

The fundamental question to be asked in this opposition of minds is the following: can time be thought or conceived if experience is neutralized? For Kant, time is a concept impossible to derive from experience because it is a necessary condition for the possibility of the taking-place and the organizing of experience itself—it belongs necessarily to the subject as a formal category of receptivity and not to objects nor to their inherent movements. Time is that which can be abstracted from the observation of phenomena and defines *a priori* the formal capabilities of the sensibility⁶.

Kant sends time into a pure category of the interiority of the subject as if time could exist without the experience of movement or repetition. Of course, things get a little complicated because this *a priori* form of time can not be immediately known by the intelligence of the subject unless the sensibility exerts itself and discloses this category to itself in the midst of an experience. As Agacinski has noted, it is far from certain if the *a priori* category of time is not itself a secondary operation *a posteriori* to experience itself—a category which is abstracted from the duration of experience and the movement of the things of the world in order to make room for a transcendental foundation of the subject (2000, 45).

Indeed, this abstraction even excludes the possibility of thinking about thought itself as a temporal activity, one that must necessarily alternate with experience and the memory of experience and thus introduce a kind of alterity into itself. The greatest problem with this abstraction from experience then becomes the impossibility of re-thinking or questioning the very artificial and conventional forms of time which

⁶ These remarks, as well as those that follow, are a synthetic reading of the claims made in "The Metaphysical Exposition of the Concept of Time" in *Critique of Pure Reason*, 1965, 74-91.

mediate and even precede our experience of time's passing. It may be argued that the technologies of Kant's Newtonian age, which ordered phenomena according the reversible processes of the succession and simultaneity of events, indicate that even the philosopher's apprehension of time was always already mediated or contaminated by the mechanical clock-work technologies that made time visible and measurable so that it might be organized in turn by social conventions and then abstracted by transcendental-metaphysical and political propositions.

What is at stake in the Kantian abstraction of time from experience ? On an ethical and political level, this pure kind of formalism precludes the possibility of a transforming experience for subjectivity. The subject applies the law of perception or even of action—a law given outside of all experience—to the given data of experience, leaving the subject an essential form of mastery over all possible experiences, experiences which could not fundamentally upset, disturb, or transform subjectivity.

To this Kantian conception, Agacinski revalorizes the Aristotelian conception—as that which is philosophically more modern, more fit to understanding our experience of the transformations brought about by the mediation of reproducible images (2000, 47). Because Aristotle surpasses the philosophical dualism separating the temporal from the eternal and the intelligible from the sensible, he is able to look at the world of beings in their becomingness, beings which are touched by the material contingency and accidental eventfulness of the world. Moreover, for all of the formal hierarchy by which the teleological potential of the soul could and should accomplish itself in an ideal sense, these beings are not placed in an ideal world in their becomingness; they are necessarily separated from the possibility of this formal accomplishment of generation or corruption by the form of time itself.

What then is time? Aristotle, in the *Physics*, inscribes the possibility of time in the point of interference between the movement of the world and the counting soul—

between the objective worlds of becoming things and the subjective world of the observer or witness—time being the possibility of the experience of movement between the witness and the movement⁷. In this sense, time would be neither a pure origin nor a pure interiority that could be separated from the empirical life that structures and composes it. Movement and time entertain a reciprocal relationship, the one measuring the other. The order of succession and duration cannot be measured outside of experience because they condition the proportions, the regular rhythms or cycles by which things succeed one another or enter into some kind of the regular return of movement.

The most fundamental rhythm or beating of this movement, Agacinski asks, is it not that of the breath of life itself (2000, 53) ? Breathing, in this sense, would be accordingly be an exemplary experience which permits things to take their breath, and to sense the perceptible beatings of their own bodies, to bring to their consciousness an occasion to reflect upon their own temporalities. It would occasion a perception and a consciousness which could not be transcended or abstracted but which must continuously be repeated in order to exchange with the outside the air which circulates and alternates with the inside. If time passes like breath, then it would not be given to a transcendental form of consciousness like an empty and homogeneous formal category of succession but would belong to the most fundamental biological-physical experience of generation and corruption.

In the historical perspective of the development of group formations and temporal arrangements, this biotic experience or rhythm gradually lent itself to a

⁷ The general outlines of Aristotle's conception of time, experience, and movement may be surmised in Section 10, Book IV of the *Physics*.

cosmic form of reckoning in the form of astronomical calendars⁸. This allowed for a kind of conventional periodicity or cycle of days, and traces and markers were developed in this order of repeated experience. However, the development of a chronometric art or science using traces and markers should not be construed as a fetishization of a time that would exist elsewhere, outside of experience. This chronometric operation allowed time to be configured on a calendar, for example, to make visible the hidden astronomical and social rhythms of time, to commemorate important births and deaths, and to mark out the possibilities of actions and events for the anticipated phases of experience in the future.

Aristotle is careful to show that the experience of movement makes time visible—because time also shows the commensurable difference between periodic movements; therefore, time must not be construed to be identical to movement, as the figure of a circle might suggest. The experience of time can only really be finally distinguished from movement because these movements are, for all of their regularity, entirely singular. This singularity indicates a relationship of irreversibility which is fundamental to the experience of time because it belongs to the principles of generation and corruption.

It may become clear why the Aristotelian view of temporality needs to be revalorized in this context: because it shows how temporal experience is organized by technics, it forces us to reconsider a theory of the subject in which the subjectivity is constituted by the empirical passage and passing experience of images of time. As I argued at the end of Chapter 1, this experience of passage may be imagined in the figure of the time-passer: the one who has lost an absolute horizon of temporality in order to pass into multiple and heterogeneous temporalities, the witness and the

⁸ As Jeremy Rifkin has pointed out, the shift in emphasis was a consequence of the metamorphosis of human societies from the nomadic existence of hunter-gatherer economies to more sedentary agricultural forms of existence (1987, 84).

ferryman who becomes the point of passage of the alterations and velocities of images that trace and render visible the passing of time. In the experience of the time-passer, the movement of a negative suspension or emptying is accompanied by an openness and fullness of attention to the radical alterity and breathing life of time-images.

Reconfiguring Subjectivity in the Time of the Image

Gilles Deleuze integrates Tarkovsky's concept of rhythm into his own system of the time-image. Deleuze argues that Tarkovsky's insight regarding the subordination of montage to temporal duration and rhythm, articulates something of the historical transition and transformation between two opposing semiotic systems of cinema, "l'image-mouvement" and "l'image-temps." Following this division, Tarkovsky's critique of Eisenstein may be inscribed in a more general historical crisis of the movement-image in postwar cinema; a crisis in which the direct time-image of cinema comes to the fore over against the indirect image of time; time no longer being subordinated to the movement but rather movement, and montage with it, being derived from a more direct presentation of time.

These opposing semiotic systems may not in fact be so rigidly defined historically between post-war films and its predecessors but the tendencies in post-war cinema are sufficiently different from those of classical models of cinema to defend the usefulness of the opposition in a historical and an extra-historical sense. In the extra-historical sense of film-poetics, I would defend the idea that these categories of the time-image and the movement-image may even be permeable within the registers of a single film and even in the frames of a single shot; although the images of a film like *Mirror* may belong more emphatically to the model of the time-image, by the subordination of action and movement to the suspension of time in the image, one might defend the idea that the time-image and the movement-image alternate and exchange constantly in the

mobile semiotic powers of the cinematographic image. Something of this mutually constituting relationship between the movement-image and time-image can even be discerned in his discussion of Tarkovsky's ideas concerning the "time-pressures" of the shots:

Dans un texte de grande portée, Tarkovsky dit que l'essentiel, c'est la manière dont le temps s'écoule dans le plan, sa tension ou sa raréfaction, « la pression du temps dans le plan ». Il a l'air de s'inscrire ainsi dans l'alternative classique, plan *ou* montage, et d'opter vigoureusement pour le plan (« la figure cinématographique n'existe qu'à l'intérieur du plan »). Mais ce n'est qu'une apparence, puisque la force ou la pression du temps sort des limites du plan, et que le montage opère et vit dans le temps. Ce que Tarkovsky refuse, c'est que le cinéma soit comme un langage opérant avec des unités même de différents ordres : le montage n'est pas une unité d'ordre supérieur qui s'exercerait sur les unités-plans, et qui donnerait aux images-mouvement comme le temps comme qualité nouvelle. L'image-mouvement peut être parfaite, elle reste amorphe, indifférente et statique si elle n'est déjà pénétrée par les injections de temps qui mettent le montage en elle, et altèrent le mouvement » (1985 ; 60).

In this sense, montage no longer functions according to the sensori-motor scheme of actions and movement but becomes a "montrage" or that which shows or presents the very suspension of action and movement, and which, in the play of speeds and durations of film, bodies forth a pure optical and aural perception of time. Neither the shot nor montage have been overcome but both have changed their function, being more originally encountered and grounded in the rhythmic forces and pressures of the time-image, as Deleuze remarks :

Le temps dans un plan doit s'écouler indépendamment et, si l'on peut dire, de son propre chef: c'est seulement à cette condition que le plan déborde l'image-mouvement, et le montage, la représentation indirecte du temps, pour communier tous deux dans une image-temps directe, l'un déterminant la forme ou plutôt la force du temps dans l'image, l'autre les rapports de temps ou de forces dans la succession des images (rapports qui ne se réduisent précisément pas à la succession, pas plus que l'image ne se réduit au mouvement). (1985 ;60)

Montage and shot do not contain time but instead are overflowing with the immanent plane of time's flowing duration. Neither montage nor shot can be separated distinctly from each other in their "montrage." In Kantian terms, shot and montage are the formal

conditions for the possibility of having a direct perception of the time-image. Each component determines the force of time integral to the cinematographic image or the relationships between different forces of time as these images are set in succession, and these forces, Deleuze explains, are irreducible to movement and succession.

Here I think it may be necessary to make explicit what is only implicit in Deleuze's argument: that these irreducible and singular forces reconfigure perception and experience by allowing time to flow in its becoming, multiplicity, and irrational intervals: and this direct presentation of the forces of time changes what it means to think. It should be remembered that Deleuze's larger philosophical project privileges a critical perspective of the cinema as a kind of "thought-machine" in which several forms of understanding converge to produce cultural strategies for imaging and imagining the world. In D.N. Rodowick's words, "the development of cinema provides a privileged site for comprehending a decisive shift in the strategies of signification, understanding, and belief that is no less true for aesthetic thinking than it is for philosophical and scientific thinking. This shift concerns the question of time" (1997; 5). The time-image and the time-image practices of postwar cinema reveal the possibility of writing a cinematic history of philosophy and a philosophical history of cinema. For the cinema may be considered "a kind of thought-machine or spiritual automata that can map the mental cartographies of an epoch" (1997; 6). Rodowick remarks that this is close to what it means to picture an era's image of thought, something close to picturing, as on a plane of immanence to its concepts, "what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought" as Deleuze and Guatarri have argued in *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie ?*

The full implications of this vision of the cinema as a thought-machine are outlined by Réda Bensmaïa in his discussion of Deleuze's concept of the spiritual automaton:

Devenue « automate spirituel » (« machine » non-dialectique), le cinéma devra aussi conquérir une nouvelle force : celle qui en fera un « automate » toujours, mais cette fois, comme machine *a-grammaticale* et *a-rhétorique*. Une machine qui aura le pouvoir de « [...] porter l'image au point où elle devient déductive et automatique, [et de] se substituer aux enchaînements représentatif ou figuratifs sensori-motors » (Deleuze, 1985, p.226-227) (194, 182)

These forces then fundamentally change what it means to think because they sketch something of the movement of thought outside of discursive reference by putting it into contact with an “automatic” power to apprehend the forces of time, or what I have been calling the a-grammatical and non-dialectical rhythm of the cinematographic image⁹. Not only would this mean that filmmakers like Tarkovsky think through the time-images of cinema as philosophers think-through concepts of time, but also that this power might begin to show philosophy how another very powerful form of conceptual thinking might be mediated by the time-image. In Marion Froger’s suggestive words,

[...] la structure cristalline peut envelopper « les ruptures », « les catastrophes », « les bifurcations » par lesquelles passe la pensée et qui lui donnent, si elle sait les rendre, le pouvoir d’appréhender le temps. L’image-cristal en tant qu’image-pensante décrira ainsi un mode de manifestation du concept qui se libère du carcan logico-déductif, de l’enchaînement de propositions. Les images pensantes du cinéma seront des concepts en acte. (2000; 17)

What do we gain by arguing that the crystalline structure of the time-image would be that which mobilizes a noetic force of thinking that is not predicated by rational discourse ? On the one hand, this would seem to suggest the possibility of conceiving the work of thinking outside of its seat in a transcendental subjectivity and those modes of language in which this subjectivity is constituted, a way of conceiving of the movement and act of thinking within this temporal mode of immanence in the world.

⁹ Again, I hesitate to qualify this power as a-rhetorical because the figuration of time seems to be suggested even when discussing the image as a « crystal »; therefore, the effort to theorize that which escapes figuration cannot itself be a-rhetorical thinking but only a different order or mode of figuration itself, in this case a crystalline chemical mode over against a linguistic-narrative-discursive mode.

The crystals of the time-image would liberate thinking insofar as they allow this immanent subjectivity to travel within several different modes of crystallizing time.

If the crystalline order of the time-image makes these irrational and multiple intervals of immanent becoming felt and known to the attentive time-passer (director/spectator), then clearly the inquiry into the nature of time cannot be separated from a theory of subjectivity; this is also the true meaning and pertinence of the concept “temporality” since it designates the phenomenal experience of time for subjectivity. Deleuze’s Bergsonian demonstration of the material fabric of duration in film does indicate a way of thinking-through this inseparable relationship between time and subjectivity. The time-image of the cinema shows us that time is itself neither a pure exterior substance through which we move nor something internal to us and which is made available for psychological “introspection”. How so ? Briefly stated, the time-image, suspended from dominance of sensori-motor movement and action, is experienced as a complex intercalation of perception and memory in which body, mind, and nature cannot be so easily opposed; an intercalation in which the phases of time co-exist, coalesce, and circulate between virtual and actual states for a subjectivity in a state of becoming. For the purposes of having a working hypothesis to be tested and modified in the course of the question concerning rhythm, I would like to cite Deleuze’s recovery of Bergson’s definitive distinction of time :

La seule subjectivité, c’est le temps, le temps non-chronologique saisi dans sa fondation, et c’est nous qui sommes intérieurs au temps, non l’inverse. Que nous soyons dans le temps a l’air d’un lieu commun, c’est pourtant le plus haut paradoxe. Le temps n’est pas l’intérieur en nous, c’est juste le contraire, l’intériorité dans laquelle nous sommes, nous nous mouvons, vivons, et changeons. (1985; 110)

While this conception of time is important for a renewed critique and conception of subjectivity in the time-image of film, clearly the paradox of our foundation in time will remain enigmatic until the questioning is pushed further in the direction of a

phenomenal exploration of the temporality of the image. The metaphysical exposition of the concept of time is less interesting because of its essential abstraction from experience, as I argued in relation to Kant's conception. Exploring Tarkovsky's theory of rhythm in terms of the pneumatic experience of the time-image, we are in a position to show how rhythm names the experience of the material passage of time as it is traced and as it breathes in the medium of film. In order to articulate the full implications of this materialist conception of filmic experience in terms of its "rhythmic temporality," we will be led in the direction of the Aristotelian constellation of concepts. Before following this less-traveled path, however, it might be best to interrogate the conventional notions and legacies of the rhythmic features and properties of film. Until we have taken a critical distance from the institutional practice of film studies which predetermines many of the ways by which the constitution of the subject and the subject's relationship to time is understood, we cannot inquire into the nature of this rhythmic temporality of experience.

The Legacy of Rhythm as an Aesthetic Principle in Film-Art

We might begin by asking why the idea of rhythm as the organizing principle of the film medium is often avoided, evacuated or ignored by film theorists. This question is enormous and must be confronted in relation to the modern institutionalization of film studies. As I have suggested, Tarkovsky's notorious critique of Eisenstein's theory and practice of intellectual montage may be understood as a larger epistemological critique of the modernity of the institution of film studies in general. For the question of the medium of film, in this case the principle of its temporal materiality or rhythm, was evacuated from film theory and practice for political and pedagogical purposes at a historical moment when the cinema was being institutionalized as film-art.

Indeed, one might undertake to study how the historical precedence for this kind of thinking of the organic relationship between time and film has been systematically ignored, suppressed, marginalized or tamed in terms of aesthetic and narrative principles of film-form. This is the direction Silvestra Mariniello's thinking takes in relation to her discussion of Pasolini's film-practice. Mariniello demonstrates that Pasolini's ideas regarding the temporal materiality of the film medium lead him to define the necessity of filming history by analogy rather than by representation. This is a film-practice in which the coexistence of present and past (modern and pre-modern) are never collapsed but are presented in their radical distance, separation and difference. Such an analysis indicates how Pasolini's film practice finds other historical echoes in the work of Kuleshov, Vertov, and Bazin:

Le discours de Pasolini sur l'impossibilité pour le cinéma de représenter le passé, nous le retrouvons chez d'autres metteurs en scène et théoriciens du cinéma. On pense à Koulechov, qui parlait, lui aussi, de relation organique entre le cinéma et la vie, et qui disait que les uniformes d'un policier ou d'un officier tsariste sont absolument anticinématographiques. On pense à Vertov qui parlait de l'impossibilité de filmer quelque chose qui ne soit pas là, présent. « Je peux écrire [avec la caméra] simultanément pendant que les événements arrivent. Je ne peux pas écrire sur la réunion du Komsomol après qu'elle a déjà eu lieu ». On pense finalement à Bazin, à sa réflexion sur la matérialité « magique » de la photographie ; à son analyse du néoréalisme italien et à son étude de la durée au cinéma. Ce n'est pas par hasard si l'on retrouve le même type de discours chez ces auteurs. Il s'agit de gens qui se sont trouvés à opérer à des moments particuliers de l'histoire du cinéma : d'un côté, le moment où le cinéma se faisait institutionnaliser en tant qu'art narratif ; de l'autre, l'après-guerre, avec la crise d'un système de valeurs et le début d'un autre système. (1994 ; 45)

The legacy of Tarkovsky's ideas may be traced in a similar way: the insights regarding the organic rapport between cinema, life, and time were either put aside when he became one of the grand "auteurs" of contemporary cinema or they were transformed into aesthetic principles of film art. Why should this be so ? I am arguing, in the light of Tarkovsky's critique of Eisenstein, that the living temporality of film—its rhythm-- has been disregarded or removed from attention because it holds the power to upset an

instrumental relationship between life and the subject and, in its plastic temporal materiality, also radically dispossesses a rational relationship to language. Rather than being the primary founding principle of the ontology and phenomenology of the cinematographic image, rhythm was relegated to a secondary role in relation to techniques of montage and editing and became an aesthetic principle for achieving stylistic effects. Rhythm, as an aesthetic principle, instead of opening free-relationships to the concept of film-as-life, consolidated the discursive formation of film-as-art; the traditional philosophical opposition between technics and life was reinforced instead of being called into question, and the “unruly” or “irrational” elements encountered in the film medium were either tamed or ignored. I have indicated that Tarkovsky’s theory is inscribed in a profound ambivalence because his insights regarding the time-based medium of film, while affording a potentially powerful critique of the institutionalization of cinema studies under the tutelage of art history and aesthetics, are re-inscribed in terms of aesthetic principles of art. It is as if Tarkovsky’s experience and experimentation with audio-visual technique surpassed his ability to recount the significance of this experience without falling back upon traditional categories. Yet his reflections on rhythm afford a suggestive critique of the very system he would seem to have vindicated.

Something of the destiny of this traditional concept of rhythm, understood as a formalist aesthetic principle in film-art, may be surmised in the treatment given it by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson’s textbook, already in its seventh edition: *Film Art, An Introduction*. Briefly stated, Bordwell and Thompson discuss rhythm as a formal and stylistic property of cinematography, an art-form that can be instrumentally controlled to shape certain formal expectations in spectators, guiding their attention, and affecting the inferences they draw in their understanding of narrative events :

[...]the filmmaker decides how long the shot will last on the screen. Within the confines of the shot's duration, the director can control the rhythm of time as it unfolds. Although the issue of rhythm in cinema is enormously complex and still not well understood, we can say roughly that it involves, at least, a *beat* or a pulse, a pace (what musicians call *tempo*), and a pattern of accents, or stronger and weaker beats. ([1979] 1997; 197)

Bordwell and Thompson never hint at Tarkovsky's conception of "sculpting in time" when they address the theory of rhythm. Very clearly, the "enormous complexity" of rhythm serves at once to highlight the controlling power of the director-subject as well as the integrity of the spectator subject with respect to the self-identity of his or her understanding within the formal unfolding of the film in time. In this instance, rhythm "roughly" reaffirms itself as a subject of interest insofar as it relates to the proliferation of technical problems and measurable possibilities (montage, mobile frame, mise-en-scene, and sound) offered by the pulse, pace and accented pattern encountered in the production of the film.

Yet, we may ask, what if rhythm is more than a formal alteration of beats and accents, more than a stylistic problem of the continuous or discontinuous metrics of images and sounds in the apparatus? Is the technics or goings-on of rhythm, and audiovisual technique generally, something merely technical? By posing this question, itself formulated in the light of Heidegger's profound hypothesis that the essence of technics is nothing itself merely technical, we may be in a position to see how the complexity of rhythm is more fundamentally a philosophical question concerning the technics of time in which a modern theory of the subject is articulated, critiqued, and reconfigured. Rather than being a "formal alteration of metrical accents for a given subject," rhythm would then be something closer to "the invention and organization of subjectivity in time¹⁰." This is, after all, what is revealed in Bordwell and Thompson's disavowal: the

¹⁰ I will be returning to the implications of this poetic-ethical-political formulation in the light of Henri Meschonnic's conception of rhythm outside of aesthetics. This critical gesture characterizes the discursive critique and invention of all of his later work (1982; 1990; 1995).

investigation of rhythm, while relegated to technical and formal problems in the study of film-art, is consistently related to the organization of a stable place for mapping the essentially univocal structure of the subject. This structure underlies the understanding of the subject of the film (narrative and plot) while securing the identity of the viewer (spectator in the face of a mobile screen-story), maintaining the controlling agency and intentionality of the director (montage, editing effects), and instrumentalizing cinematography (the apparatus of the mobile frame, etc.). How is this done ?

In the first place, Bordwell and Thompson's analysis of rhythm as a metrical pulse, pace, and accented pattern must begin by considering the cinematographic image and audio-visual technique as a problem of manipulating movement in a discursively operated frame of action in order to achieve certain effects. To corroborate this view they return in several chapters to the rhythmic editing and sound effects of Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* (1938), a film financed by the Nazi governments during the 1936 Olympic games. Bordwell and Thompson explain how the "response cues" of this film betray the symptomatic meaning of Nazi ideology. However ideological these cues may be, Bordwell and Thompson marvel at their rhythmic powers from a purely formal point of view. They defend the abstraction and redefinition of these powers in the more absolute categories of film-style: the build-up effect of charged editing, the narrative pace of jump-backs and cuts, the interaction of voice-overs and silences during shots, the powerful and grandiose Wagnerian-style of music.

The grandiose settings and the framing and editing patterns that turn the athletes into superhuman beings support elements of Nazi mythology of the supremacy of certain races. Framing also brings out the regimentation of events. The Wagnerian music accords with the norms of official Nazi culture. Luckily these ideas have little appeal for us today, and a modern audience is unlikely to respond to *Olympia* in the same way that Germans might have in the late 1930's. But by demarcating the film's categories and tracing out patterns of development, the style can endow categorical form with considerable interest and emotion.

Nowhere is it clearer than in this quote how the aesthetic determination of rhythm in terms of the absolute categories film-form may be used to evacuate history by casting a so-called modern and educated glance that we are “lucky” to be able to cast upon earlier propagandistic techniques because we no longer share the ideas that support them. Rather than share the Benjaminian concern with the “aestheticization of politics” through film, in which the mass mediation of the body politic is intimately connected, articulated and constituted by the infinitely extendable control of rhythmic effects, they make this facile and ambivalent apology for film form. Such a perspective, because it relies upon the distinction between film-form and film-content as well as their potential separation in the study of film-art, makes it possible to understand aesthetics outside of ideology even when this aesthetics is always already determined by the political conditions of the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. Clearly such a perspective has the power of rendering innocuous, if not unthinkable, the critical implications of rhythm as a poetical-political-ethical principle by which subjectivity is organized in time.

Indeed, in Bordwell and Thompson’s analysis, the problem of time is consistently subordinated to the technical problems of movement. Even when the mobile frame of camera movement is impressed with the duration of time, as in the films of Ozu and Mizoguchi (p.251), this consuming moment of screen time is analyzed only in order to compare film “styles” or in order to discover the formal mechanisms in film that fulfill the “arc of raised expectations” given in the narrative unfolding of story and plot. In this instance, rhythm never releases time in its organic rapport with life, never allows time to be made visible nor audible in its essential negativity, suspension, or

emptiness¹¹; rhythm is consistently subjected to movement, diegetic action and cognitive-psychological intention.

While Bordwell and Thompson do discuss the graphic and rhythmic possibilities of nonnarrative films using “abstract and associational form” as an alternative to continuity editing (the films of Stan Brakhage, Bruce Conner, and Léger-Dudly Murphy, Jean Epstein, Lev Kuleshov, and Jean-Luc Godard are discussed, pp.300-303) they never seem to draw out the epistemological implications involved in the subordination of the temporal and spatial editing factors to rhythmic ones. The investigation of rhythm never upsets the essentially narrative set-up of film study since, within this discursive framework, it can only report the stylistic conventions of film-form. Rhythmic “factors” only imply a form of discontinuity editing, a style different in degree and not in nature from continuity editing, and even narrative film seems finally to encompass and to assimilate this stylistic difference historically.

The analysis of the rhythmic “dimension” of film-sound takes a similar path; Bordwell and Thompson are alert to the complexity of pace, pulse and accented pattern of film-sound, but again only in a stylistic sense that reduces rhythm to a problem of the formal co-operation of image and sound tracks :

Any consideration of the rhythmic uses of sound is complicated by the fact that the movements in the images have a rhythm as well, distinguished by the same principles of beat, speed, and accent. In addition, the editing has a rhythm. As we have seen, a succession of short shots help create a rapid tempo, whereas shots held longer tend to slow down the rhythm. (327)

The visual and sonic rhythms are either matched (as in Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers’ choreographies of dance in *Swing Time*) or they set against one another (as in Chris Marker’s *La Jetée*, combining long still shots with rapid voice-overs and sound effects).

¹¹ The argument for this will follow in my discussion of Deleuze’s Bergsonian conception of the image-crystal of time in cinema.

Since rhythm, for Bordwell and Thompson, is never more than a technical dimension or factor in the style of film form, it is never related to the more philosophical problems of audio-visual mediation : rhythm as it relates to the temporality of subjectivity, the material inscription of experience and memory, or the speed of historical events¹². This is not to categorically reject nor to discard the vocabulary and methods of analysis in film-form and film-art, for we may inevitably have recourse to them in the analysis of sequences and shots from Tarkovsky's *Mirror*. Rather, it is to recognize the limits of what can be thought under this modern paradigm for film-analysis and to investigate the potential for developing a theory of rhythm that would be articulated outside of the discursive framework of aesthetics, film-art, and narrative-linguistic analysis.

This would mean side-stepping the mainstream critique of Tarkovsky's work, even those studies which are sensitive to the questions of time and memory in his films and his writings. Predictably, these studies usually follow this conventional paradigm of film-study by limiting the question concerning rhythm to that which is of a merely technical, stylistic, or thematic nature. The most recent scholarly publication of Tarkovsky's corpus of work by Vida T. Johnson and Graham Petrie, *The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky: A Visual Fugue* (1994), consolidates this paradigm and even critically synthesizes and corrects all previous reviews and analyses under it. Although they mention Tarkovsky's effort to conceptualize a theory and a practice of rhythm, reiterated in his films, lectures, writings, and interviews, they do no more than summarize and reduce this conception in one single paragraph (p. 37), in the chapter devoted to showing how Tarkovsky was busy "Shaping an Aesthetics," imagining himself in the role of the prophetic artist-genius in dialogue with the other arts.

¹² While not limited to these problems, each of these receives extended treatment in Part II.

Even in the chapter devoted to a consideration of “Imprinted Time,” rhythm is never investigated as anything more than the measurable quality of the chronometric-time of long-shots and sequences and the manageable quality of the variable number of frames per second; this reduces the materiality of rhythm to the instrumental art of metrics. As such, rhythm is never more than one among many stylistic elements which “share the common function in forcing the viewer to constantly readjust his or her expectations about what will appear on screen, in what order, and how it will be presented” (1994; 198). While suited to an overall narrative analysis of film, this cognitive-interpretative approach to film viewing, itself affiliated with the precepts of transcendental phenomenology and hermeneutics, always unquestioningly reproduces a modern theory of subjectivity in which the subject is constituted before temporal experience, *a priori*, and is secured over time between the “already” and the “next.” The temporal materiality of film, its rhythm, must be reductively “judged” in narrative-discursive retrospection as “information” to be adjusted in the light of “new information.”

This is, in fact, what happens as they analyze the shots and sequences of *Mirror* (Johnson and Petrie, 1986; 119). For example, the mysteriously unassignable images of sequence III (the childhood memory of the barn burning beside the dacha) and the magically indiscernible images of sequence IV (the dream of awakening to his mother’s image) are all “situated” and “placed” for the viewer in sequence V (Alexei the narrator calling his mother). The complex temporal composition of images, the material duration of elements and phantasmagoric deceleration of shots are never explored as powers of the cinematographic image as an image; instead they are reduced as mere stylistic elements¹³. The overriding objective of such an analysis is to secure the place of the viewer (and the narrative instance of authority) in the diegetic environment of the

¹³ See Part III in which an alternative analysis of these sequences and shots is elaborated.

film's chronotopes. Yet it seems clear that Tarkovsky's conception and practice of rhythm, when pushed to a critique of subjectivity and modernity, might put into question the arc of expectations organizing the field of this conventional kind of analysis and open up other possibilities for thought.

Rhythm as Ethos : A Critique of Deleuze's Crystal-Image

I have argued that this theory of rhythm indicates a way of thinking about the cinema as a practice and an action (praxis) that allows the pre-logical and a-grammatical material reality of the world to appear and to flow before it is spoken for by linguistic utterances and signifiers. This is suggested by dismantling Eisenstein's conception of intellectual montage and the dialectical regime of truth; for rhythm is not simply a poetics of montage but a technics, poesis, and phusis, of temporality in which the logical and grammatical treatment of the image is subordinated to the rhetorical sculpting of the forces, pressures or thrusts of time. Secondly, the theory of rhythm indicates a way of thinking-through the temporal materiality of the film medium; in this case the dynamic dimension of rhythm is not an objectifiable property but a series of relationships, capable of infinite variation and experiment. This is suggested by calling into question the institutionalized theory of rhythm as a definitive formal aesthetic principle in the service of a signifying subject; for rhythm is not merely a technical dimension of film-art but a dynamic principle on the side of film-life, movement and becoming, a principle in which and by which subjectivity may be invented and organized in time.

For all of these reasons then, the theory of rhythm may be shaped as a critique of the discursive configuration of aesthetics, morality and science, the trivium of Enlightenment thinking which underlies a great deal of the principles of film studies—as I have briefly shown in this critique of the work by Bordwell and Thompson (1997), as well as that of Johnson and Petrie (1994). Moreover, the theory of rhythm allows us

to rethink the Aristotelian relationships between *poetics, politics and ethics*. Rhythm, as a dynamic principle of life and a practice of action, is closer to the concept of *ethos* than it is to the formal and stylistic categories of aesthetics.

Does Deleuze's sub-category of the crystals of the time-image contribute to, or militate against, the open inquiry into this theory of rhythm ? This is the question that I would like to guide the following reflection. Since Deleuze interrogates the figure of the mirror and even comments upon Tarkovsky's *Mirror* in his discussion of the crystals of time (Chapître 4: *Les cristaux du temps*) , it would seem reasonable to begin by understanding what is involved in this concept of the crystal. Deleuze begins, "Le cinéma ne présente pas seulement des images, il les entoure d'un monde. C'est pourquoi il a cherché très tôt des circuits de plus en plus grands qui uniraient une image actuelle à des images-souvenir, des images-rêve, des images-monde" (92). The image is not simply presented or projected as the photogrammic unity of a original beginning or ending to be surpassed in a chain of images but becomes rather the *milieu* out of which emerges a series of relations to other types of images. As a milieu, the actual image opens a path of concentric circuits between different temporal modes (memory, revery, world) by which other virtual forms of images might be activated. Contracting and dilating the circuits of images, Deleuze sees in this the possibility of imaging for every actual image a double virtual image that responds like a mirror or reflection.

En termes bergsoniens, l'objet réel se réfléchit dans une image en miroir comme l'objet virtuel qui, de son côté et en même temps, enveloppe ou réfléchit le réel : il y a « coalescence » entre les deux. Il y a formation biface. C'est comme si une image en miroir, une photo, une carte postale s'animaient, prenaient de l'indépendance et passaient dans l'actuel, quitte à ce que l'image actuelle revienne dans le miroir, reprenne place dans la carte postale ou photo, suivant un double mouvement de libération et de capture. (92-93)

The crystal-image is a kind of time-mirror in which the actual image is always co-present with the additional time of its passing or its coming to be and this allows the crystal image to be something more than a temporal representation, defined by the

sensori-motor schemes of action. The double movement of liberation and capture opened by this circuit between the virtual image and the actual image, allows different temporalities to become folded and enveloped in their alternating exchange. As Deleuze goes on to argue, its most contracted exchange, this circuit is constituted around a point of indiscernability; however, when the bifocal image finds its genetic-double element, it can produce larger circles of exchange. When Deleuze argues that this image “crystallizes” the indiscernible point between the actual and virtual image, he insists that this indiscernibility is not simply in someone’s head, like a subjective illusion, but constitutes an objective illusion, a kind of hallucinating suspension of time. In other words, it does not suppress the distinction between the two faces of the mirrors but renders the distinction unassignable because the circuit of the virtual and actual image is infinitely reversible.

Indiscernibility is clearly the key to understanding what Deleuze means by the crystalline order of the time-image because it shows this image to have many faces and these multifaceted crystal images make visible the ceaseless fracturing or splitting of nonchronological time (Rodowick, 92). The indiscernible circuit of the crystal-image makes itself visible, Deleuze explains, by means of three figures : the actual and the virtual (two mirrors face to face), the limpid and the opaque, and the seed and the milieu.

Mirrors in the films of Losey, Ophuls, and Welles figure this circuit between actual and virtual images: the mirror image is virtual in relation to the actual person whose image it seizes but actual in relation to a persona who is left only a kind of virtual existence. In the proliferation of images, their ensemble absorbs the actuality of the actor and makes of it one virtual image among others. This movement of absorption and dissolution holds the power to shatter and reconfigure subjectivity in Bergsonian terms, for the body of the subject becomes only one privileged image among others.

The constant exchange between the actual and the virtual, Deleuze explains, is given a special expression:

Distincts, mais indiscernables, tels sont l'actuel et le virtuel qui ne cessent de s'échanger. Quand l'image virtuelle devient actuelle, elle est alors visible et limpide, comme dans le miroir ou la solidité du cristal achevé. Mais l'image actuelle devient virtuelle pour son compte, renvoyée ailleurs, invisible, opaque et ténébreuse, comme un cristal dégagé de la terre. Le couple actuel-virtuel se prolonge donc immédiatement en opaque-limpide, expression de leur échange. (95)

"Opaque and limpid" then is the expression of the indiscernible passing or exchange between actual and virtual images, and it points to an increasing clarity or obscurity depending on whether the actual is brought into focus through the virtual or the actual obscured and left lapsing in a virtual state. In other words, "opaque and limpid" expresses a scale of intelligibility in the image even while this image is "unassignably" divided between the actual and the virtual state of becoming; more, this scale of intelligibility is defined as a function of the quasi-chemical state of the crystal-image (this state being defined, for example, by the sharp and hard definition of the image, or the cloudy, dirty, unpolished surface of the image).

Finally, Deleuze explains, the indiscernibility of the crystal-image expresses a third relation: "Le cristal ne se réduit plus à la position extérieure de deux miroirs face à face, mais à la disposition interne d'un germe par rapport au milieu" (96). What does this mean? Seed and milieu, as Rodowick has helpfully explained, in contradistinction to this scale of intelligibility (opaque and limpid), "define genetic elements wherein narratives are created out of the indiscernibility of the actual and the virtual. Seeds are virtual elements that generate actual diegetic environments" (1997; 93). This disposition of seed and milieu would allow the actual-virtual circuit of the image to do more than infinitely circulate between the reflections of two mirrors, to become more than the limpid or opaque expression of this circulation, but to generate something else, perhaps something like the material out of which a narrative *mise-en-récit* or *mise-*

en intrigue might unfold. Deleuze intimates that the seed and milieu generate something like diegetic environments by discussing the opening scene of Welles' *Citizen Kane* in which the artificial snow, falling in the crystal ball dropped by the hand of the dead Kane, generates the flashback to the snowfall scene of his childhood where he plays with his sled "Rosebud."

What do we gain by arguing that the crystalline structure of the time-image would be that which mobilizes a noetic force of thinking or conceptualizing outside of discourse? On the one hand, this would seem to suggest the possibility of conceiving the work of thinking outside of its seat in a transcendental subjectivity and those modes of language in which this subjectivity is constituted, a way finally of conceiving of the movement and the act of thinking within this temporal mode of immanence in the world. The crystals of the time-image would liberate thinking insofar as they allow this immanent subjectivity to travel within several different modes of time's crystallization. The mode of this crystallization would potentially change, and Deleuze describes different modalities of crystallization in different directors: Welles' unequivocal time-image, Robbe Grillet's inexplicable time-image, Renais' undecidable time-image and Godard's incommensurable time-image. Each time, what is experienced is a new quality of time and of time's unfolding in the activity of thinking.

In Tarkovsky's *Mirror*, one might discuss these qualities of temporality in terms of these figures of the actual-virtual, limpid-opaque and seed-milieu when analyzing the shots from Alexei's nightmarish dream in the third sequence. For as we watch the phantasmagoric image of Alexei's mother Maria wash her hair, walk through the liquefied halls of the dacha, and confront her image in the mirror (See Sequence 3; shots 24-25, Part III), time is made visible and audible in all of its thickness and pith as well as in its undecidable reference, unequivocal beauty and horror, and incommensurable distance.

On the other hand, it may be questioned, does this mode of mobilizing concepts in the immanence of thinking, by means of the different modes of the crystallization of time, give us anything more than a sophisticated taxonomy or topology for understanding the mechanics of thinking or the mechanisms of the time-image ? And what would this taxonomy or topology have to do with the problematic question concerning rhythm ? Does rhythm insert itself within the general system of the typology of the time-image or does it indicate the necessity for inventing another approach ? To raise this question is to not to attack Deleuze's enterprise categorically but to wonder what can and what cannot be recuperated in his conception of the time-image in the light of a theory of rhythm that questions the category of language itself. One wonders, for example, why Deleuze, after invoking this sophisticated topology of the indiscernible circuits of the crystal image, a topology that would seem to be articulated outside of discourse and narrative as it is normally understood, would return to a rather banal conception of flashback and narrative?

It would appear that Deleuze's discussion begins to degenerate at this moment, a moment where the argument might have taken other turns. Instead, Deleuze allows the topology of his time-philosophy of the crystal image to lapse into what seems nothing more than an excuse to give a critical opinion on which directors have the privilege of entering the crystal-palace hall of fame. In this instance particularly, he contrasts the perfection of Herzog's *Glassbead Game* to the staid, heavy, and closed imperfection of Tarkovsky's *Mirror* :

Il y a chez Tarkovsky une tentative analogue, reprise de film en film, mais toujours refermée : « *Le miroir* » constitue un cristal tournant, à deux faces si on le rapporte au personnage adulte invisible (sa mère, sa femme), à quatre faces si on le rapporte aux deux couples visibles (sa mère et l'enfant qu'il a été, sa femme et l'enfant qu'il a). Et le cristal tourne sur lui-même, comme une tête chercheuse qui interroge un milieu opaque : Qu'est-ce que la Russie, qu'est-ce que la Russie...? Le germe semble se figer dans ses images trempées, lavées, lourdement translucides, avec ses faces tantôt bleuâtres et tantôt brunes, tandis

que le milieu vert semble sous la pluie ne pas pouvoir dépasser l'état d'un cristal liquide qui garde son secret. (1985; 101)

Here the narrative structure of the film is suggestively resumed but rather conveniently reduced in the figure of the crystal image. The opacity and the fixity of the crystal liquid state is critiqued for three main reasons. First, the crystal, however multi-faceted, only turns on itself rather than contracting and dilating into other circles of images. Second, the nationalist questioning apparently repeats itself rather than opening to the outside. Third, the genetic elements of narrative, overpowered by the raw material of the images, seem to be unable to go beyond or become transformed for a merely liquid crystal state. Having disposed of *Mirror*, Deleuze can now allow himself the liberty of a session of Tarkovsky-bashing by which his other works might be judged for their pessimism, morbidity, and opacity:

Faut-il croire que la planète molle « *Solaris* » donne une réponse et qu'elle réconciliera l'océan et la pensée, le milieu et le germe, assignant à la fois la face transparente du cristal (la femme retrouvée) et la forme cristallisable de l'univers (la demeure retrouvée) ? « *Solaris* » n'ouvre pas cet optimisme et « *Stalker* » rend le milieu à l'opacité d'une zone indéterminée, et le germe à la morbidité de ce qui avorte, une porte close. (1985; 101)

It is clear in the disdainful brevity of these passages that Tarkovsky's films serve merely as the foil against which Deleuze might define his own pantheon of cinematographers. Yet to recognize this is to miss the point also; for Deleuze underestimates the power of the crystal images in Tarkovsky's films. For example, he reduces the opacity and indeterminacy of the crystal images in *Stalker* to a morbid lack of "optimism"; by doing this he ignores the potential to conceive of this opacity in epistemological terms: that which holds onto the distance between the visible and the invisible, the evident and the mysterious, or that which resists the light of rational operations. Again, entirely overlooking the rhythmic features of the film—even in a stylistic or formalist-aesthetic sense—he ignores the rhythmic passages constituted by crystal-image as a fundamental

problem of time, memory, and temporality. Although his taxonomic vocabulary may be recuperated to discuss the descriptive categories of the image, it does not indicate a way to inquire into the non-discursive project of thinking and acting in time with the ethos of film because it does not clarify an approach to the order of the visible based upon a theory of the materiality of rhythm.

In those moments when Deleuze seems interested in commenting upon the elemental material composition of Tarkovsky's images, he never moves his thought alongside the rhythmic possibilities of his films. Instead, he makes a facile connection to Serge Daney's remarks, for whom the materiality of these images are themselves an ideological emblem of the slow glacial "defrosting" of the Soviet empire during the 1970's :

Le lavé de Tarkovsky (la femme qui se lave les cheveux contre un mur humide dans « *Le miroir* »), les pluies qui rythment chaque film, aussi intense que chez Antonioni ou chez Kurosawa, mais avec d'autres fonctions, font sans cesse renaître la question : quel buisson ardent, quel feu, quelle âme, quelle éponge étanchera cette terre ? Serge Daney remarquait que, à la suite de Dovjenko, certains cinéastes soviétiques (ou de l'Europe de l'est comme Zanussi) avaient gardé le goût des matières lourdes, natures mortes denses, qui se trouvaient au contraire éliminés par l'image-mouvement dans le cinéma occidental¹⁴. Dans l'image-cristal il y a cette recherche mutuelle, aveugle et tâtonnante, de la matière et de l'esprit, au delà de l'image-mouvement, « en quoi nous sommes encore pieux ». (1985; 101)

However dissatisfying and reductive this commentary be on the work of Tarkovsky, the emphasis on the materiality of the image deserves more attention. An image that intensifies its materiality and becomes densely saturated and layered in a geological treasure of heavy elements, or--we might add—saturated and layered by the detritus of

¹⁴ « Les Américains ont poussé très loin l'étude du mouvement continu (...) d'un mouvement qui vide l'image de son poids, de sa matière.(...) En Europe, en USSR même, certains se paient le luxe d'interroger le mouvement sur un autre versant : ralenti et discontinu. Paradjanov, Tarkovsky (mais déjà Eisenstein, Dovjenko ou Barnet) regardent la matière s'accumuler et s'engorger, une géologie d'éléments, d'ordures et de trésors se faire au ralenti. Ils font le cinéma du glacis soviétique, cet empire immobile. Que cet empire le veuille ou non(...) » Serge Daney, *Libération*, 29 janvier 1982 (cité par Deleuze 1985; 101).

a toxic landscape of residues, becomes a kind of image-fossil¹⁵ charged with the forces of time.

When we approach the cinematographic image as a “fossil” slowly accumulating and thickly inscribing layers of time, we are in a position to think about its materiality as a “revolution waiting to happen” because it releases a carcinogenic and contaminating influence that makes the present untenable. As an ossified image of time charged with this revolutionary breaking, it holds the power to re-collect memories, private and collective, that have been discarded; a volatile power that can, as objects, colors, faces, and voices brush up against the screen and make contact with the mindscreen of spectators, arouse other memories and activate “inert presences” in even the most recent layers of history.

As I will be concerned in demonstrating in Part II, the “elemental” materiality of time in Tarkovsky’s *Mirror* shows how the “poetics of memory” is also charged with the possibility for this kind of “politics of memory.” A poetics and a politics of memory that might challenge the dominant discourses of history by setting loose the “inert presences” of other histories and memories which are “awakened” by the *ethos* of film, the material debris and flotsam of time which is compressed, accelerated, and expanded in the multiple rhythms of film.

¹⁵ Laura U. Marks (2000) explores the image as a fossil in the chapter, “The Memory of Things,” in which she investigates how the audio-visual techniques of intercultural cinema excavate what she calls *recollection-objects*, irreducibly material objects or artifacts that often embed unresolved traumas of collective memory and encode social processes of migration and displacement. In addition to tracing the histories of transnational objects, Marks places particular emphasis on the concepts of the fetish (Pietz), the radioactive fossil (Deleuze), and the concept of aura (Benjamin; Buck-Morss) as they relate to different orders of contact, contingency and contamination in cinema.

Part II

The Audio-Visual Mediation of Memory, History and Forgetting

Chapter 4 : How is Historical Knowledge Articulated on the Work of Memory ?

- Introduction to Key Debates
- Nuancing the Question of Truth as a Question of Contract
- De-Realizing the Historical Event
- The Phantasmagoric Power of Images
- The Social Character of Memory and Mourning
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- The Compulsion to Assume Subject Positions
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Chapter 4 : Is There A Filmic Vision of History ?

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Chapter 5 : Rhythm and the Mediation of Historical Events

- Introduction
- The Multiple Rhythms and Temporalities of History
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Chapter 4 : Historical Knowledge and the Work of Memory

What is the relationship between the rhythmic temporality of the medium of film and the construction of historical knowledge ? In order to set out the terrain of this question and its relationship to the poetics and politics of memory in Tarkovsky's *Mirror*, it is necessary to sketch out some of the central concerns and key issues raised by the contemporary debate of the "representation of history in cinema." I would like to address the critical discourses¹ of two relatively recent anthologies of essays by major intellectuals, film scholars and historians because both of them renew the terms and nuance the discussion of this problematic: *The Persistence of History : Cinema, Television, and the Modern Event*. (Ed.) Vivian Sobchack. Routledge : NY, 1996; *De l'histoire au cinéma*. (Ed.) Antoine de Baecque et Christian Delage. Éditions complexe : Bruxelles, 1998². At the same time, these two anthologies are vehicles of an implicit "debate" crossing and dividing the interests of academic inquiry in North America and Europe. What seems to be a common preoccupation, the persistent burden of history in cinema, is instead the mark of a clear division, emblematic of divergent institutional values and orientations. Setting the opening editorial remarks of these two relatively recent anthologies, each in its own way addressing the problematic of cinema and the persistence of history,

All of the essays in this volume deal with transformations in the sense and representation of history which emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century, correlative with the birth of cinema, modernity, and « modernism » [...]

¹ The following sections are direct block-citations of my article, "Audio-Visual Mediation: Reconfiguring the Discursive Problematic of Cinema and History" *CiNéMAS*, Vol 11; no.1, automne, 2000, pp. 153-168.

² Sobchack's anthology was edited over several years as a response to a lecture given by Meta-Historian Hayden White on « The Modernist Event » sponsored by the American film Institute (1992). De Baecque and Delage's anthology was edited from transcriptions of conferences given in a research seminar entitled, « Histoire, cinéma, représentations », from 1995-1997 at the *Institut d'histoire du temps présent (CNRS)*.

with the ways in which film and television respond to, interrogate, and create contemporary history [...]. (Sobchack, 1996; p.7)

En animant ce séminaire, notre souhait était de réfléchir à la manière dont le cinéma contribue à la vitalité et la diversité des réflexions actuelles sur l'écriture et le statut de vérité de l'histoire [...] (De Baeque and Delage, 1998; p.13).

One is tempted immediately to begin an archaeological dig into the discursive settings that divide academic inquiry in North America and Europe. Historically, neither anthology addresses the otherⁱ; yet each has a way of reverberating, echoing, and disturbing the voices of the other with important effects. While both editors project large themes, neither shares the initial premise of the other; whereas Antoine De Baeque and Christian Delage objectify the contributions of cinema conservatively as a vitalizing and diversifying force in the domain of a philosophical discourse of history already honorably established, Vivian Sobchack underscores how the advent of modernist cinema and other forms of audio-visual technique have upset the frames of this discourse itself, ushering in a period of radical transformation about the representation, interrogation, and production of history.

Without reducing the richness of the diverse articles included in these anthologies, it might be helpful to paraphrase two opening articles from each of the volumes that best set the stakes of the debate and to highlight key-words, conceptual notions, and discourses that animate it. The main purpose of such a double-headed reading is to produce a field of tensions that reveal how a series of fundamental problems in the critique of historiography have been reformulated, reassessed, and reconfigured by cinema and television studies in the terms of audio-visual mediation.

Nuancing the Question of Truth as a Question of Contract

It becomes extremely interesting to compare the anthologies by discussing the essays of Roger Chartier, « La vérité entre fiction et histoire,» and Hayden White, “ The Modernist

Event.” If the critique of historiography seems to have become a sophisticated and complex debate of problems of rhetoric and theories of narration, one may do well to consult Chartier’s essay for some clarification regarding the historical development (from Hegel to Michel de Certeau) of the fundamental question of the “truth of the narrative of history.” Both Chartier and White agree that the question of truth cannot be reduced to being an inquiry into the conditions of formal narrativity, of merely locating narrative poetics within the traditional typologies of rhetorical figures. Instead the question of truth, explored in the problematic conflation of fiction and historical knowledge, must be discussed in terms of the mediating relationship to reality or “contract” established historically between texts and readers or between screens and spectators. In Chartier’s opening words,

[...] « le statut de vérité du récit d’histoire », concerne...le contrat passé entre l’écriture de l’histoire et le lecteur de l’histoire quant à l’accréditation du récit comme vrai, ce qui renvoie aux parentés et aux différences existant entre toutes les formes de l’écriture narrative, qu’elle soit d’histoire ou de fiction...cette problématique est proche de celle qui vous est familière et qui s’interroge sur le statut de la vérité dans le contrat passé entre le spectateur et le film et sur les effets de réalité produits par les différentes techniques de la reproduction des images (Chartier, 1998; p.29).

It is clear from this statement, and from the absence in this essay of any other remarks made in reference to the reproduction of images, that Chartier considers film as a case of the problem of fiction. Yet one may ask, can the insights generated by the critique of historiography, and enumerated throughout Chartier’s essay, be grafted so easily to problem of the audio-visual mediation of events in the twentieth century ?

De-realizing the Historical Event

This question may be brought into focus by considering what Hayden White has called the transformation, between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of the “historical

event,” discussed again in terms of transformation of the mediating relationship or contract :

The relationship between the historical novel and its projected readership was mediated by a distinctive contract : its intended effects depended upon the presumed capacity of the reader to distinguish between real and imaginary events, between “fact” and “fiction,” and therefore between “life” and “literature.” (White, [1992]1996; p.18)

While reviewing the universally contested status and interpretation of Oliver Stone’s film, *JFK* (1992), White goes on to contend that post-modernist docu-drama or historical metafiction dissolves this “contract” that originally mediated the nineteenth-century author and reader, not so much by reversing the distinction between the real and the imaginary but by placing these distinctions “in abeyance” (p.19). Consequent to this dissolution, White discusses how, the notion of “the historical event” has undergone radical transformation as a result of the occurrence of events in our century of a scope, scale, and depth unimaginable by earlier historians and the dismantling of the concept of the event as an object of a specifically scientific kind of knowledge. The same is true for the notion of “story;” it has suffered tremendous fraying and an at least potential dissolution as a result of both that revolution in representational practices known as cultural “modernism” and the technologies of representation that made possible by the electronics revolution. (p. 22-23)

Following this argument, White links the problem of the loss of transmittable experience, wisdom, and knowledge, (the virtualization of the “storyteller” as discussed by Walter Benjamin) to what Frederick Jameson has described as the “de-realization” of the event. White goes on to discuss how this loss was in turn explored as a de-realization by literary and filmic modernism,

[...] by constantly voiding the event of its traditional narrativistic function of indexing the irruption of fate, destiny, grace, fortune, providence, and even “history” itself into a life [...] and give the life thus affected at worst a

semblance of pattern and at best an actual, transsocial, and transhistorical significance. (p.24-25)

The Phantasmagoric Power of Images

In Hayden White's essay, images of twentieth century catastrophes are discussed, from Chernobyl to the Holocaust, and explosive cases of social interpretation, from the Rodney King video to the Space Shuttle Challenger explosion, in order to qualify the "explosive" and the "unstable, fluid, and phantasmagoric" power of the images of modern media. These images have exerted endless fascination and debate precisely because they are impervious to explication and resistant to narrative representation. The effort to slow the medium down, to bring these phantasmagoric images under the control of words for subjects within the purview of the culture of "literate" television-journalism, was only exacerbated by the repetitive frequency of their transmission, manipulation, and transformation.

It is in this final sense that White nuances the question of truth and the problem of the dissolution of the "contract" alluded to earlier. The modernist images of film, video, and television do not merely constitute a case of the historiography/fiction debate as Chartier implies, but open a series of questions about the new conditions for the mediation of the truth of historical events. According to White, these new conditions are intimated by the emergence of techniques of fictional modernism (stylistic innovations are discussed in reference to substantial citations from J.P. Sartre, Virginia Wolf, and Gertrude Stein). For this reason, the "anti-narrative" techniques of these writers (i.e. the existential shard, the vagrant interval, or the fusion of the inside/outside of stories) are not raised polemically as a critique of historiography since they explore and open new relations to the temporality of the word and the unveiling of truth. Rather than negate "the burden" of history, these modernist techniques hold out another possibility for bridging a "contract" with audio-visual culture: the capacity to negotiate traumatic

experience in the presence of the phenomenal explosion of images and to mourn what is unsayable in the scrambled sense of events witnessed in the twentieth century.

In the sixth chapter of the dissertation I will be concerned with continuing these remarks in the context of the “Post-symbolist modernism” of the Russian Poetry and the heritage of “Acmeism”, particularly as it is transformed in the audio-visual technique of Tarkovksy’s *Mirror*. Before discussing the problems of the temporality of poetry, however, it is necessary to discuss the problems of the mediation of the event and the transmissibility of historical experience in terms of the problems of speed.

The Social Character of Memory and Mourning

Paul Ricoeur’s erudite essay « Mémoire et histoire » opens the anthology *De l’histoire au cinéma*, addressing broad epistemological issues of historical knowledge and cultural memory. Like Chartier’s article in the same anthology, mentioned earlier as a counter-example to Hayden White, it is clear that for Ricoeur the problems posed by the history of cinema and the powers associated with cinematic history/memory are implicitly situated in the midst of this larger philosophical problematic of the mediation of memory; these problems and powers of cinema invoke and open a discursive site of questioning, unexplored by Ricoeur’s earlier work, *Temps et récit* (1983-1985). However, for the editors of the anthology, this questioning seems less a discursive concern and more of a thematic strategy since they reduce Ricoeur’s remarks somewhat, in an effort to circumscribe all the essays within this predicament :

Loin de constituer un simple catalogue d’informations sur ce qui s’est passé, le cinéma construit avec ses spectateurs une relation esthétique et historique...voire même idéologique...nous aidant à mieux comprendre la corrélation entre l’ « intériorité de notre mémoire » et le « processus de notre socialisation » (Paul Ricoeur), entre une représentation du monde (le cinéma) et la manière dont les hommes vivent dans ce monde (l’histoire) (De Baecque et Delage, 1998; p.15).

Ricoeur, while never specifically mentioning the place of cinema among these issues or any particular films, does foreground his epistemological inquiry by mentioning the gaps and the excesses of the memory of WWII, the danger of such widely available “corrective” collective memory and the possibilities of transforming it. This underscores a concern with the way historical knowledge is contested, rewritten, and therapeutically confronted with the processes of and pathologies of personal and collective memory. The central problem becomes, in Ricoeur’s words, « comment la connaissance historique s’articule-t-elle sur le travail de souvenir et le travail de deuil » (p.23) ?

In order to prepare the ground for this question, Ricoeur discusses the difficulty of establishing anything more than an analogical “correlation” between the ontological concept of “interior memory” (St. Augustine/Hegel/Locke) and the merely operative, sociological concept of “collective memory” (Halbwachs). The dilemma is posed in the following terms: « Quand on parle de mémoire collective, faut-il alors supposer l’existence d’une mémoire collective ? Halbwachs n’hésitait pas à le faire ; mais alors qui est le sujet qui se souvient ? Peut-on parler d’un sujet collectif ? (p.19) » Dissatisfied with Husserl’s solution, by which we may speak of intersubjectivity, or the transposition of the subject onto the collective categories of identity and consciousness, Ricoeur decides to break with the philosophical tradition which forbids thinking beyond the singular/collective analogy : he proposes the hypothesis of a direct correlation between two subjectivities, individual and collective, that mutually constitute one another (p.20). Ricoeur justifies this hypothesis on the basis of the most common phenomenological experience of mediation and memory :

Pour se souvenir, même de façon solitaire et privée, il faut recourir à un médium langagier : le souvenir est un discours que l’on se tient à soi-même. Platon définissait déjà la *dianoia*, la pensée, comme un dialogue que l’âme se tient à elle-même. Il n’y a pas de mémoire sans langage. Or, la médiation du langage est d’emblée de rang social. [...] Cette convergence de faits – médiation langagière, médiation narrative de la mémoire la plus privée – conduit à se demander si l’intériorité présumée de la mémoire n’est pas corrélative du

processus de socialisation. Ce serait dire qu'intériorité et socialité se constituent simultanément et mutuellement. Au fond, avant l'échange langagier, l'échange narratif, il n'y a que la dispersion d'une vie, qui ne trouve sa connexité, sa cohésion, que dans la connexion narrative qui est publique (p.20).

This insight, regarding the correlation of the individual subject to a collective subject through the mediation of language, is corroborated and expanded by discussing the work of two key thinkers on the subject of history and memory : the application of Reinhart Koselleck's "Augustinian" notion of historical consciousness as a sense of orientation in time structured on a personal and collective level; and the possibility of applying Freud's pathological categories of individual memory to collective memory. This allows him to discuss the problematic mediation of traumatic memory, situated as it is--in the wounds and scars of the collective and individual memory of events.

Trauma and Repetition

Finally, historical consciousness, grief and melancholy are related to Ricoeur's preoccupation with the "subject" of narrative and time; since literary narrative is a homeostatic model of historical narrative, featuring the prototypical tropes, configurations, and resources for the mise-en-intrigue of history and of persona, its potential for generating other positions paves a way by which an individual or collective subject might negotiate the experience of traumatic events :

Raconter autrement, mais aussi être raconté par d'autres. Or, dans une histoire racontée autrement, les événements ne sont plus les mêmes, dès lors que leur place dans l'histoire est changée. Ces variations narratives ont une fonction critique remarquable au regard des formes les plus figées par la répétition, les plus ritualisées par la commémoration. On voit là à l'oeuvre le travail du souvenir mais aussi celui du deuil. Raconter autrement et être raconté par les autres, c'est déjà se mettre sur le chemin de la réconciliation avec les objets perdus d'amour et de haine (p.23).

Like Hayden White's essay discussed previously, Ricoeur sees the possibility in literary fiction of assuming the burden of history and mediating the traumatic memory of modern

events. Whereas White emphasizes the renewed contract made possible through the techniques of fictional modernism, Ricoeur insists on the reconciling work of repetition and commemoration inherent in collective and singular acts of narrativity. While both White and Ricoeur problematize the connection between the medium of language and narrative mediation, only White goes on to discuss their relationship to the techniques of audio-visual mediation. Nevertheless, Ricoeur does leave room for speculation by redefining a theory of the subject in the context of collective and singular memory in a setting itself organized by the larger problem of mediation.

The Compulsion to Assume Subject Positions

The possibilities and the limits of this theory might be tested were we to discuss the memory of the subject in the historical and cross-cultural context of the cinematic representation of the Holocaust. We may refer to Thomas Elsaesser's important article in the Sobchack anthology, "Subject Positions and Speaking Positions from *Holocaust*, *Our Hitler*, and *Heimat*, to *Shoah* and *Schindler's List*." On the more historical level of popular cinema, especially the post-war and neo-realist cinemas in Germany and Hollywood representing the history of fascism and Nazism, Elsaesser's article follows something of the path of Ricoeur's guiding question. He emphasizes how several generations of contemporary directors in cinema and television have offered perspectives on the way in which historical knowledge is articulated alongside the work of memory and the work of grief and mourning.

According to Elsaesser, with the advent of audio-visual media, in which the divide between memory and History is being crossed and recrossed in either direction, in which the past is "digitally remastered," History has entered a conceptual twilight zone, lost its hold on public interest, and has become the very "signifier of the inauthentic."

No longer is storytelling the culture's meaning-making response, but something closer to therapeutic practice has taken over, with acts of re-telling, remembering, and repeating all pointing in the direction of obsession, fantasy, and trauma. If civil wars, communal strife, and tribal violence suggest a compulsion to repeat at the level of action—because buried memories, rekindled by fresh hatred and local grievance, seek to redress wrongs suffered centuries ago—what obscure urge is soothed by the compulsion to repeat so typical of television? (p.146)

Elsaesser continues these remarks by insisting that the cinema, as the “public art” of the United States, has allowed the history of the Vietnam War, for example, to go beyond the “history books.” By association, such a statement challenges what Ricoeur's text qualifies as the work of reconciliation inherent in the repeated storytelling of historical memory:

C'est en s'initiant à la confrontation entre écritures historiques rivales que les mémoires malades s'exercent non seulement à raconter autrement, mais à structurer différemment la compréhension qu'elles prennent d'elles-mêmes au niveau des causes et des raisons. À cet égard, je voudrais souligner l'importance du phénomène de réécriture (Ricoeur, 1998; p.26).

Were Elsaesser to offer a response to this notion of therapeutic re-writing, he might ask: What about the confrontation between films exploiting the ills of an endlessly rewritten and war-torn memory? Films like those representing the Vietnam War (*The Deer Hunter*, [Cimino, 1978]; *Apocalypse Now*, [Coppola, 1979]; *Full Metal Jacket*, [Kubrick, 1987]; *Platoon*, [Stone, 1986]; *Dear America—Letters from Home*, [Couturie, 1987]), do not bear witness to one history or even to plural histories but have *produced* “history” by *doing* the “mourning work” of a nation, for a nation with a burdened conscience.

The Subject of Grief : Reconciliation or Pretentious Pathology ?

Without directly critiquing Ricoeur's ideas, we may try to test their scope, their pertinence, and their limits in the historical context of cinema by deliberately setting them against some of the poignant remarks and questions Elsaesser poses throughout his essay.

These questions themselves are organized by the problem of audio-visual mediation, for Elsaesser explores and evokes them in the context of what he calls “the subject positions and speaking positions” of individual and collective memory, particularly the historical memory repeatedly transformed and contested in several generations of cinema and television. Such a “confrontation” will in turn allow us to expose what is at stake in contemporary cinema by asking the following series of questions, emerging from a critical engagement with Elsaesser’s text:

- Can the “obscure urge” of television and cinema to exorcise buried memories, “soothed by the compulsion to repeat,” itself be qualified as a “conciliatory” act of re-telling ? (p.146)
- What would such reconciliation mean when it continuously produces “a secularized and debased response” in a “melodramatic interpretation” of historical events of the “incomprehensible” magnitude of the Holocaust ? (p.148)
- In the context of the postmodern debate on the historical representation of Auschwitz, and in the effort of safeguarding the memory of such terror--beyond an “epistemologically compromised form of realism” or the “silent despair before the incomprehensible”--what would it mean for cinema to preserve the sense of Jean-François Lyotard’s imperative: “the sublation, or the double negation: the effort to preserve the fact that the unrepresentable exists?” (p.148)
- Do such films need to be “ruled by an aesthetics of detachment and distance” in a modernist hermeneutic of pathos and irony to be worth their intellectual salt, or is there a healthy purpose at work in the popular, spectacular culture of obsessive memory, in the highly charged emotions and affective responses produced by these films and television series’—even when they elicit the “excessive, perverse, and compulsive” affects of violence, “melodrama, sentimentality and prurience ?” (p.150)

- To what extent can we lend credence to either critical impulse, whether it be “ironically detached” or “emotionally excessive” when both are grounded, to some extent, in cinema’s “postmodern hubris,” namely the implicit “theodicy” or claim “[...] to redeem the past, rescue the real, and even rescue that which was never real ?” (p.166)
- Is the idea of “mourning work” in cinema or television seriously worthy of defense as an essential form of historical knowledge in the twentieth century, or is it merely a hollow pretext to valorize films that stop short at self-pity and sentimentality “[...] acknowledging compassion only at the price of playing victims off each other in the vain hope of squaring accounts ?” In other words, is the idea of a “reconciling confrontation” between individual and collective memory in the public sphere of film a pretentious “over-evaluation of the political importance of the aesthetics of moral rectitude,” according to which “the experience of one’s own loss may serve as a prelude to acknowledging the loss of others ?” (p.171-172)

These questions and problems are opened as Elsaesser describes the divided “subject positions” among the directors of the New German Cinema of the 1970’s-1980’s, including among others : Werner Herzog, Wim Wenders, Hans Jürgen Syberberg, Alexander Kluge, Helma Sanders-Brahms, Volker Schlöndorff, Edgar Reitz, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, and Marcel Ophuls. Explaining how these directors assumed paradoxical “speaking positions” of alienation and representation when responding to the fascist past, the Federal Republic and the possibility of German unification, Elsaesser evokes the problems of identification, identity politics, and the price of empathy. His remarks come to a head in words that are explicitly central to Ricoeur’s own enterprise:

But if “mourning work” cannot open up that space of otherness, what can? What kinds of affect might possibly “unlock” numbness, apathy, indifference, and reconcile memory and hope, commemoration and forgetting, or mediate

between pity, sentiment, and shame? [...] In the face of narcissistic forms of identification in conventional narrative and fictional dramatization, such an “affect of concern” is meant to break through any coherent and thus comforting subject position and shock spectators into recognition. Yet such strategies of shock, increasingly used to convey the suffering caused by human or natural disasters, also imply the deeply ambiguous modes of address typical of news broadcasts and current affairs programs: soliciting (emotional) response, while disempowering (civic, political) action. (p.172)

Such dilemmas help to refocus the generic divide between documentary and fiction film according to the “ambiguous or extreme subject positions they are able to sustain” rather than according to the traditional distinctions of “what they show or do not show,” or whether or not “one is more or less authentic than the other” (p.173).

Between *Shoah* and *Schindler's List*: An Ethics of Accountability

Particular attention is given throughout the essay to the spectrum of differences between two notoriously opposed films, *Shoah* (Claude Lanzmann, 1985) and *Schindler's List* (Steven Spielberg, 1993), contrasted in the following terms:

Two kinds of eschatology, then, seem to confront each other: the tragic vision of life of the European Jew Lanzmann, and the life-affirming vision of the American Jew Spielberg. [...] By affirming that whoever saves one life, saves mankind, Spielberg accepts the principle that the one can represent the many, that the part can stand for the whole. *Shoah* is based, explicitly and emphatically, on the exactly opposite premise: that no one can stand in for anyone else. After six hours of testimony in *Shoah*—a testimony that, in different ways, records only absence, one is left with the overwhelming thought that no history can contain, let alone signify or represent, the palpable reality of so many individual, physical deaths. (p.178)

Yet the problems of “representation” underscored by the confrontation between these films as they negotiate two contrary forms of personal/collective memory serve also to highlight the problems of the subject/speaking positions that films project and sustain.

The collision between the two films implies, aesthetic, moral, as well as religious differences, but it also includes the most constitutive division in film history between Hollywood and Europe, itself a scene where the same drama seems destined to play itself out over and over again. I want to take this case, and look once more at the relationship between historical events and their

representations, but also at what it means to bear witness—especially when public history has inevitably superseded personal memory—and to speak for someone, or find oneself spoken by someone, in the medium of cinema.(p.147)

Yet what does it mean for a subject to speak in the context of a hypermediated world, when speaking is no longer grounded in the mere exchange of language for a subject who “stands by” his word with other subjects, as Ricoeur might have it; when speaking—even political speech-- is always already an act of ventriloquism “voiced-over” into microphones, speakers, and screens of audio-visual media, an act of “throwing one’s voice” or finding oneself “thrown” in the new cultural sphere of public history and memory ? As Elsaesser argues, even a “historical unconsciousness,” itself part of “representing history,” may be made to speak in the subject positions framed by a film’s mode of address. What happens to the subject of speech in this “postmodern condition of contemporary cinema,” when even “the text no longer speaks for the author ?” (p.175)

No modernist defense like “exile, silence, and cunning” can protect the filmmaker as author, but the public arena of magazine and television interviews, published diaries and essays, the promotional machinery that makes the director “speak.” These speaking positions, I think, need not refer to biographical individuals, nor even to “auteurs,” but are instances of historical and personal accountability. It is in this context that one can view the one-sided exchange between Lanzmann and Spielberg. (p.175)

Elsaesser goes on to describe how the subject positions of both films, determined by their respective genres when touching upon an identity politics of historical and religious values that neither can transcend, both work “[...]on the borders of the *unified* and the *shattered* self” (177). According to Elsaesser, Lanzmann, while attempting to evoke a documentary history for which there is neither redemption nor exorcism, suspending all preconceived and unifying narratives and explanations, still very carefully created a “persona” for himself, a kind of phantasmic and “Dantesque” super-ego of the voices heard and unheard-- of the faces seen and unseen—of the memories coaxed or left undisturbed.

Lanzmann works with each individual memory as a unique “archaeological” site, requiring different tools and different techniques. Whether he flattened someone’s complacency or patiently stalks someone else’s elusiveness, whether he takes the man who shaved the women at Treblinka back to his barber shop or listens to the prisoner from Chelmo tell how his singing voice saved his life, Lanzmann creates a multitude of speaking positions by separating them as sharply from each other as possible, while embedding them in sympathy, even when they must have appalled him or when pity threatened to overwhelm him.(p.174)

Spielberg, on the other hand, re-appropriates the “fashioned” reality of the history on the movie production sets in the streets of Krakow, in the after-life of the ghetto “scene” become a famous shot-on-location. While providing a master-narrative transgressing the taboo of narrative emplotment, he strategically shatters viewer identification by projecting melodramatic sentiment in a fictional form bordering on the perverse. More generally, and more paradoxically, Spielberg, by putting into circulation a discourse which suggests that this was a “personal” film, has given himself the license to do exactly the opposite: namely to speak on behalf of others, to make the step from direct testimony and personal memory, to narrative and history.(179)

These paradoxes show at once how easily and yet how ambiguously Ricoeur’s ideas of collective and personal memory, as simultaneous and mutually constituting subjects, may be applied to the cultural phenomenon of cinema.

For to the extent that a film creates a public sphere, a space for discourse, confrontation and debate, it is this space that produces the speaking positions which in turn are the external limits of representation. One reason for dwelling on these examples is that they underscore the difficulties, when taking facism as the “limit” case of historical representation, of determining any author’s speaking position, yet also assert the necessity of doing so in each case.(p.179)

It is clear that Elsaesser sees the historical necessity and hope of assuming or inventing an ethics of responsibility to “account” for all of the repeated inversions, reversions, and

perversions of subject positions and speaking positions that have obsessively recalled the traumatic events such as the Shoah/Holocaust. In this, there is the expectation and the hope of an *ethos* committed to understanding how historical knowledge is contested, therapeutically confronted, and rewritten in the grief and mourning of memory. An *ethos* that recognizes how such knowledge has become, inevitably and irretrievably, the predicament of positioning the subject for speech in the audio visual techniques of television and cinema.

How does this conception of *ethos* stand with respect to the earlier argument I made regarding the rhythmic temporality of film ? Something of the principle of this ethical commitment, I would argue, emerges out of the rhythmic materiality of film and the transforming contact it makes with the time-passer as it “awakens” the witness (cameraman/editor/director/spectator) to the materiality of History and the radically different shores of time. In the next chapter, I will be concerned with showing how the rhythmic temporality of Tarkvosky’s *Mirror* constitutes a kind of ethical opening and awakening to this Historical passage and passing.

Chapter 5 : Is There A Filmic Vision of History ?

This question is articulated in an important chapter of Marc Ferro's study, *Cinéma et histoire*, and posed in the following terms:

Le problème est de se demander si le cinéma et la télévision modifient ou non notre vision de l'Histoire, étant entendu que l'objet de l'Histoire n'est pas seulement la connaissance des phénomènes passés, mais également l'analyse des liens qui unissent le passé au présent, à la recherche des continuités, des ruptures (1993 [1977]; XIX, 217).

Ferro implies that there may be a deep relationship between the emergence of audio-visual technique (cinema and television) and the modification of historical knowledge; that the understanding, analysis, and perceptibility of past events might have a different character or sense of linkage and even rupture with the present. The implication is that cinema and other technologies like television, far from merely reporting history as it has been written and adopting the image of the past as it has been represented by historians, actually produce new relationships to History by changing the character of its production, perception, and reception. On a political level this means that audio-visual technique reveals to the attentive historian a radical decentralizing power, capable of restoring to society at large the History or histories from which they have been dispossessed by the hegemony of the institutional apparatus of transmission. Audio-visual technique would be able to give voice to the voiceless, produce archives instead of falling back on official ones, break up the institutional monopoly on the conscience of History and demystify the apparatus of its production (Ferro, 1973; 22-26).

The Production of Histories

In order to appreciate the nuances I would like to suggest regarding the critique of historiography implicitly and explicitly articulated by work of historical memory in Tarkovsky's *Mirror*, it is necessary first to discuss Ferro's helpful schema, or global

classification, outlining the relationship between film production and the production of various discourses of History :

Propositions pour une classification globale des films dans leur rapport à l'Histoire

Il est apparu que les discours sur la société émanent de quatre foyers:

- ◆ Les institutions et les idéologies dominantes, qui expriment aussi bien le point de vue de l'État, d'une Église, d'un parti ou de toute organisations qui porte en elle une vision du monde.
- ◆ Les opposants à cette vision, qui élaborent une contre-Histoire ou une contre-analyse, pour autant qu'ils en ont la capacité et les moyens.
- ◆ La mémoire sociale ou historique, qui survit par la tradition orale, ou par des œuvres d'art légitimées.
- ◆ Les interprétations indépendantes, scientifiques ou non, et qui procèdent à leur propre analyse. (1987; XIX, 224).

His schema speaks to a social theory of media whereby one can discern, in the agency of cinema and in its production of a critical discourse of modernity, a series of institutional problems. First, the cinema catalyzes a breakdown of the univocal discourse of History in which the "worldview" of dominant subjects gives way to the production of disjunctures between a plurality of "worldviews." Second, this breakdown brings about a reconfiguration of what constitutes the "public" sphere and the credibility of "official History" with the renewed circulation of private memory and the resurgence of oral and popular traditions in cinema. Finally, this schema indicates the necessity for a reappraisal of relations of political power as contesting speaking positions and subject positions on the subject of History are sustained by the signifying practices of cinematography. In this, Ferro's schema outlines something of the duty of the historian as it is practiced by Michel Foucault and Fernand Braudel from the *Annales* school. By confronting different historical discourses against each other the cinematographer-as-historian would be able, by means of this very confrontation, to discover, access, and intervene in a portion of social reality ordinarily invisible.

The four distinct social forums of discourse outlined in Ferro's tableau are articulated along two main axes of pertinence: that of official history versus counter history, and that of artistic and oral tradition versus individual interpretation and documentary science. The first axis (official/counter-history) underscores a concern with the way historical knowledge is confronted, contested and rewritten in the larger context of the institutions of social life and cultural memory; cinema being both a potential vehicle for all instances of power but also for all instances of resistance. Cinematography, as a *technics* of memory, an audio-visual mediation of experience, and a mass medium of historical production, has the power both to upset and to reaffirm the authority of institutions, the persistence of traditions, and the discursive framework by which historical truth is revealed and transmitted. Retroactively, this means that film-making as a social practice, while exacerbating the modern crisis of the representation of History, also reveals what Foucault would call the profound historicity of all other institutions and practices that legitimate and authorize official History. In this sense, it may be argued that the proliferation of counter-histories in cinema and television foster what Jean-François Lyotard has qualified as the characteristic trait of the postmodern condition, namely the "incredulity" towards the meta-narratives that confer legitimate authority on the production of knowledge. However, it may be argued that this very incredulity towards the institutional practices and operations of History, has also created other regimes of belief that structure social and cultural memory.

The second axis of Ferro's schema articulates another tension, no less important to the very essence of the technology of cinema, between independent and modern scientific research and the social and historical memory surviving in artistic and oral traditions. This tension would seem to intimate the classic sociological opposition between fall of tradition and the rise of modernization, revealing the paradoxical way that audio-visual technique belongs both to the "modern spirit of research and scientific documentation" and also to the

“survival of traditional artifacts¹.” The reproduction of the image in cinema belongs as much to the scientific impulses to record and systematically document objective reality as it does to the impulses of tradition to transmit the memory and identity of a people; the extraordinary power of the reproducible image resides in its transmissibility after all. What then is the relationship between the production of counter-history and the complex survival of tradition in cinema? Counter-histories are embedded in a form of wisdom and belief that may be seen as the opposition between the collectible or transmissible over against the merely traditional; or what Hannah Arendt, describing Walter Benjamin’s technique of thinking, has called the collector’s chaotic impulse to hold on to the transmissibility of objects, fragments, and citations that work directly with the past but which are ignored or unhandled by tradition (1968; 45). The collector’s impulse to tear things from out of their contexts, holding onto them as a form of citation or quotation, is “contrary” to the cumulative persistence of tradition because it is not based upon an authority that systematically and chronologically organizes and separates the positive from the negative, the orthodox from the heretical, the obligatory and relevant from the merely interesting or exotic, but holds onto

¹ Even Walter Benjamin hinted at the retreat of the authority of tradition in the age of the technics of mechanical reproduction. Contemporary social theorists like John B. Thompson have made some important distinctions regarding the relationship between modernization and “detraditionalization”, arguing, for instance, that although tradition has been unmoored from its power of legitimation and authority, it has simultaneously been re-embedded in new contexts of social life owing to its efficacy as a means of crafting identity and hermeneutically making sense of everyday life. In the chapter, “The Unmooring of Tradition,” (*Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of Media*. Stanford UP, 1995) Thompson argues powerfully that in the age of modern media and in the cultural space of migration, diaspora and deterritorialization, we are actually witnessing the radical revalorization and reinvention of tradition. Tradition, considered as the work of transmission itself, has been radically deritualized, depersonalized and delocalized from local, face to face contexts of social interaction. Yet the “unmooring” of tradition does not imply that it cannot simply float freely; instead, tradition must be re-embedded in new contexts in order to be handed-down; provoking, for example, what Hobsbawm has qualified, “the invention of tradition” and the “invention of nationalisms.” The interest of such a perspective does not lie in debunking the authenticity or original purity of tradition but in throwing light on the essentially mediated character of transmissibility itself and the historically fashioned or constructed nature of social identity and memory. This is all the more true when oral traditions and legitimate artworks serve as a foil, not to production of formal research or independent opinion, but to the reconstruction of social memory, constituting what may be qualified as a politics of memory and forgetting.

them contiguously as material shards revealing and redeeming another relationship to History. Audio-visual technique is concerned with this kind of historical citation and collection, materially inscribing the flows of time while wrenching these temporal fragments or “vessels” from their contexts. It encodes social memory as a form of counter-history by registering tensions of disbelief in institutional regimes of belief, practicing a kind of “heretical empiricism” to borrow Pier Paolo Pasolini’s suggestive phrase, and actively appealing to what Deleuze has characterized as the “powers of the false” circulating in the time-image of film.

Tactics of Popular Memory

The second axis of pertinence also suggests another important problematic out of the dichotomies of social memory and independent research, scientific reporting and oral traditions, documentary evidence and artifacts. This problematic concerns the emergence of “the popular” in the learned discourse of modernity, or what Michel de Certeau has repeatedly characterized as the “other” of instrumental reason, productive rationality, political power and its epistemological operations of violence. In other words, the popular might help to define the very disjuncture and difference, expressed radically and decisively by Tarkovsky himself, between popular culture and the State, ordinary practices and instrumental reason, orality and literacy, social memory and folkloric representations. The “popular” will also help to delineate how the second axis (social, traditional, artifact-memory/independent scientific research) intersects the first axis (official History/counter history), since its “diversions” are an implicit critique of the instrumental rationalism of scientific research and the subject-centered epistemology official History.

How might the audio-visual technology of memory in the medium of film upset the traditional organization of popular memory? In order to go further with these questions, it is necessary to discuss the theoretical origins of the concept of the popular in the work of

Michel de Certeau. Informing and generating the analyses of de Certeau's important works of cultural critique, *La Culture au pluriel* (1974) and *L'invention du quotidien* (1980), is the idea that culture has been fundamentally shattered into myriad forms and is no longer organized under a universal literary model, nor capable of being anthologized under an exclusively scriptural economy.

Fascinated with the plurality, mobility and multiplicity of the practices or "arts de faire" (techné) of contemporary societies, de Certeau constantly turns his attention to the rifts between representations and the "represented." This allows de Certeau to explore the tremendous gap between the orthodox symbolic languages and techniques used to manage and control social life (such as Foucault's schema of "disciplinary micro-techniques" or Bourdieu's concept of the "habitus") and the creative usage or reappropriation of these languages and techniques in "the invention" of everyday life. The implication is that the category of the "popular" escapes the discursive operations of scientific reason and its inscriptions of "proper" meaning, while opening the possibility of another kind of knowledge related to "savoir-faire." Neither a transhistoric constant, nor the emblem of facile distinctions of class, race and gender, nor an aesthetic category, the popular "...works rather as an unstable term for the analysis of hierarchical social organizations which divide a culturally productive minority from a vast majority of apparently passive consumers" (Ahearne, 1995; 161).

It is in these terms that I would like to argue that a counter-history is produced through what de Certeau has called the tactics and ruses of "popular memory" that disenfranchise the strategies and the scientific rationalism of modern historiography. Since a counter-history is not produced merely through a clash of institutional speaking positions and subject positions of State and society, this also means revising significantly the importance accorded to the mere narrative "enunciation" of a position or a view on History from the perspective of the child-figure. For example, in the earliest of Tarkovsky's full-feature films, Ferro notices the

importance of the orphan-figure, not as an allegorical figuration of the very dislocation of time as I will argue, but as the instance of the enunciation of a counter-history:

Avec L'Enfance d'Ivan de Tarkovski, une ère nouvelle s'annonce. La vérité de la guerre apparaît, qui n'est pas la vérité officielle. Toutefois, pour dire cette vérité, sa vérité, Tarkovski doit, comme le fait Klimov au même moment, passer par le relais du regard d'un enfant (1989-1993; XVII, 206).

To speak of the “tactics” of popular memory in the time-image of film is to displace, somewhat, the attention normally afforded to questions of the rhetoric of montage, filmic narrative or subject figuration. This makes sense of Ferro’s remarks on the production of a counter-history in which the resurgence of tradition is mediated by film; ideological considerations aside, another way of understanding history and history-making is made possible. « On l’a compris, on dissocie volontiers l’idéologie du film du savoir-faire du cinéaste » (1987; XIX, 220). If savoir-faire may be dissociated from the mere production or reproduction of ideology, as Ferro suggests, this is perhaps for more than aesthetic reasons : the audio-visual technique of mass media may not be exclusively determined as an instrumental means of subjectification.

Savoir-faire implies a non-instrumental relationship to audio-visual technique; like techné, it is a manner of being entirely “at home” in a medium, it does not stand imposingly without; it is a way of crafting materials or of “working with” their potential agency, its mastery is not *given* as a scientific expertise that “takes hold” but is rather *granted* in the handling, touching, and transforming; savoir-faire is, finally, a way of “getting around” and knowing one’s way about, it moves and insinuates diversions in strategic maps and rational calculations. Now to put the question less abstractly : How does one handle the magical/mimetic mirror-effects of cinematography with savoir-faire ? And what might it mean “to sculpt time” with the rhythmic-effects of the cinematographic image and fashion the very stuff of history and memory? The question of tactics concerns the problem of rhythm, temporality, and technics; at the most intuitive level, tactics is the critical “tact” or

“attentiveness” film affords as a way of coming into contact with and “touching the pulse” of different orders of time, bringing about a threshold of perception that is, properly speaking, only available as a rhythmic pressure, compression, acceleration or collapse between temporal experiences. In the chapters that follow, I will be exploring the implications of this rhythmic temporality as a form of critique of modern practices of historiography, and as a politics and poetics of memory emerging in the signifying practices of cinema.

The Poetics of Counter-History

It might be helpful to understand the politics of this film-poetics in order to highlight how a counter-history is produced in Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, one related to the resurgence of tradition and memory in “popular” culture. For epistemology, this production of counter-history problematizes historical knowledge in ways that are already familiar to contemporary film theorists of postmodern historiography² :

- by recounting the past self-reflexively rather than assuming the impersonal, disinterested and objective tone of the scientific historian; *Mirror* is narrated in the autobiographical form of an interior monologue and does not simply reconstruct the phases of the lived past but continuously plays with its remembrance in reflexive ways;
- by eschewing the traditional order of story and plot and reorganizing the sequence “beginning-middle-end,” refusing to “sum-up” the meaning of the past; *Mirror* does

² For a summary of some of the key issues of the debate regarding the “poetics of postmodern history” as they are related to a series of contemporary films, one may consult: Robert A. Rosenstone’s article, “The Future of the Past” In *The Persistence of History*. New York : Routledge, (1996; pp.203-206). Although I take issue with some of the facile and sweeping gestures of his argument, which entirely ignores or effaces the question of the mediation of the event, the distinctions he introduces are interesting, useful, and descriptive.

not chronicle the past-present-future narratively³, nor make sense of history in terms of the intrigue of an unfolding plot, but deploys a topical itinerary of links and send-offs to recurring places or stations of memory (*lieux de mémoire*)⁴;

- by indulging in “creative anachronisms,” superposing stories and juxtaposing storytellers, exploiting the cinema’s potential for repetition and narrative undecidability; *Mirror* confuses temporal orders deliberately by forcing spectators to confront the phantasmagoric “unheimlich” of the medium as a place for the exchange between actual and virtual images, between the imagined and real, through the use of doubles (the same actor playing the child of the narrator and the narrator as a child; the same actress playing the wife of the narrator in the present and the narrator’s mother in the past) ;
- by foregrounding the normally concealed attitude historians have to their material; irony and melancholy being the overriding mood of the rhetorical tropes that explicitly organize historical discourse and memory in *Mirror*;
- by working with audio-visual fragments and scraps to form intermedial “collages” of memory resistant to the totalizing power of prose narratives of history, the conventions of historical time (chronology, progression, completeness), and the scholarly apparatus of footnotes, bibliography, and written sources; *Mirror* projects history as a hallucination made possible by the vision and voice of a “collector” who does not justify and corroborate the accuracy of his discourse, a collector interested in

³ This quality may not be specific to the medium of film. As I argued earlier in Chapter 4, the modernist techniques of writings by Joyce, Woolf, or Stein significantly call into question the organization of narrative, plot and intrigue.

⁴ I am not referring to the more nuanced concept of “*lieux de mémoire*” discussed, notably, by Pierre Nora. I am referring to the distinction between autobiographical narrative tropes and the topoi of the “*autoportrait*” introduced in the work of Michel Beaujour (1980. *Miroirs d'encre : Rhétorique de l'autoportrait*).

working against the grain of official history by means of found newsreel footage, traditional painting and lyric-epic poetry;

- by implicitly calling into question the authority of the medium of historical inscription (codex, parchment, printing); in *Mirror* history and memory is a kind of rhythmic pulse “sculpted in time” through the medium of cinematography, time emerging outside of, or unaffected by, written or spoken discourse.

When considering this final point, concerning the rhythmic temporality of film over against the mere narrative “enunciation” of a position or a discourse on History, I think we are forced to think about the time-based medium of film outside of any simple notion of spectator identification, seduction and consumption. For the temporal fabric of film, as a dynamic passage of time always in a state of becoming, challenges its fixed status as an object to be consumed by letting itself be experienced only in a mobile series of relations. The consideration of the medium as a signifying practice allows us to reflect upon the cinema as a social activity without reducing the dynamic links between film production, circulation and reception: continuously generating other experiences, acknowledging the plural texture of life and the intervals between words, sounds, silences, and images, constantly inviting viewers to follow the trace of a creative gesture that may be in turn restored, unmade or remade⁵.

The Anamorphic Mirror of Counter-History

Following Ferro’s classification, I would like to argue that the historical discourse reflected in Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, and refracted between all four social forums of discourse on the production of history mentioned earlier, produces anamorphic effects. This would suggest a correspondence to the anamorphic tricks of the mirror, tricks that bend that space between

⁵ Trinh T. Minh-ha discusses this point in “World as Foreign Land” In *When the Moon Waxes Red*, p195.

truth and falsehood, clarity and mystery, perfect correspondence and distortion. Bend a portrait photo into a cylinder shape and place it on the surface of a plane mirror: the features will melt, distend, break apart on the mirror surface. Reverse the experiment and trace the distorted traits onto a flat piece of paper and collect them once again at the virtual center of a cylindrical mirror. Such a transformation of geometrical dimensions is made possible in the exchange of perspectives as they distend and extend between a flat surface and a cylinder. Tarkovsky's film is something of a such a flat mirror-surface reflecting the gaps, ruptures, continuities, and dispersions of time, as it were, caught in a cylinder.

In other words, the mirror-function of the cinematographic image in *Mirror* is anamorphic not because it blurs, bends, distorts or deforms the image in itself but because it blurs that point of perspective, through the gaze of the child figure of the rebel-orphan, by which a history might be produced—its place of production under one regime of belief being destabilized and upset by several orders of truth. This would help us to take into account Marc Ferro's second level of classification, according to which films are produced either from above (observing instance of power), from below (if the questions are analyzed from the point of view of the masses, peasants, or workers), from within (as when a narrator implicates himself in the go-between with the object of research), or from without (by reconstructing social or political objectives without necessarily an interest in reconstituting them in formal work). Although Ferro hesitates to categorize Tarkovsky's position, in contradistinction to his categorization of a host of other prominent directors, he does remark: "Toutfois il est posé, au préalable qu'une œuvre filmique ou non, peut participer à plusieurs instances"(1987; 225).

This is the anamorphic effect of Tarkovsky's mirror of counter-History, that it ambiguously reflects these positions from above, below, within and without, sometimes simultaneously contrasting these different positions and projections. Moreover, it is anamorphic because it conceals and encodes a special way of seeing, specific to audio-visual

techniques of cinematography and radically different form written historiography, by which a counter-History might be articulated from within the very frames of the dominant institutional History without being subject to censorship⁶.

I would like to discuss briefly some of the stakes involved in the anamorphic-effect, on the level of spectator/reception theory and on the level of epistemology. For spectator/reception-theory, the anamorphic effect assumes the necessity for viewing difficulty and for a multiplicity of views in the absence of a single linear-narrative economy of causality. It is guided by the principle that, in order to access, to navigate, and to transmit a counter-History, one must train spectators to understand the mechanics of orientation, of the possibility of registering the forbidden and the taboo by means of an optics of mirror-like transformation of perspective. As Lacan noted, regarding Hans Holbein's baroque masterpiece, *The Ambassadors*, the anamorphosis is effected in the dramatic entr'act, *intermezzo or intermedium*, of viewing when spectators change their position in the gallery of tableau's exposition and, looking back—in a glimpse—catch sight of or are caught by the specter of death.

Examples of this anamorphic effect abound in Tarkovsky's *Mirror* as he plays constantly in that space opened by a mobile center for the production of history, at times identifying with institutions and at other times with counter-institutions, with oral traditions, memories and artistic artifacts. The anamorphic effect is significantly mediated by the figure of the orphan-rebel who permits the passage from personal to collective memory when the hostile yet innocent gaze is transformed into an apocalyptic vision. Afasayev—an orphan boy, having lost his parents in the Leningrad blockade, also becomes a rebel and refuses to obey the military discipline of the training master's commands to turn about-face, to shoot the

⁶ It should be noted that as that as the official organ of approval and censorship, Mosfilm operated mostly on the basis of the written script, the subtleties and tricks of images and sounds were rarely noticed by the police-culture of literacy. Therefore, they were highly suspicious of Tarkovsky's desire to operate on the basis of a script that would be adaptable to the unforeseeable possibilities of the set and the actors.

target, or to remain obedient outside practice; instead he turns about-face twice, shoots obliquely, and throws a dummy hand-grenade onto the shooting platform. It is through his rebellious eyes that the Lake Sivash documentary sequence, itself an orphan-film archive⁷, is introduced and paralleled in montage. As this scene ends, we see the rebel-orphan introduce other apocalyptic clips of war and Maoist euphoria after having climbed a snowy hill into a cinematographic recomposition of the tableau by Pieter Breugel the Elder—*The Hunters in the Snow*; his gaze, as it faces and receives a bird (emblem of memory and of the Holy-Ghost), transforms the temporality of the historical material of the documentary clips through the intermedial frame of the Breughel-tableau into an apocalyptic vision.

The complexity, ambiguity, and contradictory nature of such a scene as it produces a discourse on the production of the temporal experience of history and memory cannot be underestimated. *Mirror* reveals that to transmit is also to transform this personal experience of rebellious refusal to speak in the name of the absent—a shattering of mirrors—refracted in the polemical and abandoned eyes of the child and reoriented as a will to face the dead in all their enigmatic opacity, silence, and irrevocable distance. In other words, there is an ethics-poetic-politics in the tact of this counter-history; Tarkovsky does not contest official History for the purpose of skirting its authority with playful irreverence like some Dadaist modernist filmmaker; on the contrary, *Mirror* reverently reflects the utopian dimension of this History *negatively* in the anamorphic effects of the temporal medium of film. This is the importance of understanding the time-passer as a child, an orphan, hostile to instruction. This child is not merely an instance for the enunciation of a counter-history or vision but a figure of the very dislocation and transformation of time itself; through the blockade-boy we are put into contact with a kind of temporal transformation of experience, that through which the noise of

⁷ Orphan-films are cinematographic and televisual archives that have been abandoned by institutions and anonymous producers for various historic reasons. Their loss, and thus of an irrecoverable audiovisual testimony of the historical events of the twentieth century, has been the subject of renewed critical interest internationally.

time may be heard and that through which the breath of time may be felt. The anamorphoses produced by Tarkovsky's *Mirror*, then, are not merely discursive reflections of a plurality of contesting ideological positions; rather, on the level of the medium as a signifying practice, they effect a serial metamorphosis of the temporal experience of reality. If this temporality is thinkable in all of its complexity and multiplicity as the movement of popular memory, then what is the critical relationship between the inscription of this memory and traditional historiography ?

The Electr-Orality of Historical Consciousness

In order to inquire into the savoir-faire of popular memory we must first discuss the place the cinema occupies historically between a textual and a visual economy of history-telling and history-making, and the specific qualities of cinematography as a medium of historical experience. In the words of Jean Louis Schefer,

Le cinéma dont j'ai été tenté de dire quelque chose non pas sur l'invention ou les expérimentations narratives mais sur une mise en fonction de l'image embrayant des appareils imaginaires, induisant des représentations d'univers, proposant comme ressource poétique des explorations de détails, de durées, des modes d'enchaînements, de décalages de réalité; le cinéma, lesté de la position expérimentale du spectateur, a inventé une espèce de plasticité de durées dont les détours, le rythme, les scansions longtemps articulées par des récits et des chroniques écrites, composaient l'imagination presque exclusive de la vie et de l'Histoire (1997, 87).

Considerations like these prompt Schefer to think about film as a technology of memory that has fundamentally changed the relationship humans have to history and to life, producing a cultural mutation of knowledge and temporal experience equal to, if not more important than, the changes brought about by the tremendous pressures and the speeds of twentieth century events themselves. This is especially true because the cinema offers an entirely new mnemonic technique of recording, witnessing, and remembering reality.

Le fait ou la possibilité même de l'enregistrement, ou de la constitution de bandes de mémoire dont la préservation et la réactivation sont indépendantes des consciences de sujets individuels (les consciences sont cadrées par des durées de vie), amorce une mutation considérable de l'idée même de l'histoire : la mémoire des faits est devenue réversible, susceptible de montage, et surtout d'accélération.(Schefer, 1997; 86)

Earlier in the dissertation I discussed how the mirror-figure of cinematography suggests more than documentary realism of past events but brings about an original relationship to the past and to the future as produced in the present, a relationship born out of the persistent materiality of the image and its rhythmic inscription of time, an inscription that would contain the possibility for the transformation of the perception, knowledge and experience of human duration. Remarks like Schefer's corroborate and extend these reflections.

One important consequence of this "independence" of historical life from subjective conscience is that film liberates a new relationship to language by restoring or re-inventing something close to an earlier epic-form of oral memory, a kind of secondary orality brought about by audio-visual technique. As Schefer explains, the popular memory of the historical imagination, once constituted by the "scansions and rhythms of the written page," would be framed by the duration of life itself in film—expanding, compressing, repeating itself in a technological-material embodiment of memory which is larger and infinitely more extendable than the individual, a living breathing imaginary of rhythm moving freely through and independently of, individual consciences. In order to qualify the transmissibility of this orality in film, an orality belonging also to other media and new technologies, I would like to call it an electr-orality of historical consciousness.

In the rhythms of an economy of electr-orality, historical knowledge would undergo a radical mutation for this economy would disrupt the ontological structure of the scriptural economy of writing. Edouard Glissant in his essay "*Le chaos-monde, l'oral et l'écrit*" discusses the promise of a "poetics of relation" in the "chaos-world" of beings—a visible sign of the crisis of writing and its pretension to Being. According to Glissant, the age of Western modernity is characterized by the rise of an instrumental relationship to language

that structures the Being of beings in a *universal* system of *transparent* models of “humanity,” an instrumental relationship constituted by the mediation of writing :

La prétention à l'être, qui définit des modèles transparents d'humanité et qui organise des échelles d'accession à l'humain, est liée à l'apparition du signe et en particulier du signe écrit. Il y a eu en Occident, en même temps et parallèlement, une marche vers la transcendance de l'écriture par rapport aux oralités premières, et une aspiration à l'être. (1994; 112)

The hegemonic insertion of oral culture in the culture of literacy involved the systematic stabilization and recomposition of oral works in writing; this reinforced the pretension to Being—and finally, to consolidating the founding myths of the origins of a people upon a territory. According to Glissant, the return of a poetic orality in contemporary writing, including the modernist crisis of the “parole éclatée” is already the sign of an opportunity to rethink intercultural relations and historical truth by celebrating the proliferation of beings and by productively embracing the distance and the opacity of the total realm of existence. This radical *experience* with the word is already *being crossed* in audio-visual technique, and this brings about the crisis of this Western ontic model of language (1994; 115). In other words, audio-visual technique, as it inscribes the temporal materiality of the world also inevitably inscribes its resistance and its opacity, and this introduces another way of remembering, another way of being historical and relating to the proliferation of beings and their stories. Audio-visual technique marks the advent of another historical relationship to language in a world marked by the distress of that which is lost and that which remains “after prose”, a relationship that can only be explored by calling into question the fundamental epistemological categories that structure historical knowledge⁸.

⁸ See Silvestra Mariniello's discussion of Primo Levi's experience of poetry in the concentration camps : « Nous vivons dans l'après-prose : dans un univers où la technologie alimentée par l'économie de consommation a créé une nouvelle oralité; dans un univers qui nous impose de repenser toutes nos catégories épistémologiques. Nous vivons la transition d'une hégémonie à une autre, un temps de « *détresse* », si l'on veut reprendre Hölderlin et Heidegger, lui aussi marqué d'un double manque : le « *ne plus* » de certains dieux enfuis (l'État, l'écriture, l'Histoire linéaire et progressiste, etc.) et le « *pas encore* » de ceux qui vont venir. La Shoah et l'expérience des camps de concentration marquent à jamais la coupure et la distance infranchissable entre les deux : le « *ne*

Do the multiple rhythms of film as an audio-visual mediation of historical time lay claim to a competence for rendering the plurality and the multiple rhythms of temporal experience? Or do these multiple rhythms of film disrupt the temporal framework of historical narrative because they disturb a sense of ontology continuously stabilized, visibly or invisibly, by the practices of historiography—even those with multi-temporal features? This question will be explored in the next chapter when comparing the narrative competence of “Braudelian” history in film.

At this point, however, I would like to ask the question in order to highlight the potential disjuncture between the literate comprehension of the rhythms of historical events and the electr-orality of historical consciousness invented by the rhythms of film. The question may be asked, even while recognizing the impossibility of venturing into a thorough historical discussion of the conditions for the transformation of the ontic structure of language. I am referring to the work of a investigation which, according to Wlad Godzich, has “not yet” begun due to the historical and theoretical poverty of the debate concerning language; for even in spite of the distinguished efforts of language and media scholars like Goody, McLuhan, Ong, and Illych, no comprehensive account is available to us (1993; 2). Part of the theoretical poverty of the debate, Godzich contends, is its lack of critical attention to the modern processes of literacy that adhere to the Parmenidean doctrine, a doctrine in which authority of being and saying are “identified” in the subject, a structure consolidated for example by the “language market,” the culture of “literacy” and by the rise of the nation-state in the mass-culture of print⁹.

plus » et le « *pas encore* ». Et la poésie ? La poésie, cette « *combinaison de matérialité et d'immédiateté* », peut-elle nous aider à redéfinir notre façon d'opérer dans le monde, notre façon d'être « *historiaux* » ? Peut-elle constituer une forme de médiation historique qui nous permette d'assimiler les expériences ? Comment ? Faut-il encore parler de poésie ? » (1997; 67).

⁹ Nonetheless, Godzich does attempt to sketch the broad features of such an argument in all of his work, from his collaborative work with Jeremy Kittay in *The Emergence of Prose* (1987) to the collection of critical essays in *The Culture of Literacy* (1994), many of which are critical prefaces to

In his essay, "The Language Market Under the Hegemony of the Image," Godzich claims that "[...]the introduction of print technology insured that the ideological commitment of humanism to linguistic universalism received the support of literacy[...]" (1993; 4). Godzich goes on to address how this definitive role that literacy played within Modernity, as an organizing political force responding to the requirements of the vast expansion of the state, the economic sphere, and the production of knowledge, is now being re-defined or mutated in the context of the hegemonic mediation of images of electronic media, entailing a "diminution in the role played by the type of language that the culture of literacy is built upon: the so-called natural language as universal mediator, the language of presence and fullness of experience" (1993; p.9). This historical premise frames the speculative reflection concerning language and the *hypokeimenon* in the Modern World-Picture: the changeable relationship that the modern subject entertains with respect to the identity of being and saying. In the age of literacy, the subject is marked by the consciousness that this identity of the "sayability of being" is perhaps a "fiction" and even becomes ironically detached from the ground of his/her utterances; and the process of this realization is marked by at least three definitive moments of modern subjectivity: revolutionary disillusion, pragmatism, and cynicism.

In the more humble margins of this dissertation, the question concerning the technological mediation of language is raised in order to highlight the inadequacy and conservatism of that kind of thinking that has essayed to address the question of the audio-visual production of History in a "postliterate" age. The potential for thinking, discovering, and inventing what Glissant has called the "chaos-world," a world in which the historical life of the imagination undergoes a metamorphic change in the electr-orality of audio-visual technique, is rather conservatively "tamed" even by those critics advocating the rise of a new

kind of history in film. This chaotic potential concerning the material agency of the historical life of beings is once again occluded in order to make legitimating claims about the organization of knowledge within the culture of literacy. It is generally conceded that the historical world created by film “stands adjacent” to written and oral history; film being itself in between both, a “postliterate equivalent of the preliterate way of dealing with the past” (Rosenstone; 2001, 65). Critics like Rosenstone often stop here by admitting that literacy has inevitably and irreversibly intervened in the historical comprehension of the past; in order to be taken seriously, the “preliterate poetics” of film must add to rather than “violate the overall data and meanings of what we already know of the past” and must stand “apposite to the truths of that discourse” legitimated by the print culture of literacy, where documentary realism of event and detail prevails in the practice of historiography (2001; 66). Rather than being radically *interrogative* of the hegemony of literacy in print culture, audio-visual technique and its affiliation with preliterate forms of memory are additive supplements, or simply distracting elements, to the acquisition of an accumulative knowledge of history. The potentially contaminating influence and unsecuring function of the problem of pre-literate memory discovered in audio-visual technique is reduced and placed back into the logic of “supplementary proof”.

The Past as Passage

On another level but in similar terms, this explains some of the resistance felt towards the practices of the “Ferro school” of cinema-historians who, according to Christian Delage and Serge Daney, too often looked to the cinema for a confirmation of knowledge already acquired elsewhere, reducing the cinematographic image of time to a kind of “supplementary proof” of documentary history. As Serge Daney explains, “En fait, ne voyant dans le cinema que l’aubaine d’une source d’information supplémentaire, elle passait à côté de ce qui est, dans le cinéma, ontologiquement historique » (1991; 88). Taking André Bazin’s ontological

grounding of the question of the historic ontology of the image, the interesting problem raised by Ferro's opening question "Is there a filmic vision of History?" remains in all its initial enigmatic mystery : How does the cinematographic image of time activate the links and ruptures of the past in original ways and allow the past "to pass" in way unknown to, because unfixed by, the medium of written and spoken discourse ? The past as passage, materially shaped in the magical mimetic and rhythmic medium of film would mark the advent of another history made possible by audio-visual technique¹⁰. What might this mean ? It seems that there may be at least three complementary aspects of the idea of the mediation of the past as passage. I would like to sketch the broad implications of these aspects before exploring them in more detail in Chapter 6.

First, the passage of the past can be understood as kind of historical experience made possible in the medium and remaining uncontained by the final edited and distributed form and content of the film. Following this reasoning, the space of filmic discourse on History should not and cannot be reduced to the production of a filmic object since what matters is not the final edited film but the social process of meaning inscribed in the presence of the film; a mobile continuum of relations crossing the context of the film's production, spectatorship and critical appropriation as well as the irreducible and dynamic contact between cinematography and reality¹¹.

Second, this mobile continuum of relations is itself constituted by the infinitely reproducible material presence of the film, its very temporal materiality, the series of temporal folds, speeds and pressures inscribed in the duration of shots and sequences. For the singularities of events remain, leaving material traces in the ribbon of the film, however much they be edited, spliced, or transformed in turn. The temporality of these events would

¹⁰ I owe the very phraseology of this thought to the suggestive research and reflection, currently undertaken by Silvestra Mariniello, "*Le cinema: l'avènement d'une autre histoire*"...(publication forthcoming).

¹¹ Talens and Zunzunegui, « Film History as Narration » (1997, 33) paraphrasing Mariniello, *El Cine et el fin del arte* (1992).

resist being reduced to the substrate of representational knowledge constituting modern historiography where it is fixed by the conceptual framework of homogenous and empty time and oriented largely by the scheme of linear progression, sequential causality and narrative chronology¹². Instead, these rhythmic traces would radically change the *perceptibility* of events and alter the character of their *intelligibility*.

Indeed, *Mirror* is an implicit critique of historiography from this point of perspective, for the phases of historical time are transmitted outside of their setting and placement within an absolute temporality in the scriptural economy of a chronicle of events. Like many postwar films, *Mirror* demonstrates that when time is fragmented and chronology is pulverized--like so many pieces of a shattered crystal shaving the past, present, and future phases of time--the merely chronological continuum of history and memory is flayed into a distinct series of discontinuous and incommensurable intervals. For when time is no longer derived from movement but eccentric and aberrant movement derived from time, then story, memory and experience are fundamentally transformed because they are mediated by incommensurable intervals and irrational divisions of time.

This brings me to the third consideration of the past as passage. As the incommensurable and irrational divisions of time "pass" in the rhythmic temporality of film, they bring about a narrative crisis which foregrounds a larger crisis in that form of knowledge and truth consolidated by the literate pretension to Being¹³ : for that which divides the inside from the outside, the mind from the body, the mental from the physical, and the imaginary from the real are no longer decidable qualities because a certain regime of truth, to use Deleuze's Nietzschean terms, has become "falsified" by the "irrational" powers of the time-image.

¹² The critique of this conception and orientation of time, as Walter Benjamin has rigorously argued in his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, constitutes a critique of the notion of the progress of mankind itself, and history must be rethought in revolutionary terms.

¹³ These terms about the « literate pretension to Being » refer back to Edouard Glissant's critique, mentioned earlier, concerning the literary « dispositif » in which the techniques of writing consolidate a transcendental aspiration to Being (1994).

In this sense, the scrap-book of genres in *Mirror*—from autobiography, epic and lyric poetry, fictional docudrama, and documentary—should be viewed beyond its challenge to aesthetic principles of the poetics of cinema as a more fundamental challenge to epistemology. My hypothesis, although it needs to be tested, is that the multiple temporalities of these diverse film sequences resist their fixation in a poetics of genre—however modernist the techniques; they do not simply make a more various narrative structure or introduce a multi-temporal history. When the forces of time outstrip the narrative capability of history then time can no longer be slowed down or “made human” by written language; for the passage of time in the image would make written language stutter, not in order to get back to some pseudo pre-linguistic reality but in order to melt language down¹⁴, to make it shudder and become the medium of a passage of a world of examples that do not have their co-ordinates in us, that are no longer organized as utterances to speak themselves in a manageable scriptural and textual economy¹⁵. The rhythm of film would introduce the historical materiality of the chaos-world of beings into another form of history-making, in which the voices, bodies, vapors, wailing cries, ambient noises, whispers, shadows, lights, glows, gestures, faces, and colors of events would pass in time, breathing in

¹⁴ Gilles Deleue and Claire Parnet speak in these terms when defending the possibility of inventing another relationship to language, one characterized by its « minority usage » or by the repetition and movement of its rhythmic musical returning, its *ritournelle* : « ...inventer le bégaiement, pas pour rejoindre une pseudo-réalité pré-linguistique, mais pour tracer une ligne vocal ou écrite qui fera couler le langage entre ces dualismes (multiplicité/totalité; rhizome/arbre; géographie/histoire), et qui définira un usage minoritaire de la langue... » (*Dialogues*, 1996; 42).

¹⁵ Michel de Certeau, discusses the possibility of making literate language shudder in terms of the material practice of reading: in the duration of the pause or in the acceleration of reading, there is the possibility of inventing the “given” use of the print-language of texts, for the eye and the mind can cross the text in a kind of “braconnage” that gives back the itinerary, the pulse, the voice, in short – the life that belongs to the breath of the word. De Certeau argues that this puts the reader in touch with that which escapes the scriptural economy of representing and organizing the moments of enunciation. In his words, “Il y a partout ces résonances de corps touchés, tels des “gémissements” et bruits d’amour, cris brisant le texte qu’ils vont faire proliférer autour d’eux, lapsus énonciatifs dans une organisation d’énoncés” (*L’Invention du quotidien 1: Arts de faire*, 1990; 238).

the duration of images and magically repeating themselves in the infinitely extendable life-world of film.

The past as passage would mark the advent of an electr-orality of historical consciousness because time would breathe alongside and into the movement of the word, a word which does not pretend to represent or to comprehend the totality of beings and existence in a univocal and transparent structure of Being, a word which integrates the opacity, the distance and the ceaseless becoming of beings in its movement with the world. This movement of the word "speaks" in its silent encounter with the historical milieu of the image. No longer bringing the narrative capability of speech or story to explain or to insert the rhythms of film in a structure of organized utterances, the speaking of this word is also a suspension of speech, an opening to otherness.

In *Mirror*, the history of the orphans of the Spanish Civil War (Sequence IX), forced to leave their homeland and who, as refugees and immigrants in Russia, can never return home; this history of exile cannot be written or represented but only analogically suggested and evoked in the space between the mise-en-scene and the re-play of documentary footage. First, we witness a mise-en-scene of these orphans as adults in the scene of their unexplained reunion in Alexei's apartment. It becomes clear that their memory, identity, and traditions are founded in the loss of the homeland and that this loss is inscribed in the body, in the deterritorialized and fetishized relationship between language, body, music, and image. Hostile to the postures of the bull-ring matador and the false choreographies of the flamenco dance, one of the orphan-refugee-adults, Luisa, speaks of the ignorance and the vanity of the others' attempt to re-produce the presence of a Spain irrecoverably missing in their memories. When Natalia attempts to draw her out by asking about Luisa's feelings of the homeland, Luisa leaves in silence for her experience cannot be spoken.

Yet the elect-orality of historical consciousness in the historical milieu of images intervenes in this silence and opens freely and indirectly into the sequence of documentary

newsreel footage of some of the Spanish refugee-orphans, their faces persisting in the magical materiality of the image. The bodily presence of these orphans in the rhythms of film suggest the negative temporality of exilic experience, the terrifying experience of forced deracination; and yet their voices, sometimes audible and sometimes silent in the duration of the time-image, seem to rend and to consume the image itself in the hot desperation of their trembling and wailing bodies. Especially there, in the face of the little girl, (Shot 79, B/W documentary newsreel) holding a doll, who turns to the camera as the mournful sound of the boat-horn bellows in the distance. Her expression is impressively recorded in the duration of the shot, expressively changing from a kind of listless drifting gaze--to that of total surrender--to that, finally, of absolute and terrifying interrogation. Viewers are confronted with the "heat" of those moments and also with that gaze, "faced" with the question in her eyes: Is it possible to give a face to the grievous wailing and loss of that irremediably historical moment, weighed in the wake of the heavy silence of the boat-horn ?

And yet the image cuts, breaks into the interval of another, quite unrelated sequence: the B/W documentary newsreel of the record-breaking Soviet ascent by balloon into the stratosphere (early 1930's). Unrelated historically and chronologically, yet related by the materiality of the rhythm and organically connected and joined in the temporal correspondence of drift and suspension. Total silence. A long-shot from below reveals a soldier seated on a swing dangling from a perfectly round hot-air balloon. This balloon and soldier are seen juxtaposed next to the loose strings and enormous presence of a mother balloon, an image that suspends speech, as it lifts and drifts out of frame.

Rhythm, Electr-Orality, and the Poet's Voice-Over

Speech soars into the air at the same time that one sees the earth sink more and more into itself...And if the voice which speaks to us of corpses, of a whole line of corpses that have just lain beneath the earth, then at this moment, the least stirring of the wind across this deserted land, across this empty space you have beneath your eyes, the

smallest hollow in this earth, all of this takes on meaning. (Gilles Deleuze, « Avoir une idée en cinéma » (translated by D.N. Rodowick, 1997; 139)

The movement of speech Deleuze describes here is also the movement of the *pneumas* in *Mirror* : the inscrutable breath of a wind, the dynamic ethos of rhythm. This movement of speech is also the voice-over of the poet as it interacts dynamically with the historical passage of the past, the newsreel footage of Lake Sivash being a particularly remarkable moment of this interaction (Sequence XII). Tarkovsky notes the “aching poignancy” of this documentary sequence because the simple people filmed are recorded “in one single event continuously observed” by an extraordinarily gifted camera-man who penetrated the dramatic moment of the Soviet advance through the Crimea in 1943 (1986; 130-131). I have already described the way in which this sequence is “enunciated” through the hostile and abandoned eyes of the rebel-orphan Afasyev—transforming the gaze into a vision, working a metamorphosis in the temporal experience of reality as the orphan-footage passes.

Yet it would be more accurate to say that the Lake Sivash sequence is introduced analogically by recording the step of the children as they are put into a kind of contact with the rhythms of the documentary film. For after playing the prank of the hand-grenade with the shell-shocked instructor, Afasyev takes his leave (Shot 110) and the children march behind him. This brief shot makes the children’s march parallel to the newsreel footage of the trudging soldiers. It is from this point of perspective that the footage is to be seen, since it is enunciated socially by Afasyev and the troop of children he leads : the cut to their rising off the platform demonstrates the way spectators must bridge the gap separating the shot of the children as they rise to take their leave and the shot of the « fall » of their « fathers » in the previous shot. The social practice of the historical imagination in *Mirror* is inseparable from this emblematic eschatology: the visibility and viscosity of the scene imposes, in the passive but open attentiveness of spectatorship, an act of the imagination to take on or pass within the historical burden implied by the economy of this transition from the orphan-

children to the lost fathers, a transition that is structured by the “horizon of the end.” Yet how does this sequence speak?

Behind the splash of boots we hear the drums and voices from the requiem refrain building and falling. Underscoring the continuous splash of the water, we hear the dim regular beat of the drums of Artemeyev’s requiem-refrain, itself loosely discontinuous with the splash of water. The disjunction of sounds has the remarkable quality of supporting the irregular rhythm of the men’s feet even while it calls attention to, and holds onto, the historical distance between viewers and the bodies on the screen. It creates an aural daze in the viewing experience, one located in the disorientation of the ear to the reality of the image.

In the next series of shots, we witness the traces of an historical event recorded in all of its singularity: the soldiers marching and trudging through the mud along an endless gray horizon, shoring up their strength and attempting to salvage their cannons and equipment on a raft to cross the Lake. Shot 117 is recorded like an immense melancholy time-sculpture, but as a “sculpture” it does not commemorate the dead and the absent but bears witness to them in their distance; although it may be called by some to be a witnessing of a kind of heroic sacrifice by and for the people of the Russian nation in a time of the Soviet engagement in World-War¹⁶—it does not set viewers in the empty homogeneous time of historiography, nor does the witnessing have the character of a tribute to the “anonymous soldiers” with whom the viewer might identify and commune in the invisible image of the nation-state; it articulates another temporality—one of profound un-mooring—one to which the movement of the raft offers a suggestive parallel.

This audio-visual drift and dislocation permits viewers to pass and become the passage of the historical traces of film, to become witnesses of a time to which they do not belong but

¹⁶ Again Tarkovsky’s own remarks confirm something of this interpretation: “The scene was about that suffering which is the price of what is known as historical progress, and of the innumerable victims whom, from time immemorial, it has claimed. It was impossible to believe for a moment that such suffering was senseless. The images spoke of immortality, and Arseniy Tarkovsky’s poems were the consummation of the episode because they gave voice to its ultimate meaning” (1986, p.130)

which brushes up against them, activating memories and inventing another form of historical consciousness. This is why Tarkovsky claims that he knew upon seeing this “orphan newsreel” for the first time that this episode had to become “the heart and nerve” of a picture that had started off merely as his own “intimate lyrical memories” (1986; 130).

How does the voice of the poet speak ? In Shot 122, the time-monument recedes out of the frame and this time we see two officers moving against the current to encourage the men with the wave of their hands to continue onward and onward. Music and water give way , in the insistence of this very gesture to push onwards, to the steady, musical, heraldic voice of the poet, Arseniy Tarkovsky, reciting his poem « Life, Life .» It is significant that the poetic recitation does not chime in from the beginning of the sequence, but follows mid-way and takes its cue from the marching of feet, the irregular splash of water, as well as the dim suspension of the requiem-refrain. The oral-voice is underscored and lifted by the material rhythms of the world, the marching tread of a generation of living soldiers ; more, this rhythmic temporality is the very key signature and stave along which the oral voice is registered and transposed. The rhythm of his voice—the historical breath of the body and the imaginary of the poet--dynamically interacts with the step of the soldiers’ boots and the gestures and the traces of film.

The historical “flesh” of the voice of the poet speaks over the endless horizon of grey earth, water and sky, in prophetic exhortation: “All of us are on the sea-shore now, and I am one of those who haul the nets when a shoal of immortality comes in. Live in the house---and the house will stand.” Nowhere do the words and the images seem to betray and to oppose each other more; the visual traces inscribed by the camera cannot coincide with the strident echoes of Tarkovsky’s utopian exhortation to build the house; yet a powerful dimension of film is formed out of their incommensurable but complementary relationship. The past cannot be saved nor salved by the words of the poet; the word of the poet passes alongside the passage of the past and out of the temporal division of word and sound, secular past and

utopian future, perception and anticipatory illumination, a powerful act of the historical imagination is relayed.

The poetry of this sequence of shots does not consist in the mere recitation of written verse about the meaning of life, a meaning which would symbolically “explain” the sense of the images. As I have argued repeatedly, in order to *come to* thinking a non-instrumental relationship to technology, particularly to the mediations of audio-visual technique, it is necessary to rethink the relationship between the subject, language, and the world as it is revealed in the medium of film. This rethinking marks the moment of poetry as a practice, a practice the revolutionary movement of which may be discerned in the dynamic rhythm of film. Film rhythm may be *discerned* in the movement of its temporal materiality without being *defined* because rhythm cannot be restrained, contained, or fixed by the subject-securing function of formalist poetics, genre criticism and modern aesthetics as *metrics*. To follow a reflection on poetry outside of these categories and forms of knowing means rethinking the relationship between poetry and subjectivity, where poetry is no longer the stylistic “expression” of an interior subjectivity, no longer the narcissistic lyric-monologue closed on the individual. Poetry cannot be contained by its designation as “verse-writing” or “cine-genre”.

For this reason, the relationship between “cinema and poetry” needs to be thought together, outside of those paths suggested, for example, by Maya Turovskaya in her study, *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry* (1989), especially in her thematic chapter on cinema as poetry. I would like my essays to begin where her essay ends, by calling into question the necessity of defining the essentially “poetic” nature of Tarkovsky’s cinema through the legitimating words of the great spokesman of the Russian Formalists, Victor Shlovsky:

There is a cinema of prose and a cinema of poetry, two different genres. They are distinguished from one another not by rhythm, or not by rhythm alone, but by the fact that in poetic cinema elements of form prevail over elements of meaning, and it is they, rather than the meaning, which determine composition (cited in Turovskaya, 1989; 101).

Accepting the distinction between “cine-genres” in which either the “elements of form” or the “elements of meaning” prevail and determine the composition, Turovskaya describes how Tarkovsky’s films strove to work in a kind of “compositional poetic form” over against a “prosaic, plot-centered form,” because the “straightforward narrative” could not “contain the pressure of ideas awakened by the story” (1986; 101). Rather than content ourselves with these formalist categories of narratology (prose/poetry; plot/story), we may wonder about this *pressure of ideas* and this *awakening to story* as a function of rhythm. Rhythm in *Mirror*, the historical compression and acceleration of time flowing in the shots, through shots, and analogically connected to other shots, provokes this kind of awakening to the historical irruption of events. An awakening to the material pressure of time—not only to the pressure of ideas—a series of multiple rhythms that scramble and suspend the narrative capability of speech—making it stammer and stutter.

For these reasons, I would like to advance the idea of poetry as a practice, a dynamic mediation of experience brought about continuously by working in the experience of technological mediations, of which verse-writing and film-making are only moments. As a *practice* with the multiple traces and rhythms of historical experience, poetry is eminently a poetical-political-ethical activity. As Meschonnic argues,

Le lien entre le rythme et le sujet vient de ce que j’entends par pensée poétique, une invention du rythme, au sens où le rythme n’est plus une alternance formelle mais une organisation du sujet. Et la poésie et la pensée poétique, je la définis comme une invention du sujet telle qu’elle invente indéfiniment d’autres sujets. (Meschonnic, 1995; 13)

How might we follow Meschonnic’s lead about the “mutual invention” of subjectivity and language in the rhythm of poetry and apply this thinking in the study of the rhythm of film? We might begin by saying that the rhythm of the voice-over of the poem is not simply a formal alternation of accents and beats, nor merely the phonic materiality of sound and the oral grain of the voice, but the material organization of movement in language by a subject

and of the subject by language. As this subjectivity and historicity dynamically and organically interacts with the rhythm of film, a potentially infinite work of historicity is begun, by which one subject passes into another and by which an electr-orality of historical consciousness is created in the passage from subject to subject.

Such a thought takes us into the heart of Osip Mandelstam's revolutionary thinking about the power of the word and its relationship to culture, on the one hand, and the power of rhythm and its relationship to the state, on the other. In his essay "The Word and Culture," Mandelstam explains the historical situation of Russian post-revolutionary poetry—a situation which is also the situation of the poetry of Andrey and Arseny Tarkovsky:

Poetry is the plough that turns up time in such a way that the abyssal strata of time, its black earth, appear on the surface. There are epochs, however, when mankind, not satisfied with the present, yearning like the ploughman, for the abyssal strata of time, thirst for the virgin soil of time. The life of the word has entered a heroic era. The word is flesh and bread. It shares the fate of flesh and bread: suffering. People are hungry. The State is even hungrier. But there is something still hungrier: Time. Time wants to devour the State... To show compassion for the State which denies the word shall be the contemporary poet's social obligation and heroic feat. (1997; pp.70-71)

If the poet stands between the hunger of Time and the hunger of the People and the State, then his social obligation, his place in the *polis* is defined by the breaking and the sharing of the bread and the flesh of the word. Not only is the poet's place politically defined, but the political life of the state cannot be thought and the culture of the people cannot be built without the compassion of the poet. To be the guardian and the ploughman of the word which is inscribed with the geological strata of time, one must understand that the craft of the "word-smith" of poetry defines and constitutes the spirit of the collective—living and dead.

This is why Mandelstam placed such high importance on the principle of rhythm in poetry. In his essay on "Government and Rhythm," Mandelstam states that "The collective does not exist. It must still be born. Collectivism appeared before the collective, and if social education does not come to its aid we shall be in danger of collectivism without the collective" (1979; 67). The *mass* of the new society is held, according to Mandelstam, by the

solidarity of a concord of goals. The *collective* is held together by *rhythm*; but neither collective nor rhythm exist--nor are they prepared to be born yet. In Mandelstam's words, the "syncretic fusion of the political-poetical elements of body, space, time and motion" which would be necessary for the creation of a future history has only "just awakened from prolonged lethargy and...has not yet realized all its possibilities" (69). If a state based upon collectivism has left out the collective, it has left out the place of rhythm and the place of the poet in the polis; the collective does not exist and the people are "not yet" because rhythm has not yet been given an intermediate and independent position suitable for such a social force.

Returning to the practice of poetry and rhythm in *Mirror*, I would like to suggest that the dynamic historical materiality of these shots and the breathing imaginary of the voice-over bring about the beginnings of such a creative utopian position and such a social force of energy: Rhythm inscribes the not-yet and the unknown body of the collective in the furrows and the strata of time. This is why the poet can make a claim on the "immortality" of the people—not because the people are affirmed in some timeless and essential identity and rescued by the prophetic power of the poet—but because the principle of a people's utopian hope to live together is projected in a kind of anticipatory illumination that would transfigure the scars of mortal existence. The time-machine of the cinema generates this promise even more irresistibly, for however much it mummifies and embalms the presence of bodies in time, it also works to re-activate the immanent becomings of the body of the collective. I will return to the paradoxically "dystopian" character of this utopian "awakening" of the historical imagination in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 : Rhythm and the Mediation of Historical Events

These poetical-political-ethical considerations indicate the necessity of developing a theory of the rhythmic temporality of film in order to understand the radical novelty of audio-visual technique for historical knowledge. What is meant here by rhythmic temporality ? The experience of time that is made possible or mediated by the material inscription of events of different speeds. The speed of the modern event is that which challenges the narrative competence of the subject and also that which allows time to be shown and perceived in the time-image as a play of different rhythms and cadences.

As Walter Benjamin intimated¹, speed defines something of the political dimension of the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction: for technics radically transforms traditional relationships to property. For Benjamin this is not only because a revolutionary politics is released in the mass distraction of media, as boundaries separating producer and audience are erased, or when opposing discourses on History clash and expose a hidden reality about the institutional apparatus of history-making. On a more fundamental level, technics transforms property because the relationship to what is “proper” to substance itself, the “Aristotelian” stuff of matter, is reversed as the possibility of its transmission; that is, speed, reproducibility, and portability have become structural and not merely accidental to the transmissibility of mass-media materials².

Historical knowledge is not merely transmitted into a different medium without being affected; in its transmission, and as a dynamic form of the transmissibility of events, it is also transformed materially. A social theory of media does not exhaust the implications of the question that Ferro raises in the first place; the question concerning the original

¹ “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” In *Illuminations*. New York: Schocken Books, 1968.

² For these remarks, I am grateful to Rey Chow’s insightful commentary in “Media, Matter, Migrants” *Writing Diaspora*, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993, p. 170.

links and ruptures introduced by the cinematographic/filmic vision of history. This question opens the possibility for reflecting on the mediation of the historical event in the rhythmic properties of the film medium, and it is here, I think, that the question must be pushed further. How does film-transmission transform the substance or “materiality” of History?

The Multiple Rhythms of History

The audio-visual technique of the time-based medium of film, far from merely representing, circulating or contesting History, constitutes a new form of historical experience and knowledge in the rhythmic temporality of film. This affirmation takes us into the heart of the problem concerning the mediation of the historical event in the multiple rhythms of film. Do these multiple rhythmic traces escape or resist all models of narrative predication? To begin to answer this question, we need to take a brief detour into another model of the critique of historiography and its potential application in film.

Michèle Lagny, a film-historian interested in applying Braudelian modes of historical-writing to the filmic narrative, resumes some of the main premises on which historical narrative was contested by the *Annales* school: 1) the disqualification of narrative as founded upon a succession of political events and figures; 2) the reconfiguration of the axis of time and its treatment by historians, who no longer privilege a univocal, linear, and continuous framework, but allow narrative to function on the principle of several temporal axes and orientations; 3) the valorization of a historical practice of writing based on larger and more massive structures of socio-economic and discursive phenomena recorded as the organization of different levels of time occurring at different speeds; 4) the invention of a historical grid structured as much upon rupture and discontinuity as it is upon continuity (1994; 18).

At the same time, Lagny, in the wake of Paul Veyne's critique of historiography, is particularly vigilant when applying these forms of critique in the field of film-studies. She denounces the "simplistic and reductionist" tendencies of critical gestures in film-studies that dismiss, with a kind of disdainful brevity, all historical narrative as founded upon a kind of linearity which can now be easily surpassed. It is not enough to state that the irreverent poetics of contemporary film-practices liquidate, once and for all, the "linearity" of historical narrative when in fact much of this narrative has been preoccupied, at least implicitly if not explicitly, with rendering the plurality of temporal experience. In an attempt to correct this tendency, she describes the problem in the following terms:

La vraie question qui se pose est de savoir quelle place et quel statut donner à l'événement, et comment trouver le mode narratif qui fasse la part des lenteurs de la longue durée, des rythmes cycliques, des crises, comme le réclamait Braudel lorsqu'il insistait sur le caractère polyphonique de l'histoire et sur la nécessité de l'exposer sur un mode quasi musical. (Lagny, « Le film et le temps braudélien », 1994; p.19)

Lagny relies on the competence of cinema to render the pluri-temporality of History in all of its quasi-musical polyphony and complexity. Insofar as the cinema can weave a narrative made of events with phenomena of a longer duration, she argues that it has a large part to play in the re-writing of history since it is able to conserve, in the diegetic strategies of film, something of the epic and global part of historical narrative, as in Braudel's quasi-Homeric study *La Méditerranée*.

On the other hand, Lagny adds-- in the light of Rancière's critique, cinema may help to generate alternate ways of recounting the piecemeal and fragmentary history of a contemporary world which no longer has great myths of origin.

Pour Rancière, c'est justement parce que, depuis l'âge à la fois de la grande industrialisation et de la démocratie, depuis l'âge des « masses », les structures symboliques anciennes et devenues inadaptées ont été détruites, mais pas remplacées. C'est aussi parce qu'il n'y a plus de modèle pour régler l'organisation du discours-récit : il n'y a plus de Livre, ni de Loi, qui puisse

servir de fondement (d'origine) au récit, en même temps que de centre (de lieu d'articulation) à la diversité des rythmes temporels. (1994; 28)

In the absence of the central identification between a discourse of the *logos* with a founding mythic story of origin or *muthos*, Lagny defends the idea that contemporary film can produce a kind of « post-Braudelian » piecemeal narrative, an alternate form of narration generated by the coalescence of historical and fictional temporalities. We might add to this, the suggestion that an alternative form of witnessing, tracing, and remembering history becomes possible in the electr-orality of historical consciousness—because it is marked by the absence of territorial/textual myths of origin.

According to Lagny, this fictional/historical coalescence is rendered by the temporal plasticity of film, the permeable borders of historical and fictional temporality being crossed by the concordances and disjunctures of images and sounds, or by the crystalline circuits of the time-image—the indiscernible exchange between actual and virtual images. Clearly such a perspective on the filmic vision of history is pertinent to the analysis of the rhythmic temporalities of *Mirror*, a film which is structured by the alternation between the rhythms of collective memory and personal memory. In Tarkovsky's *Mirror*, the long durations of major events in the twentieth century are punctuated, perforated, and folded by the short but intense durations of daily life, of the utopian and dystopian memories of childhood; this alternating exchange between personal/collective memories and long/short durations is structured by the free indirect passage between historical and fictional temporalities and by their coalescent exchanges in the time-mirror of the “crystalline image.”

In the first place, *Mirror* reveals the fundamentally social character of memory, the way in which personal memory and collective memory mutually constitute each other, and it is upon this mutually constituting work of memory that the historical narrative of

the film is articulated in all of its complexity³. The complex narrative emplotment of history in *Mirror* makes its appearance in the film in the alternate exchange between the trans-generational story of a broken family (the narrator's son repeating something of the story of the narrator as a boy) which is expanded onto the history of generations of other families (Soviet and Spanish) broken by the events of WWII. This alternating exchange is made intelligible in the complex visual structure of the chronotopes⁴ transmitted by the memories of a narrator and other members of his family (1930's at the dacha; 1940's events of WWII; 1970's narrator's apartment). While being itself uncertainly shuffled and "fabulated" between the historical and fictional temporalities of image-crystals, this exchange would seem to make recognizable at least the semblance of a transhistorical destiny of a people (family/nation).

If there is not any clear central Text/Law or eschatological narrative around which these multitemporal sequences are organized, we may at least say that they carry the burden of the absence of this law; in other words they do not simply heretically reject this mythic-epic Law nor lose it to memory but they are inscribed in the memory of its loss. A memory of loss already carried by the tropes of XIX century Russian literature (Dostoevsky/Tolstoy/Chekhov/Pushkin) and the prophetic word and utopian/dystopian vision of the poet, Arseniy Tarkovsky the director's father. This memory of loss organizes the intertextual-intermedial work of memory in *Mirror*, a memory that is a mixture of the material supports that articulate, structure and constitute its recording—from the book of reproductions of Leonardo Da Vinci's paintings to the voice-over of the Arseniy Tarkovsky's poems. The religious impulse surging out of Tarkovsky's

³ For a more elaborate articulation of this, see my discussion of Ricoeur's essay "Mémoire et histoire" in chapter VI.

⁴ I borrow this term from the literary criticism of Bakhtin (1937; 84). *Chronotope* : the "time-space" of a fictional setting where historical relations become visible and stories "take-place". No priority is given to either time or space but they are fused into one organic whole; time thickens, becomes visible and "takes on flesh" and space become charged with the movements of time, plot and history.

Mirror organizes and transmits this mythic order of truth somewhat diabolically through the absence or loss of the father/master artist/Moses-figure. This also explains his relationship to his father Arseniy Tarkovsky; the duty, felt in poetry and projected in cinematography, to let *Mirror* continue to mediate and to dedicate an audio-visual echo to the poem inscribed in his journal, itself an “echo” felt to the paternal traditional by his father as a dedication and named, *Dédicace sur un livre*:

**J'ai quitté ma famille, la chaleur du foyer,
Un givre trop précoce a teinté mes cheveux
Et la voix de celui qui crie dans le désert
Est devenue la mienne au pays de mes pères.**

**Comme l'oiseau, mendiant, comme Israël, boiteux,
Jamais encore je ne me suis trahi,
Et ma langue, devenue la langue de la fierté
Est restée pour les autres une langue ignorée.**

**Et Voici que j'entends de mon rire, de mes pleurs,
L'écho qui va s'affaiblissant
--Dieu de justice !—est-ce *cela* chanter ?
Comme ma propre vie, tout ce qui est sacré ?
Car j'ai —naguère—brûlé, vécu, chanté...**

(Arseniy Tarkovsky, traduit dans *Journal*, p.6)

However much *Mirror* models itself on the work of the passage of paternal tradition and the memory of its loss, still it should be emphasized that this work of memory in *Mirror* is nor a clear transmission of any kind of memory but a passage into its oblivion also, a stammering through the gaps separating co-existing temporalities, the impossibility of reunions, the opacity and difficulty of homecomings. These gaps are narratively imagined in *Mirror* through the divorce, misunderstanding, and absence of family relationships (the hyphens separating three generations of father-son, husband-wife, son-mother relations).

More, these gaps are rhythmically inscribed in the medium of film, in the difference of time-pressures in scenes and between scenes, and in the different charge of historical and fictional temporalities.

For this reason, one might make an equally compelling case for *Mirror* as a film which belongs to the Deleuzian logic of the time-image, a film in which the direct expression of time puts into question the order of rational “truth” organizing historical narrative. The semblance of a transhistorical destiny of a people (family/nation) would then only be an “unrecognizable” or “less recognizable” semblance, for it is itself uncertainly shuffled and “fabulated” between the historical and fictional temporalities of the crystalline circuits of the time-image. After all, the social work of memory is folded in the dream-work of the narrator, rendering the passage from one frame of memory to another difficult to assign to the agency of particular subjects⁵—and this unassignability allows us to apprehend time as a force. The material duration of the time-image and its multiple rhythms, always in a state of becoming, would remove the possibility of there being any rationalizing or stabilizing logic to manage the multiplicity and speed of temporal experience by which historical events might be chronicled—even in a Braudelian sense.

The Storyteller Stutters

The attempt to understand the divided heritage of *Mirror*, between the “Braudelian” and “Deleuzian” modes of indexing the historical event, must confront the problem of the decline of the mediating role of the traditional storyteller in audio-visual culture. Walter Benjamin signaled the decline of this role, as he discussed the waning tradition of storytelling techniques in the fiction of Nicolai Leskov. As Benjamin recognized, in

⁵ See Shot 6, the childhood memory of the dacha, for a good example of this.

what has practically become a commonplace in critical discourse, human experience retreated from the realm of its possible transmission in story due to the acceleration of the explosive forces of technological mediations such as those shocking the human body on the battlefields of WWI⁶. If history can no longer be put into the narrativity of story and, refusing to be mastered, breaks down into images that outstrip the potential structures of human comprehension, then that history “passing in real time” can only be witnessed in its radical alterity⁷.

What is the relationship between the storyteller and the time of the story? Walter Benjamin reflects on the traditional relationship and Osip Mandelstam on the radically new one:

The storyteller: he is the man who could let the wick of his life be consumed completely by the gentle flame of his story (Walter Benjamin, “The Storyteller”, XIX: 108-109).

My desire is to speak not about myself but to track down the age, the noise and the germination of time. My memory is inimical to all that is personal. If it depended on me, I should only make a wry face in remembering the past. I was never able to understand the Tolstoys and Aksakovs, all those grandson Bagrovs, enamoured of family archives with their domestic memoirs. I repeat—my memory is not loving but inimical, and it labors not to reproduce but to distance the past. A *raznochinets*⁸ needs no memory—it is enough for him to tell of the books he has read, and his biography is done. Where for happy generations the epic speaks in hexameters and chronicles I have merely the sign of a hiatus, and between me and the age there lies a pit, a moat, filled with the

⁶ “With the [First] World War a process began to become apparent which has not halted since then. Was it not noticeable at the end of the war that men returned from the battlefield grown silent—not richer, but poorer in communicable experience? What ten years later was poured in the flood of war books was anything but experience that goes from mouth to mouth. And there was nothing remarkable about that. For never has experience been contradicted more thoroughly than strategic experience by tactical warfare, economic experience by inflation, bodily experience by mechanical warfare, moral experience by those in power. A generation that had gone to school on a horse drawn streetcar now stood under the open sky in a countryside in which nothing remained unchanged but the clouds, and beneath these clouds, in a field of force of destructive torrents and explosions, was the tiny, fragile, human body. (“The Storyteller,” 1968; p.84)

⁷ See: Johanne Villeneuve and Brian Neville, whose synthetic critical preface helped me to articulate this: *La Mémoire des déchets : essais sur la culture et la valeur du passé*. Québec : Éditions Nota bene. 1999, p.149.

⁸ *Raznochinec*: an intellectual associated with none of the principle social classes, such as the nobility, priesthood, merchants, etc.

clamorous time, the place where a family and reminiscences of a family ought to have been. What was it my family wished to say? I do not know. It was tongue-tied from birth—but it had, nevertheless, something that it might have said. Over my head and over the head of many of my contemporaries there hangs congenital tongue-tie. We were not taught to speak but to babble—and only by listening to the swelling noise of the time and the bleached foam on the crest of its wave did we acquire a language.

(Osip Mandelstam, *The Noise of Time*; “La Komissarzhevskaja”, p. 77)

Mirror situates the storyteller somewhere between Benjamin and Mandelstam, between the storyteller as a guardian of culture, transmitter of counsel and wisdom, craftsman of an intergenerational memory that “would consume” his own life as it gently handles the wick of story begun before himself, and the storyteller as an orphan of the cultural traditions of family; a tongue-tied listener to forgetting not a teller of memory, a forgetting that is the fragmented, incomplete, and inchoate “noise of time” and temporal rupture; a forgetting that breaks the continuity of speech, stammering and stuttering. Perhaps these visions of storytelling are not so opposed since to remember is also to forget; to assemble members of memory is to transmit an orphaned archive that seeks a home beyond the orphanage, a foster-home of remembrance. What does it mean to sustain in the craftwork of the storyteller that sacrificing effort to bring a perfect narrative about through a variety of retellings? Is it not also to listen attentively to the atavistic imperatives of the absent, the untold, the dead?

This is another way of asking how one can call attention to the force of forgetting always already structuring the act of remembering. Placed in the context of remembering and forgetting the experience of modern technological warfare and the catastrophic meaning of death in the twentieth century, we may ask whether or not this ritual of retelling is inevitably marked by the symbolic effort to redeem the voices, faces, and things of the past from their usury and mutability as mortal beings in time? Or is this re-listening/re-telling also structured by an opposing impulse—a refusal to remember, a hostility towards finding closure in the remembrance of mourning and grief?

Clearly the decline of storytelling as a cultural mediation of history-making has met with the popular rise of a kind of therapeutic practice of remembering, repeating, re-telling in the audio-visual techniques of television and cinema—techniques that point in the direction of obsession, trauma and fantasy (Elsaesser, 1996). Clearly there is a difference to be made between the kind of obscene repetition of the society of the “spectacle,” which Guy Debord has thoroughly critiqued for its self-enclosed circulation of simulations, and the kind of repetition offered by the serial experiences mediated by films that are charged with the historical materiality of time. If we limit ourselves to the second form of serial-experience, the question then becomes: What motivates the compulsion to repeat? Can it be in any sense be qualified as a redemptive impulse?

The implication is that these two moments of the storyteller may not structure each other after all, but reveal opposing epistemological tendencies in the work of memory and forgetting: one attempting a “remembering of the dismembered” in the reconciling work of mourning, in which the sickness of memories are negotiated and re-worked in the trials of opposing narratives and re-tellings, rebuilding the “protective shield” of the past or repressed “forgetting” that Freud saw as penetrated by trauma; the other, which wishes to bear witness to the sources of the past in their opacity, to hold the wounds open rather than let the scars heal, one that listens to the melancholic spade of the grave-digger and refuses to let grievous loss be commemorated. However opposed these tendencies may be, an opposition particularly exacerbated by the crisis of the representation of history, they are still both structured by the utopian promise of the future, of the settling of final-things in the last-analysis—by the horizon of eschatology. In the first, this promise and this hope is “restored” to the “horizon of experience and expectation” dilating in the past and re-told to help bring new perspectives into the horizon of the present⁹; in the second,

⁹ Ricoeur’s essay, “Mémoire et histoire” (1998) thoughtfully ends by invoking something like this possibility. In the discussion concerning the curative function of re-writing history, he invokes Reinhart Kosseleck’s renewal of the Augustinian historical categories of the “space of

the principle of this hope is melancholically deferred by the form of time gaping between present and past and allegorically repeated in its heterogeneity until the epoch-ending Messianic moment of apokatastasis¹⁰.

Most critical analyses suggest that historical horizon of the work of memory in Tarkovsky's *Mirror* is essentially "restorative" by pointing out the redemptive motifs and a few of the commemorative themes that structure the complex narrative; this is legitimated and even reinforced to some extent by Tarkovsky's writings and declarations of the film as an emblem of "historical sacrifice," as I mentioned earlier in Chapter 5 regarding the interpretation of the Lake Sivash sequence. The possibility of another perspective is precluded by the rather superficial attention to narrative/thematic patterns and authorial intentions which prevail over any consideration of the time-based medium of film itself. I would like to argue for this other perspective by showing how the film calls attention to rhythm, the way the image *speaks* the melancholy work of memory and mourning *in time*.

In Tarkovsky's *Mirror* the storyteller is orphaned from the home of memory; witnessing the clamorous noise of time the storyteller stutters. It is no accident that the prologue-sequence of *Mirror*, a brief television documentary about the hypnotic curing of a young man's stutter, introduces and initiates the complex work of memory in the film. Several interpretive accounts have been made of this prologue. Johnson and Petrie discuss it as a clear metaphorical device used for the Russian audience, a device that "unmistakably voices an artist's and a whole society's need for unfettered expression," the event of clear speech being "an optimistic guide" for Tarkovsky's and the narrator's

experience" and "horizon of expectation" (1985), in order to show how the future anteriority of lost or forgotten horizons of experience and expectation might be restored in the re-writing(s) of history, particularly by revalorizing the place of eye-witness accounts and testimonial-stories in history-making.

¹⁰ For a more detailed discussion of the emergence of this tendency in the work of Walter Benjamin, see Martin Jay's essay, "Walter Benjamin, Remembrance, and the First World War" (1996).

"coming to terms with the past with which the film deals" (1994; 116). The problem with such a metaphorical and ideological interpretation of the prologue is that it reduces the problem of the stammer-stutter to that which situates the film in the context of Kruschev's Post-Stalinist thaw of speech in the Soviet State, collapsing the problem of the stammer-stutter as an emblem of a political problem from the outside which has been overcome now that the film begins. In this view, the prologue has "no narrative significance" in the film itself.

Any serious study of *Mirror* makes such facile critical gestures of criticism problematic especially since it does not, as a film, speak loudly nor clearly—but takes one through the stutter and the stages of such a hypnosis sequence by sequence. Moreover, from the point of view of the audio-visual critique of historiography to which the entire film responds, it significantly questions narrative capability itself. The prologue is more than the metaphorical springboard for the rest of the film but that which metonymically imparts a certain temporal tonality, tenor, and tremor to the various pieces of the shattered experience of memory to follow. As a prologue to *Mirror* it would naturally seem that this scene does, however, signal the film's interest in the effort to overcome the stutter : the hypnotic recall, the attentive concentration, paralysis and release, the hand-head-eye co-ordination of energy that would re-invent, recall, and redeem the voices, gestures and words of the absent. We must ask: does the effort to overcome the stutter, especially as it is metonymically cast into time-mirrors and voice-overs of the film, restore or undermine the authenticity and authority of speech for the subject?

This question will become clearer if we situate and interrogate Mark LeFanu's critical perspective on *Mirror*, or what he calls the film's effort to reaffirm the sacred-prophetic and simple-poetic power of speech in a modernist/post-modernist age that can only speak in ironical self-effacements and cancellations (1984; 82-83). For LeFanu, this reading of

Tarkovsky's prologue would seem to be a way to settle accounts with the theoretical trends and attitudes exemplified by the films of Godard, and also with the academic discourse of "post-modernism" for its denial of the subject's mastery of speech, the relationship between speech and authenticity, and the capacity of the word to speak the Truth. Describing the stuttering scene in relation to the voice-overs of Arseniy Tarkovsky's poetry throughout the film, Le Fanu declares: "The power of the word, combined with its ability to define truth is almost, perhaps, the single central article of faith that Tarkovsky is testifying to in *Mirror*" (83). For all of its provocative charge, such a statement ignores the problem of mediation; more specifically, it occults the problem of the *mediation of the word in time*. Clearly, literacy has intervened even in the critic's position by giving him the *capacity to read* the fullness of meaning transmitted immediately by the power of the word as it defines truth. It does not occur to LeFanu that the temporal dimension of the movement of the word, its rhythm, encountered in the powerful materiality of the voice as it interacts with the time-image of the film, might disenfranchise these "articles of faith" concerning the identity equation of subjectivity, authenticity, and Truth. For in the act of the stutter and in the voice-over of poetry, the word has been unmoored from its anchor in subjectivity and filled with the breath of time, and the identity between being and saying has been disjoined. To consider this unmooring and this breath is to inquire into the power of the word in the "post-literate" age of audio-visual techniques like the cinema and television.

Hyperdiegetic Flashes

Beyond the *mise-en scene* of the stuttering boy, *Mirror* manifests this stuttering-effect of the historical event by pushing narrative principles (*mise-en-récit*, plot) to their limits, accelerating diegetic strategies so that they no longer regulate the periodic occurrence of events in a narrative structure but, in a kind of hyperdiegetic suspense, mark their arrival

in a flash of memory. *Mirror* does not employ the technique of “flash-back”; events do not flash in order to receive retrospective causal explanation, nor in order to generate the narrative succession of action. I would like to argue that the “flashing” work of memory in *Mirror* marks the moment of the arrival of events in order to provoke a kind of startled “awakening” to their radical alterity.

In what sense is this flashing work “hyperdiegetic” ? Edward Branigan, in the chapter, “Beyond Plot: The Complex Temporality of Hyperdiegetic Narration¹¹”, makes the following useful distinction: “the hyperdiegetic, then, stands for the barest trace of another scene, of a scene to be remembered at another time, of a past and a future scene in the film (a hybrid scene) for a scene that is evaded and remains absent” (190). This concept may be applied to a great number of the moments of *Mirror* because it is a film concerned with the fullness of memory, not as it is recollected in a story, but as it is founded in loss and absence and dispersed in the fragments and traces of a story. However, in *Mirror*, the sense of the hyperdiegetic does not apply to what Branigan describes as the logic of anticipation and suspense found in the hyperdiegetic narration of actions but suspends this theater of action and intrigue in favor of a suspended experience of the agency of time itself. How does the hyperdiegetic work in *Mirror* ?

Enigmatically enough, one of the key narrative moments of Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, featured towards the film’s ending, concerns the death of the narrator Alexei to which I have already alluded. In this scene we witness the narrator Alexei lying down to his death in a room of his apartment (Postwar 1970’s), hidden behind a screened curtain, and lying next to a wall of mirrors and we are informed by a doctor that he is dying for personal reasons untreatable by medical science. We are told by two women that he is dying in his guilt—of being unworthy of his family; one of these women, knitting, recalls literary images of Fate, the other allusively recalling the familiar image of the poetess Anna

¹¹ *Narrative Comprehension and Film*. London : Routledge, 1992.

Akhmatova (apparitions we have already seen before in a haunting scene with the child of the narrator). He tells the doctor and his visitors repeatedly to leave him alone. His hand, lying on the sheet next to bird-droppings, reaches out to pick up a small wounded bird with wet feathers. In slow motion, the hand clasps the bird, turns gently and then caresses its head which peeks out beneath the thumb. Alexei, with shortened breath—an ominous sign of his last breath, says, “Everything will be all right” as if addressing the bird. Again he sighs and whispers, “Everything will be...” and he is heard breathing and expiring... In the softness of this expiration, the camera lifts and holds the frame of the image just above his hand; the rhythm of the breath and of the duration of the image emphasize this contemplative suspense of this lifting. In slow motion and silence the arm lifts into the frame and the hand, capturing the light of the sun, opens: the bird is tossed into this light, lifting into the horizon of the next image. As we follow the flight of the bird we are lifted by the camera into the last scene of the film.

In terms of the dying narrator Alexei, we witness the narrative trope or pretext that would anthologize as well as generate the heterogenous series of memories reflected throughout the film of a man acquiring a conscience on the edge of death. Yet this scene surpasses the techniques of narrative “flashback” as a moment that would gather a causal sequence of developments in a voice-off make-over in the interior monologue of a character; for *Mirror* is organized by the elliptical “emboîtement” set between two mirrors that, facing each other, reflect the infinite series of exits and entries set between the gaps of three generations of family—of the narrator as a child and the child as a narrator (DeBaeque, p.78). We do not hear the narrator speak of his feverish guilt of being unworthy as a father-husband in a family fragmented by war, misunderstanding, and divorce; his gesture and his breath however do generate the work of memory, opening out towards the luminous presence of the “child-figure” and to the half-remembered and half-forgotten experiences of his childhood projected in the last scene.

Significantly, the hyperdiegetic work of memory, a moment of startled awakening to the figure of the “child” and the utopian memory of childhood¹²—is founded in the respiring-expiring breath of the time-image.

The Last Breath of Ivan Illych

The scene of the “last breath” of the narrator is a more or less direct adaptation/citation of Tolstoy’s celebrated novella “The Death of Ivan Illych”; this seems appropriate, for in both cases the last breath shows how no one in either story seems to belong to the same temporality, an un-belonging or disjuncture in temporal experiences especially accentuated at the moment of death. This is true for Ivan Illych: as a judge whose offices must be replaced, his mortal illness is viewed by his associates and friends as a delicate but rather unfortunate moment in a bureaucracy of inevitable successions and promotions; as a father and husband protecting and providing for the social vanities and the daily needs of his family affairs, his dying is viewed as a miserable inconvenience in a life lengthened by the banality of dinners, balls, marriage proposals; finally, as a man facing himself, brooding over his imminent death, exasperated by the unworthiness of his life and his guilty conscience, his life is illuminated with new meaning in the anticipation of death since it reaches out towards the horizon of eternity—with the help of the Christ-like figure of the peasant Gerasim.

This is indeed a novella that characterized the autobiographical situation of the film, especially the ambiguous ending which is so close to life that it “shakes us to the depths of our being” (*Sculpting in Time*, p.108). In Tarkovsky’s words, “*Mirror* was not an attempt to talk about myself, not at all. It was about my feelings towards people dear to me; about my relationship with them; my perpetual pity for them and my own

¹² I address the connection between the “technology of memory” in film and the utopian figures of childhood and awakening as they relate to the possibility of mediating the modernist event in at the end of this chapter.

inadequacy—my feeling of duty left unfulfilled” (*Sculpting in Time*, p.134). Tarkovsky describes the last scene of Ivan Illych as the search for forgiveness and authentic life felt by an unkind and limited man dying of cancer who, although surrounded by a nasty wife and worthless daughter, insensitive to his suffering and preoccupied with their social vanities, nevertheless is overcome by a feeling of goodness, pity, and forbearance towards them.

And then, on the point of death, he feels he is crawling along in some long, soft black pipe like an intestine...In the distance there seems to be a glimmer of lights, and he crawls on and can't reach the end, can't overcome that last barrier separating life from death. His wife and daughter stand by the bedside. He wants to say, "Forgive me". And instead, at the last minute, utters, "Let me through" (*Sculpting in Time*, pp.107-108).

The difference between these two phrases is the difference of a rhythmic gap, a stammering, for literally in the Russian "Forgive me" is *prosteeete* and "let me through" is *propoosteete*; the syllabic difference that utters the *poos* between *pro* and *steete* stammers between Heaven and hell, light and darkness, grace and gravity. Far from being a literal or a semi-autobiographical adaptation of Tolstoy's novella, *Mirror* begins where Tolstoy ends, by recording something of the rhythms of Ivan Illych's breath—this gasping—between what Ricoeur has called the *intentio animi* (*prosteeete*) and the *distentio animi* (*propoosteete*). The poignancy of this rhythmic gap between words, this caesura marking a kind of pause of breath, is also emblematic of the inscrutable separation between generations, the impossible passage of a return to the same. Like Mandelstam's prose essays, *Mirror* inscribes this pipeline of pressures between the living and the dead, not as a vessel of domestic or inter-generational connection but as an abyss germinating with the noise of time.

We may discuss how the mechanics of this gasping is sustained throughout the film, from the opening documentary clip of the stuttering fit; to the narrator's opening telephone call with his mother in which he recounts his dream and asks her forgiveness, a

request she denies in the click of the phone; to the repetitive dream of trying to access entrance to the dacha of childhood; to the final death-bed scene in which the narrator, in despair of never being granted his mother's forgiveness, launches the bird into the hall of communicating memories. In this sense, *Mirror* is less interested in transmitting this story as a story than in re-organizing it in terms of its gaps, send-backs and cancellations; introducing the pause, the hyphen, and the stutter to speech. Setting time loose from the structures of story, *Mirror* transmutes temporal experience. The sequential passage of one historical or fictional scene into the next must be seen as a function and configuration of this enigmatic transformation of temporality. The temporal materiality of film, its rhythm, effects a serial metamorphosis of reality; in the attentive absorption to the alien rhythms of the film we witness the passage of time, from the intensity of its compression to the plasticity of its expansion—and in the inscrutable cipher of pressures of this historical material of duration—we relay the radical alterity of this serial-becoming of temporality through which we too must pass.

Fabulations of Subjectivity in Time

Deleuze's logic of the time-image affords another approach to the problem of the dislocation of the subject from the narrative capability of story. Since the time-image presents time as a "series" it also presents storytelling (in the French, "légender") as a performative speech-act that "fabulates." In its "direct presentation", the thickness of time flows and inheres in the time-image in its virtual potentiality and time is presented as a force and as a series engendering various forms of fabulation. The construction of time as a series means that time would no longer be organized as an open totality of movement and subsumed under a linear unfolding of organic narration; instead it would assume a serial form of narration continuously becoming other because it introduces into the time-image a series of incommensurable intervals and interstices. Instead of

organizing history upon a limited number of central myths of origin, this power of fabulation—equally a power of the false, a power of fiction—would promote the construction of new situations through which a people and their stories might come into being. Indeed, the entire process of re-producing the life of Tarkovsky's memories in the re-producible images of the semi-autobiographical *Mirror* belongs to this movement of repetition and difference in the moment of becoming other: the image of the mother, faithfully recorded and phantasmagorically “doubled” throughout the film, makes her fullest appearance in the moment of childhood remembrance; the set of the dacha, reconstructed over its ruins from original photographs, generates the topical movement of memory and forgetting for all of the fictional and historical chronotopes in the film; the fields of buckwheat, replanted and grown in front of the dacha in order to correspond to Tarkovsky's childhood memories, make visible the inscription of time in the rhythm of film and bend to the breath that sweeps between the already and the not-yet of this childhood. The historical subject of *Mirror* (the author, the narrator, the family, the people) is not an ideal image of unity that already exists and must only be awakened into self-consciousness, it is a profoundly historical image, re-membered in virtual and real circuits, on the basis of which a future might be invented by allowing the occluded elements of the past to creatively invent the future.

In this section, I would like to argue that the time-images of Tarkovsky's *Mirror* are constituted by the powers of the false even in those sequences and shots that seem to offer a kind of total narrative resolution and a return to the origins of a founding myth because they introduce “impossible¹³” moments of time in the materiality of allegorical images.

¹³ The impossible names a relationship to the co-existence of different temporalities in the materiality of the image, a co-existence which is logically “impossible” within the abstract structure of chronological time. Rodowick (1997; 98-100) traces the concept of impossibility in Deleuze's concept of the time-image, demonstrating how Deleuze finds this concept by re-

The images in the final sequence of shots (XXII; 201-208), in which viewers are taken from the scene of the sick-bed of the dying narrator Alexei into the vision of his childhood, would provide an excellent test-case of this hypothesis. Shot 201 offers the image of the hand of the dying narrator (Alexei/ apartment 1970's) picking up a broken-winged bird and launching it upwards in his expiring breath; in shot 202 viewers are taken presumably back to the moment before the narrator's conception (dacha/1930's) where his young parents are pictured lying in the grass below the house wondering if they would have a boy or a girl; in the long duration of shot 203, Maria's (Alexei's younger mother, played by Margarita Terekhova) face makes several expressive changes—as if in the pause of her husband's question her face were anticipating a lifetime of tremendous events: passing from anxious curiosity to warm surprise, from hopeful bewilderment to pure desperation; finally in shot 204 Alexei's mother Maria is pictured as an older woman (played by Tarkovsky's own mother, Maria Tarkovskaya) steps into view from behind holding a wash basin. She is accompanied by a young child, presumably the image of the narrator as a child. Together they behold the image of the hill where the dacha used to be. The co-existence of different temporalities reaches a climax in this image; for we have passed from the image of the young mother Maria in the last shot (early 1930's) to the image of herself as a old woman (1970's) and paradoxically, we have passed from the deathbed of the narrator who now remains the “ageless model” of the child—holding hands with his aging mother.

reading Leibnitz through Bergson: Leibnitz proposes the impossible in order to evade a contradiction between the determinate infinite power of God and the undetermined freedom of mankind; Bergson argues that our entire past is preserved as non-chronological co-existence in time, virtually expanding from the points of surfaces and borders of the present and leaping into it; for Deleuze, this Bergsonian conception of the past liberates humans by giving them a determinate power of creation and invention to move with the ceaseless forkings of non-chronological time. This time-scheme subtends the various forms of serial narration recognized by Deleuze in the time-image; for example, the discontinuous leap through “sheets” of the past or the alternating movement between them, etc.

Critics like Johnson and Petrie find in this series of shots an extraordinary power of explanation because they represent a “reconciliation of the conflicting forces in the hero’s life” as the “tenuous borders” crumble between dream and memory, between past and present, between real and imagined characters (Johnson and Petrie, 1995; 129). The juxtaposition of images might suggest such a narrative analysis. It might step beyond this to suggest that the hero is not the narrator but time itself, that the screen “enacts” the fiction of a “resurrection” of time. The narrator-hero/anti-hero would then be the figuration of time bringing about the vision of that reconciliation which may be expected at the end of time. How is this figuration of time imagined? The off-screen voice of the “narrator” heard throughout the film seems to be a topical figuration of mortal being at the limits of time: he makes his appearance in the penultimate sequence at his *death bed*, who then in the final sequence is only a unspeakable possibility of mere conception before birth, and who now appears as an ageless model of the child. The argument for such a topical figuration might be reinforced by insisting that the shots and sequences of *Mirror* are modeled as a “martyr-ologue,” they function as a kind of imitation of the passion of Christ cinematographically fashioned in the wake of the Russian literary tradition of Dostoevsky’s tormented and confessional anti-heroes and overheard in the baroque harmonies of J.S. Bach’s *Passion According to St. John*.

However seductive and pertinent such an analysis may be, it does ignore that which is equally present in this shot : the persistent materiality of the time of the image and the historical ruins and debris of the “place of memory” that it inscribes. I would argue that the “tenuous borders” do not crumble but are in fact made even more “tenuous” and permeable as the complex temporalities of the major chronotopes in the film merge in phantasmagoric and allegorical images. Just as the images of the mother can never be unified but are radically disjoined in time, the narrator/subject is separated from himself by the impersonal form of time, by the “impossible” forking or splitting of non-

chronological time. Would the historical-materialist gaze of this sequence be irreconcilably opposed to this eschatological vision? Perhaps they may not be so opposed, for the historical-materialist gaze grounds the eschatological vision as allegory rather than as symbolic representation.

The fundamental difference between allegory and symbolic representation as it appears in the image and as it speaks in language is its constitution by and in time. The time-image of cinematography, its material constitution by and inscription in time (rhythm) and its profound "historicity," already intimates its affiliation with allegorical images generally. As the work of Walter Benjamin reminds us, the *image of allegory*, while pointing towards--and hoping for--the triumph of the "immutable" at some infinite and absolute horizon, never coincides with this state of being "out of time." The image of allegory is itself founded in the ruins of history, grounded in the irrevocable loss of memory and the engraved with the materiality of time in the image of a death-like mask¹⁴. The *language of allegory*, as Paul de Man's work on the "Rhetoric of Temporality" reminds us, never coincides nor identifies with the fullness of its meanings because they are themselves constituted by the temporal trace of their endless anterior repetition. Accordingly, the subject of allegory, renouncing an illusory identification between self and non-self, establishes itself in the "void of this temporal difference" (1983; 207).

Even outside a mere consideration of the materiality of the time-based medium of film, I would argue that the historical-materialist *gaze* of the camera in these shots always grounds the eschatological *vision* as allegory in terms of its mournful nostalgia. Strictly speaking, the following shots are not simply a nostalgic mode of "reconciliation" in

¹⁴ This is my own synthetic understanding of several passages in which Benjamin describes the death-mask of allegory. For example, the significance of the material fusion of the transitory and eternal in the allegorical image is always being prevented by guilt—from finding the "fulfillment of meaning in itself." See: "Allegory and Trauerspiel," In *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p224.

which the narrator encounters himself seemingly “out of time” at the end or at the beginning of human-time; in favor of this revelation, the profound nostalgia motivating these shots is itself a painful recognition of being always only “in time” even at the horizon of the ending or beginning of time, that the return to origins is irremediably an endless repetition of anteriority. Moreover, this nostalgia indicates that the illusion of the fullness of memory must be renounced for the possibility of inhabiting the historical ruins of memory and forgetting; that the self is constituted by the non-self and the non-human in the temporal distance and the difference of these historical sites/sights.

How does this possibility structure the relationship to the future ? Speaking in Nietzsche’s terms, when we discover that the forms of “truth” are fundamentally temporal, then we are freed from the somewhat passive position of automatically reacting to the historical eventfulness of the world by “discovering” pre-existing truths. If the time-image of cinema gives a “direct” presentation of time this means that we apprehend time as a force that can disrupt repetition as the return of the same. In the logic of the “impossible,” time forks in repetition and returns to not-necessarily true pasts. In Deleuzian terms, to think of the passing moment of time, as that which could not have started, nor finished, becoming; this is to put thought into contact with the potential to generate new possibilities for life, affirming the highest form of difference in the serial movement of repetition, a difference that might ultimately affirm the dormant, the unthought, the latent potentiality of the “not yet” of a people and their stories. As D.N. Rodowick argues, this “not yet” of a subject or a people describes a virtuality or potentialization of forces that is “not unlike Ernst Bloch’s concept of utopia as *Vorschein* or anticipatory illumination. Utopia is not an unrealizable ideal here. It too is virtual and real as material forces that urge, perhaps unsuccessfully or successfully, an immanent becoming” (1997; p.154). The gathering intensity of such a material and virtual force may also be related to Walter Benjamin’s messianic conception of the profane

illumination, for : "...just as a force can, through acting, increase another that is acting in the opposite direction, so the order of the profane assists, through being profane, the coming of the Messianic Kingdom" ("Theological-Political Fragment" In *Reflections*, 1978; p. 312). How does one keep this potentialization of forces alive in the serial work of memory except by structuring historical experience around the figure of an "awakening" which, returning continuously to the dreams of childhood, never finishes awakening?

Awakening to the Utopian/Dystopian Memory of Childhood

What are the relationships which various traditions of the utopian imagination have established with history and memory ? Although they are very difficult and complex, many of them converge around the figure of an "awakening" to the light and the darkness of perception, memory, and experience; an "awakening" to the possibility of another form of knowing and being in the world— paradoxically characterized by the way in which the non-place (u-topia) either flattens time, makes time cyclical or intensifies the irruption of time. One has only to think of the poor soul in Plato's *Republic* who must "turn" his/her eyes from the phantom-appearances projected in the cave towards that other light, and who, in his/her startled bewilderment and disorientation—must find another way of seeing the world, an "awakening" to true knowledge through the powers of recollection. Without going into great detail one can clearly surmise the relationship between a technique of awakening, a power of recollecting, and a radical turning to another form of knowledge.

In his immensely suggestive work *The Arcades Project*, Walter Benjamin, writing from the perspective of the Messianic conception of the utopian imagination, characterizes what he calls "the Copernican revolution in historical perception" in terms of an awakening. For Benjamin the flash of awakened consciousness gives birth to a

utopian politics of memory. Benjamin characterizes this project and this method of “awakening” as a “graduated process” in the life of the individual and in the collective; revolutionary historical knowledge is constituted by the temporality of a flashing dream which reveals to the individual and to the collective how memory and remembrance must bring “the new world into symbolic space”; for the utopian dimension of historical knowledge can only be articulated on the dream-work of collective-individual memory when it remembers “the task of childhood” (1999; pp.388-390). Paradoxically, the darkness of the individual’s experience of slumber is recuperated to discuss a technology of collective remembering and political awakening. Referring to the experimental and theoretical work of Marcel Proust and Ernst Bloch, Benjamin distinguishes his own historical project,

What Proust intends with the experimental rearrangement of furniture in matinal half-slumber, what Bloch recognizes as the darkness of the lived moment is nothing other than what here is to be secured on the level of the historical, and collectively. There is a not-yet-conscious knowledge of what has been: its advancement has the structure of an awakening. (“Dream City, Dream House, Dreams of the Future” *The Arcades Project*, 1999; p.389)

Benjamin’s conception of the dream-work of awakening and remembering offers a startling perspective on the utopian dimension of memory in as it is set loose in the materiality of film. Remembering in Tarkovsky’s *Mirror* is neither a psychological memory where the individual narrator recalls a repressed past nor simply a historical memory that would represent the occluded story of a people; the time-series of remembering, bifurcating throughout the film, shows how the inside and the outside, the public and the private, the individual and the collective can meet and generate a collective enunciation of history based upon the utopian potentials of the not-yet, the darkness of experience, the half-awakened slumber of the dream; a history that generates its remembrance around the figure of the child and the disorienting experience of dreaming about childhood. My hypothesis so far has been that the utopian memory of

childhood in *Mirror* is invariably related to the problem of the mediation of the catastrophic historical events; the pathology of the narrator is related to the traumatic remembrance of history, one in which individual and collective memories are transposed in the redemptive work of mourning or in the allegorical work of melancholy grief. In this section I would like to argue that the memories of childhood generate—out of the material pressures and repetitions of historical time—an awakening and an openness to the potentially radical alterity of the future.

In a philosophical sense, childhood is what activates memory, it is the cradle of the house of memory: childhood plays with remembrance by miniaturizing the immense space of the world or by accelerating or decelerating the time of the world; the child is also the figure of that kind of innocence and naiveté that could be invested with the unspeakable power to hold, because he does not possess the language that might organize for speech, all memory and all experience. When language stutters and “history breaks down into images” in Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, the child is the rebellious orphan-figure through which the velocities and the fragments of the image must pass; however, the child is also the ageless model of innocence who inhabits the dacha of memory, the mobile symbolic space in which this history must be organized for the future. The narrator’s tortured journey back to childhood and his repeated effort to access the house of memory (seen from sequences XVIII-XXII) take viewers to the dark-luminous visions of hope and desperation, for the child is inevitably torn between the melancholy of a lost world and the utopian wish to generate a new world.

Part III

Sequence-Shot Analysis of Andrey Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975)

Prologue-Sequence I (Hypnosis of the Stuttering Boy)

Opening Sequence II (The Dacha Remembered and the Burning Barn)

Sequence III (Awakening: The Phantasmagoric Image of the Mother)

Sequence IV (Maria and Lisa at the Printing Works, 1930's)

Sequence V (Alexei Quarrels with Natalia over Ignat's Upbringing)

Sequence VI (The Exilic Chronotope of the Spanish Refugee-Immigrants)

Sequence VII (B/W Documentary of Spanish Refugee Children)

Sequence VIII (Documentary Newsreel of Balloon-Flight)

Sequence IX (May Day, Ignat's Déjà-Vu, the Apparition of Akhmatova)

Sequence X (Afasyev's Pranks on the Shell-Shocked Instructor)

Sequence XI (B/W Documentary Newsreel of Lake Sivash)

Sequence XII (B/W Newsreels of WWII: Prague, Reichsberg, Hiroshima)

Sequence XIII (B/W Newsreel of Mass-Maoist Euphoria, P.R. China)

Sequence XIV (Father's Farewell)

Sequence XV (Natalia and Alexei, Boredom and Repetition, 1970's)

Sequence XVI (Alexei's Recurring Utopian Dream of the Dacha)

Sequence XVII (Alexei's Dystopian Dream of the Dacha)

Sequence XVIII (Hunger: Masha and the Prosperous Doctor's Wife)

Sequence XIX (The Dacha Returned)

Sequence XX (Alexei's Deathbed and the House of Memory)

Sequence-Shot Analysis of Andrey Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975)

PROLOGUE-SEQUENCE I (Hypnosis of the stuttering boy)

SHOT 1

(Color, 1970's, in the apartment of Alexei, the narrator) Ignat turns on the screen of the television. It is significant that *Mirror* begins with the shot of the television screen for it foregrounds the concern with what might be called, in Ishaghpour's terms, the new modernity of contemporary cinema in the age of television. Significant too, that Ignat is identified with the television; throughout the film we learn that he seems to be something of a disappointment to his father for his being a dunce, not possessing the wit or consciousness that would seem to come from literary competence. As Ignat steps back and we see the back of his head and hear the voice-over of the television documentary about the curing of a young man's stutter.

SHOT 2

(B/W documentary) We hear a frail and lank young man speak his name, Yuri Zhary. When the doctor asks where he is from we hear him tremble and stammer between several syllables over at least twenty seconds, his head shaking and his eyes occasionally moving back into his sockets as he rocks forward in the noise of his breath, before catching the place-name, Kharkov, and declaring that he goes to a trade-school there.

The female doctor, a strong and robust woman, declares that it is time to begin the hypnosis session and we see her in profile, medium shot, as she points to her eyes, and tells him to concentrate. The camera moves in to her face and her finger and captures the attentive pause as she hypnotically pulls Yuri, as if by invisible strings towards her. He leans in the trance and his body interrupts and shakes off the pull when the leaning takes him off balance.

The same tactic is used from behind, the doctor placing her hand on Yuri's head, telling him that her hand is drawing him backwards. As she gradually lifts her hand off of his head and Yuri leans into her pull, the camera itself pulls backwards as if in imitation of the hypnotic movement. Again, Yuri's back leans into the trance until its interruption.



The doctor turns to face Yuri, takes his hands and tells him to place his attention there in the co-ordination of head to hand. As he does this, she tells him to place his great desire to succeed in his hands, and to concentrate as he conducts the tension from his head into this paralysis of his hands.

At the count of three she tells him that his hands have become rigid, that he cannot move them. Her words do not describe the action of hypnosis but perform and constitute the measure of its enactment.

The camera pulls in to capture their faces close-up, as she puts her hands on his head and tells him that as she releases the tension in his hands and his speech, he shall now speak clearly and effortlessly, loudly and clearly for the rest of his life. At the third count, she pushes his head back tells him "Say, I can speak!" He nods and repeats after her in the measures of a voice that seems to be released from the tension of the stutter.

OPENING SEQUENCE II (The dacha remembered and the burning barn)

SHOT 3

Color, long-shot. The camera tracks in slowly behind a woman, Maria (played by Margarita Terekhova) who we later learn to identify as the mother of the narrator, set back in the summer of 1935. She is sitting languidly on a fence, smoking a cigarette and staring off into the distance of the Ignatyev forest stretching before her. The mournful sound of a train's whistle in the distance gives way to the narrator's voice-over explaining that this was the farmstead-dacha where summer days were spent before WWII.

As Johnson and Petrie remark, "The peaceful scenery, the woman's willowy shape, her white embroidered dress and comfortable black cardigan, the silky blond hair pulled loosely into a braided bun—everything is radiant with the golden glow of the setting sun and clearly imbued with the nostalgia for the past" (116). Maya Turovskaya also notes that for the generation born in the thirties this image holds "the elusive charm of recognition...for the semi-rural and semi-urban existence...of the fragile, pre-war days" (1989; 65).



SHOT 4



The distant figure of a man appears, walking around the bush from the path of the dark oak woods. As the camera turn to capture Maria's face, composed but anxious, the narrator explains that they could usually recognize a member of the family. "If he appears from behind the bush and walks towards the

house, it's father "... the camera tracks left, following Maria's profile as she expires her smoke, to the other side of the fence where the wind blows gently through the leaves, as if respiring in return... "if not then it isn't him, which means that he will never return again." Henceforth, the wind will evoke the irrecoverable absence of the Father as well as his mysterious presence, the consciousness of loss always associated with this rhythmic respiration or *pneumias* that haunts several of the film's shots.

SHOT 5

Maria is seen against the backdrop of the house, long shot, and we hear birds chirping and the strident echoes of a dog's distant barking, a sound used throughout *Mirror* and in many of Tarkovsky's films. Sounds often cue the setting of the scene or mark its placement and displacement; in this case the barking echo has the effect of opening the setting of the image to an absolute outside for an entering or exiting into a different place or order of experience. A stranger, not the Father, walks towards the house (played by Anatoly Solonitsyn).

SHOT 6

The camera turns to the stranger, a doctor who we learn comes from the nearby village, Tomshino. Having forgotten his house-key, he wonders if Maria might have a nail that he could use. She very nervously replies that she does not, the camera abruptly turns and tracks downwards towards her as she says this. The doctor teases her and asks to take her pulse. When she threatens to call her husband he shrugs and remarks that she seems not to be wearing a wedding ring, implying either that there is no husband or that he is ambiguously cherished if there is. As she expires her smoke, the camera carefully swings 90° around her, isolating the back of her head in a close-up against the background of the forest. The doctor enters the frame of the image and asks for a cigarette. They are now set facing against one another, Maria's back to his front, as in one body. The relay of the gestures and gazes is very carefully composed: just as he leans down for the flame-light she is holding for him, she turns her head left 180° towards her son who in the hammock behind them, who seems to be half-awake and half-asleep, but looking nonetheless towards his mother. From the perspective of the narrative storytelling, Johnson and Petrie justly remark:

Although this scene is presented in voice-over by the adult narrator, it cannot be a direct memory, as he was both too young to understand it and asleep while it took place. Even if this paradox is not fully assimilated on a first viewing, it gives the film an unusual viewpoint, for the past which we are being shown is built up not simply out of direct experience but as a mosaic of what the narrator knew firsthand, what he was told, what he dreamed or imagined, and what happened around him as part of a historical process that he shared with millions of other people (116).

SHOT 7

Medium shot, diagonal perspective : the doctor sits on the fence and asks her why she is so sad. The fence breaks under his added weight, and they fall together backwards. Bantering back, while he is heartily laughing, she asks him why he is so happy? "Because it's nice to fall with a pretty woman" he says. He is seen laying flat on the ground, and this sudden unexpected communion with the earth seems to sober his laughter and

darken the moment. He gets up, and as Maria brushes the twigs off her cardigan, he discusses the way that humans have been alienated from the awareness and perception of the life-tempo of plants and trees. The camera follows him from behind as he walks into the darker shadows of the trees: "They're in no hurry, while we rush around and speak in platitudes." The dogs' barking is heard. He turns and walks gradually and obliquely towards the camera "it's because we don't trust our inner natures, there's all this doubt, haste, lack of time to stop and think."

Maria does not encourage him to continue his monologue on time but seems to be worried, perhaps if he has not been wounded by the fall. "No, no, no have no fear, I'm a doctor you know." When she replies, "What about *Ward No. 6*?" he says, "It's all Chekhov's invention!"

This is the first, but not the last, intertextual allusion to 19th century Russian literature. It is suggestive that Chekhov's tale should be mentioned in reference to this doctor's musings on time, for it is a tale about a complacent doctor and director of a ward who is seen by the outside world around him to be slowly losing his sanity as he discusses, with one of the ward patients, the questions of time, death and eternity.

He takes his leave, inviting her to come to Tomshino. The camera turns to Maria, medium shot, and she tells him that he is bleeding.

SHOT 8

Long shot of the doctor shrugging, wiping his scar, and walking down into the field of barley stretching towards the Ignatyev forest. The frame is still and we watch his figure descend and diminish in the duration of the scene. The dog's barking-echo is heard again, and the doctor pauses in the middle of the field. Again, the wind powerfully descends into the field, made visible by means of the tilting barley grain; in its gathering immensity and sudden rush, the *pneumos* sweeps the doctor off balance, and moves towards the camera. The invisible presence of the wind always cedes to visibility and impresses itself as a time-pressure, a movement the duration of which is powerfully inscribed by the rhythm of the film.

SHOT 9

A brief shot of Maria against the blowing trees, looking off, wondering...

SHOT 10

Long shot of the doctor, whose turning towards her is accompanied again by another rush of wind—the bush in the distance wildly blown. He pauses for several moments, shrugs, turns around and makes his way off.

SHOT 11

Close shot of Maria's glowing melancholy face. She turns and walks gradually up the incline towards the dacha. As the camera follows her from behind, we hear the voice-over of the poem "First Meetings" (composed and recited in a voice-over by Andrey Tarkovsky's father, the poet Arseney Tarkovsky¹). The poet's



voice-over in this sequence powerfully displays what Roland Barthes has called the rhetorical technique of "writing aloud" (*l'écriture à haute voix*), an art of the timbre and the grain of the voice which is more phonetic than phonological, seeking the pulsing incidents and inflections of the voice, over above the clarity of the message, a language "carpeted with skin...the patina of consonants, the luxuriance of vowels, a *stereophony* of deep flesh..."(my translation, from *Le Plaisir du texte*, 1973; 105). In Henri Meschonnic's terms, while the rhythm of the voice inscribes the phonic materiality of sound, this rhythm is not reducible to this phonic dimension of material sonority for rhythm is what happens to language as the body moves through it; in other words, rhythm engages a breathing imaginary that concerns the entire living body with its history (1989 : p.270). In this sense, the images that accompany the voice-over are not merely a decorative backdrop against which the meaning of poem might come to light; instead, they open up the very space in which the voice might materialize itself, as if it were called out of the saps of the dark interior panels, the warmth of the hearth, the heaviness of the jug. Although the father/husband is not at home yet his absence speaks and breaths in the history of the house.

Every moment that we were together was a celebration, like Epiphany, in all the world the two of us alone, you were bolder, lighter than a birds wing, heady as vertigo you ran downstairs two steps at a time, and led me, through damp lilac...At these words, we witness the pages blowing in an open book on the windowsill of the dacha, presumably a book of the father's poetry, and the book falls to the ground. The mother seem to have a premonition and turns to her right.

SHOT 12

The camera cuts to a child's face looking obliquely downwards, he is outside of the dacha in front of an outdoor fireplace that is burning. He turns towards his mother... **into your domain, on the other side of the mirror.** (With his crew-cut and indiscernible features he is not easily identifiable. Nor is he meant

to be identified, although he may be the narrator as a child; he is above all, a model or an emblematic figure of the "child").

As the camera pans left, we see another child sleeping near a wooden box in the grass. A Nanny or aunt, dressed in a black robe and also unidentified (but in later scene clearly alluding to the great Russian poetess-figure, Anna Akhmatova) picks up the child. **When night came I was granted favour, the gates before the altar opened wide and in the dark...**

SHOT 13

Inside the darkly glowing interiors of the wooden dacha two children are sitting at the kitchen table, where we see a loaf of opened bread. One child is eating cereal, another placing a pile of sugar or salt on neck of a kitten who is busy lapping up a small puddle of spilled milk. Just as the obsessive attentiveness to the details of everyday life, as if in cinematographic transformation of still-life, seems to transfigure their ordinary presence in the image, so too the poem continues to express the transfiguration of daily life through love: **...our nakedness was radiant as slowly it inclined. And waking I would say "Blessings upon you !" and knew my benediction was presumptuous: you slept, the lilac stretched out from the table to touch your eyelids with a universe of blue...**

The camera tracks right in the darkness where Maria is standing behind the curls of the iron bedposts in the glimmering corner of the room and gazing obliquely at the camera, her hands crossed on her arms...**and you received the touch upon your eyelids and they were still, and still your hand was warm.** She leaves the frame of the image and the voice-over continues to fill the empty space. **Vibrant rivers lay inside the crystal, mountains loomed through mist, seas foamed...**

The camera tracks slowly right, where the books and papers on a letter-writing desk are seen scattered, a dried flowers in a vase in a windowsill. **...and you held a crystal sphere in your hands, seated on a throne as still you slept...** The camera closes in on Maria, now sitting despondently by the wall as if listening to the wind and rain outside...**and —God in heaven!—you belonged to me. you awoke and you transfigured the words that people uttered every day, and speech was filled to overflowing, with ringing power, and the word "you" discovered its new purport: it meant "king".**

The camera moves away from Maria slowly directing itself into the windowsill above the open book of poetry, looking out through the curtain of rain at the trees and simple objects (iron, cloth, glass) on the ironing table outside: **...ordinary objects were at once transfigured, everything—the jug, the basin—when placed between us like a sentinel, stood water, laminary and firm.** Memory seems to be bathed in these objects and elements which reappear throughout the film.

The camera gently lifts into the trees as if watching the movement of the lovers in the poem. **We were led, not knowing wither, like mirages before us there receded cities built by miracle, wild mint was laying itself beneath our feet, birds traveling by the same route as ourselves, and in the river fishes swam upstream...**

SHOT 14



Close shot of Maria's darkly glowing face. Tears, which do not seem to fall from some idle melancholy, cut her breath...**and the sky unrolled itself before our eyes. When fate was following us in our tracks like a madman with a razor in his hand.** The poem's cumulative account of the lover's ascent out of time into the epiphany or transfiguration of the world

catastrophic moment, the irremediably secular and unbearably historical image of the fateful razor.

SEQUENCE III (Burning barn)

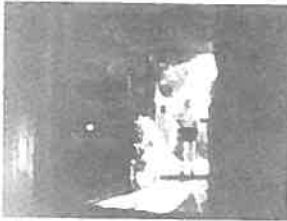
SHOT 15

Two sounds are heard, as if a tipped bowl were rolling on its rim—and a strange whistling call. Maria turns her head left, then right. Camera pans left as she exits out of frame into another room, the barking of the dog is persistent and louder; Maria enters back into the kitchen and tells the children at the table that it's a fire, and not to shout. The children exit left, the camera pulls back into the threshold of the door : the image of the table and chairs is held like a still-life but the obsessive patience and stillness of the shot is broken by a bottle that rolls on its side from the table and drops to the floor. It should be mentioned that this figure of the falling bottle is a chronotope that receives repeated treatment throughout the film.

SHOT 16

The camera turns into the frame of the door, the dark wooden materiality of the door frame and back walls are blurred in the close sweep of the image. Darkness. The camera sweeps left into the surface of an old mirror and the screen of the film merges with this mirror-screen : the surface is at first blurred out of focus as if the camera were haptically touching the pocked black marks of the mirror-surface, a surface distinct from itself; as the mirror-image comes into focus the distinction is lost, giving way to the clear depth of the image revealed behind. Off-screen we hear the anxious voices of parents, presumably peasant caretakers of the dacha-residence, worrying about the whereabouts of their son,

wondering if he is in the burning barn. The mother wails: “What if Vitya’s there ? What if he’s burning to death ?”



The urgent desperation of this voice seems to heighten the strangely eternal hope of the image revealed in the mirror : two children standing side by side transfixed by the scene of the burning barn, rain beading from the roof above them, an enormous water jug at their side. This image will

in fact be explained as a childhood memory of Alexei the narrator in the sequences to follow, but the historical mode of remembrance is already presaged in the image itself. The duration of the image is impressed with the glowing light of nostalgia, as if the image before us were simultaneously inscribing the duration of burning wood and also virtually co-existing with the remembrance of this scene. This way of sensing the passage of time in two registers is reinforced by the very composition of the image: the irreversible flow of passing time is captured only indirectly in the image reflected backwards by a mirror, the light of the flame is at once burning and glowing--giving the materiality of the image a kind of soft patina effect or grain, and the backs of the children standing in the image literally direct the gaze to a look back into the age of childhood.

SHOT 17

We hear footsteps inside the house and the voice of the father calling for his son outside. The mirror-image of the burning barn swivels left as the camera turns slightly into the corridor. This turning, because it collapses the vanishing point of perspective given in the mirror-image into the flatness of the next image in profile, makes the appearance of the peasant boy seem to emanate from *behind* the mirror, leaving viewers with the impression that he was walking, perhaps, directly out of the image. This has the compelling effect of heightening the magical-mimetic powers of the cinematographic image itself : for the mirror-image is both a mimetic reflection of the real constantly exchanging and transforming itself with the magical entrances and exits that occur at its phantasmagoric surface. In the materiality of the image, the virtual and actual states of time seem to circulate and communicate; a reflected image



imparts a motion forwards out of itself and acquires the depth and the mystery of another time and space. The camera follows the boy through the dark interiors of the house, tracking through the door to capture a beautiful long shot that is explored by slowly panning right along the balcony of the house : before we see or hear the fire we are presented with

the sight and sound of rain beating and falling irregularly off the roof and the dewy pine trees; tracking past columns and a ladder the image lingers before the scene of the burning barn, the raging orange flames are presented against the wet verdant landscape, the figures of the father and mother are joined in a triangle as their son moves in by their side.

SHOT 18

Medium shot of Maria in profile against the dark-green background of the forest. The camera follows her as she moves down towards the well; the sound of rain and her footsteps give way to the roar of the flames. Fire, water and earth seem to speak to each other in the human-silence of this shot. Maria reaches out to the bucket hanging from the immense wooden crutch and lever over the well, sits down and washes her face, the bucket swings languidly and heavily and squeaks listlessly and eerily throughout the rest of the shot; Maria's repose is set against the unrest of the male caretaker who is seen running towards the barn, the persistent sound of the roaring flames reinforced by the darker, percussive sound and brushing-roll of an off-screen tympany.

Eduard Artemeyev's use of sound, under Tarkovsky's direction, shows how elemental sounds and orchestrated sounds may flow into one another without being distinguishable in the final electronic sound track; this permits them to travel synthetically in the luminous images, creating a kind of organic union between the aural traces and the material elements of the visual image. As the sounds flow through the image they connect with multiple layers of temporal experience without rigidly distinguishing themselves in the filmic world of reality and fantasy (Truppin, 1992; 243).

SEQUENCE III (Awakening : the Phantasmagoric Image of the Mother)

SHOT 19



Sudden cut to B/W (black and white). Close-shot of young boy stirred from his sleep and sitting up in bed, awakened by the sounds of a hooting owl and a mysterious clattering outside.



This introduces the first, and perhaps most important, sequence of the film concerned with awakening and dreaming. For a full treatment of the question of the mediation of the historical event the figure of "awakening" to the utopian/dystopian memory of childhood (Refer to Part II, last section of chapter 5).

SHOT 20

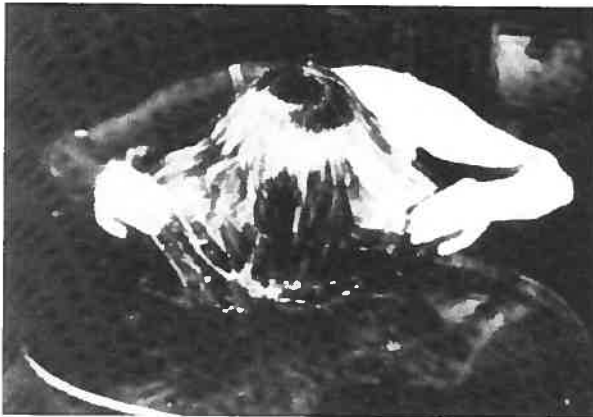
B/W medium-shot of trees in the forest behind the house. The gentle current of air turning the leaves is suddenly stirred and a rush of wind bends the trees forwards. Since the shot is captured in slow-motion, the motion itself seems to peel away or become suspended by the effect of its stretched-duration; this highlights the rhythmic temporality of the film, the *pneumas* of time respiring within and between shots.

SHOT 21

B/W close-shot of the young boy sleeping or lying down again. He awakes, sits up, and says "Papa!" As he climbs down, we hear the clinking of the ornate brass bed and the owl whistling once again outside. The camera follows him past the wash basin and the chair at the edge of the bed. As he peers from the threshold of the bedroom into the adjoining room, we see a mysterious white shirt being thrown from the next room across the top of the screen.



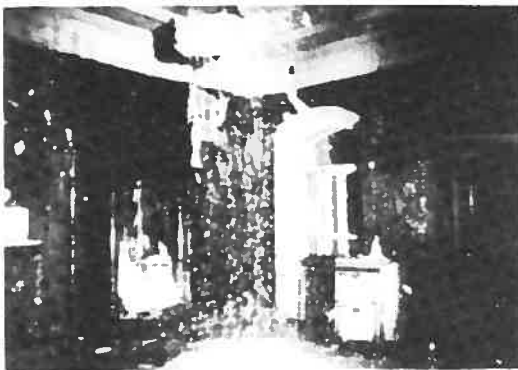
B/W medium shot of the father in profile, each gesture mysteriously thick and suspended as it is presented in slow motion. He is leaning down and pouring water from a pan and behind him we see flames from a gas stove burning in the background. Presumably he is preparing a basin of warm water for his wife to wash her hair in, yet the mysterious deceleration of this movement alerts us to the mystery ghostliness of the entire scene to come; the ordinary reality of the scene is metamorphosed into the extraordinary. As he stands up and exits left off- screen the camera dips slowly down to reveal the mother washing or rinsing her hair.



Her head is face down, her hair forming a wet curtain that stretches into the depths of the basin. The sound of dripping water accompanies the sight of bright leaping flames from the stove burner in the background. As she lifts her head in the slow motion frames of the film, her face concealed behind her dripping hair, her arms outstretched and her hands flapping, the camera tracks back. This smooth but swift track backwards, accompanied by the cool sound of the dripping water and the sound of Eduard Artemyev's electronic organ-chord held out at length, makes the image of the mother seem to float hypnotically. In such a time-image, however stylistically composed, we are presented with the irreducible inscription of the materiality of elements (water, dripping sounds, electronic music, light and shadow) and their dynamic and organic interaction in the rhythmic medium of film effects a metamorphosis in the experience of time, conferring a kind of mythical dimension on ordinary actions.

Medium-shot, the camera lingers over the image of the mother standing, her head still bent forward and the curtain of her hair still dripping to the persistent sound of water dropping. The walls of the room can be more clearly discerned; they look as if they are melting because they are covered unevenly and heavily with a thick tar-like substance that reflects specks of light. The mother is standing in a white shift next to the stove on her right and the two flames of its burners are reflected on her left in the standing mirror.

SHOT 23



B/W Medium-shot of the same room, this time without the presence of the mother. This absence gives way to another presence: what was merely the sound of trickling water drops in the last shot becomes a vision of rain falling in slow motion from the ceiling. This time only one burner on the stove is still flaming. The dry room with hard wood floors visualized in the previous shot is suddenly liquidated

and the waterlogged plaster on the ceiling begins to fall in heavy wet lumps, splashing in the puddles on the floor. The tonality of this vision is set by the effects of sound also: a bell clangs once and over the electronic build-up of noise one can hear the barely perceptible, low bass pneumatic singing of a traditional orthodox canticle or requiem.

SHOT 24

B/W Close shot of Maria in profile. The camera tracks left in slow motion as she passes into the corridor. The tar-melt walls are streaming and trickling unevenly with water, giving the sense of passing into dark caverns or a mythical underworld of the dead.

The mysterious music continues to build up as she pulls up her hair and turns to face the camera.. She crosses the threshold of another passage in which we can perceive the dark and opaque reflection of a glass window or mirror. She turns, holds her head back, smiles mysteriously and the sound of the owl is heard once again.

The camera tracks left past the threshold as she passes into the reflection of a mirror that is divided by a stream of water trickling down its surface. However, in this play of vanishing perspectives between threshold and mirror, the image of Maria seems to be emanating from the threshold itself and she appears to be passing through the surface of the mirror from behind, as if the actual image of the flat surface of the mirror were virtually the depth of glass through which her reflection were passing. Darkness. The cool tactile texture of the image of water flowing down the rough textures of the cavernous walls and its spangled lights is impressive, giving it a metamorphic quality. The cavernous wall gives way to an adjacent room of white plaster and brick, water is still trickling down these walls. Maria is not shown from the right; rather, she is shown suddenly facing the camera in this room. It is as if the metamorphic darkness dividing her “passage through the mirror” were now conjuring another Maria, her double-other. Wrapped in a knitted shawl like an old woman, Maria walks now from the left, as it were, from the other side of the mirror.

SHOT 25

B/W cut to a mirror-image of an old woman wearing a shawl and in a similar position to Maria. It is as if Maria were encountering herself, in the temporal depth of the mirror, at a later time in her life as an aged woman. This impression, that it is the aged mother of the narrator Alexei, will be confirmed later in the film. The narrative retrospection may help to situate her appearance without, however, explaining its mystery¹. What does remain clearly enigmatic in this time-mirror is that a face to face encounter is impossible; Maria cannot be con-temporary to herself but is always separated by the form of time in the distance between her younger and her older reflection.

¹ Adding to all of the strangeness of this image, the aged woman is played by Tarkovsky's own mother, Maria Tarkovskaya, and the uncanny resemblance of mother-images between his own mother and her representation by the actress Margarita Terekhova, makes this “transference” especially interesting from a psychoanalytical point of view.

This is an image composed of luminous superpositions and its haptic *visuality*² transforms the hardness, flatness, and coolness of the mirror-surface into a series of soft diaphanous curtains that breath into each other; the clarity of the surface gives way to a depth of multiple perspectives. The image of a landscape seen distantly through an arched door is reflected in the mirror-surface; out of the vanishing perspective of this landscape and doorway, the old woman with the shawl walks towards the surface; as she walks into perspective on the center-left, the light of the diaphanous landscape is dimmed and the image is shifted behind her to the center-right; this effect, together with the flame seen behind her (similar to that burning in the stove of the previous shots), makes her appear to walk out of the mirror itself.

This illusion is broken however when we see her stop to look at herself, examining the soft materiality and fuzzy resolution of her image against the texture of the stucco wall reflected behind her. She stretches out her right hand and this hand is met, in reflection, by the hand entering the frame from the left. The haptic softness and depth of the image is also broken, for as the hand touches the mirror-surface it makes a hard squeaky wiping sound. While this touch literally “brings us to the surface” of the image and awakens us, as it were, from the oreiric illusion of depth, still we hear the sound of water dropping, as if heard from inside a deep well. Even Tarkovsky’s use of sound makes the surface and the depth of the time-image an undecidable quality; in Deleuzian terms, the crystal image of time always opens a circuit in between the “actual and the virtual” states of time, made intelligible by its “limpid or opaque” expression, and generating diegetic environments out of the disposition of its “seed and milieu.” We can no longer situate who is looking on which side of the mirror: Is it the younger Maria projecting an image of her elderly self or the elder Maria seeking her youth?

SHOT 26



Color, close-shot of a child’s hands in prayer: they are extended in profile against the darkness and holding the wick of a long flame that makes the hands appear translucent. This image is repeated in the earring scene in which teenage Alexei is staring into the mirror, and Ignat comes across similar images of hands in prayer as he leafs through the pages of DaVinci’s drawings in Sequence X, shot 88.

² I am borrowing this term as it has been redefined by Laura U. Marks (2000; 163) using Alois Riegel’s terminology. Marks considers images of intercultural works of video and film which privilege the tactile over against the visual sense and thus the material presence of the image over against its representational power. As she explains, these are images that discern texture rather than distinguish form, and since they are “more inclined to move than to focus, more inclined to graze than to gaze,” they locate perception and subjectivity in an embodied form of knowing.

SEQUENCE IV (Narrator and Mother on the Phone, Moscow apartment/1970's)

SHOT 27

In color, the camera slowly turns and explores the space of the present day apartment of the narrator Alexei, late 1970's. The phone is heard insistently ringing and the image of a French poster of Tarkovsky's film *Andrei Rublev* is seen against a wall. An off-screen telephone conversation is heard between Alexei and his mother. While the camera explores the spacious interiors of the apartment, he tells her that he has not spoken for three days and that this has done him some good, "words being too inert to express a person's feelings."

The camera takes a long shot of the corridor of the apartment and its communicating rooms. As it tracks in slowly towards the dark curtain at its end, the depth of the two adjoining rooms is pulled through the frame slowly and gradually and we see how the thresholds between rooms open and also close what is accessible to vision. Each room is marked by a portrait-photo of his mother and then by one of his father and these *topoi* of the rooms open the space in which the conversation about Alexei's rumination of memory takes place.

As Alexei tells his mother that he has just dreamt about her, the preceding B/W dream of Sequence IV (shots 19-25) may seem to be more easily situated and placed by viewers. Yet in fact this sequence is only situated within another transference, as it were, a "hall of communicating dreams and images": the narrator dreaming of himself as a child awakening only to have another visionary dream of the multi-temporal economy of his mother's image (half-recognized as the image of his wife).

Alexei asks his mother when the barn had burned down and if his father had left them in 1936 or 1937? These dates may leave viewers to wonder whether or not he had been arrested during the time of the Stalinist purges. When she answers that both happened in 1935, this does cue and help viewers to situate the childhood memory of the burning barn in Sequence III (Shots 15-18) as the "time-frame" for Alexei's early childhood, as Johnson and Petrie suggest (1995; 119). However, when this personal memory of childhood is assigned and placed within the periodic chronology of the life of the narrator, the material powers of the time-image of childhood are flattened; for example, this perspective of narrative-chronology ignores how the very magical and mysterious materiality of the shots of Sequence III generates a topical frame of social memory which is explored and put into dynamic relation with other time-frames throughout the film. Moreover, by insisting that this shot-sequence is a narrative instance that would generally situate and explain other previous sequences, this perspective also tends to reduce the temporal effect of alienation and disorientation between Alexei and his mother, felt in the obsessive duration of the long-shot.

When Alexei's mother tells him that Lisa, her coworker in the printing press, has died he expresses no sympathy; instead he asks what time it is, whether it is morning or evening. When she snaps back, "What's wrong with you?" he asks "why are we forever quarreling?" imploring her to "forgive him". Silence follows, suggesting that such forgiveness cannot be granted nor spoken so easily, that their experiences of death, anxiety, and loneliness cannot be so easily shared nor their brokenness so easily mended. The silent pause gives way to the impersonal click and beeping of the telephone, and finally we hear the echo of a metallic scraping sound: in the place of the movement of the voice in the word, we hear only the stuttering-stammering noise of time, gaping between generations, a gaping that leads viewers into the time of fear and suspicion in the next sequence.

SEQUENCE V (Maria and Lisa at the printing works, 1930's)

SHOT 28

B/W long-shot. The ominous metallic sound, carrying over into this shot, is not easily recognizable; sound's potential for ambiguity and abstraction is suggestive here: its literal or referential function of attaching itself to a familiar object is abandoned in order to provoke a de-familiarization or a dis-orientation.

An off-screen voice of a conductor announces that we are at the "print works." Maria is seen from the back running in obvious panic and distress through the street. The camera focuses on her face moving behind the bars of the fence of the print-works factory and her breath and hurried footsteps are heard very closely.

SHOT 29

B/W long shot. Maria runs in obvious panic across the street, the pouring rain and dull grey buildings, as well as the effect of the black car parked on the street (for Soviet viewers, an obvious sign of the "Black Marias" of the Stalinist era) all add to the building intensity and suspicion of the image.

SHOT 30



B/W Medium shot. Maria opens the door and steps inside a security check-point, show her papers against the glaring harsh light and passes once again to the outside.

SHOT 31

B/W medium shot. Through the pouring rain, Maria descends the stairs into another building. She steps down into an outdoor courtyard littered with enormous blocks of old stacked newspapers against the walls, wasting in the rain. In the background, another security officer is seen watching her and turning to wave to the light of a surveillance camera.

SHOT 32

B/W medium shot of the disheveled Maria entering her own office building. As the door closes the camera tracks back, isolating her in the rather prison-like atmosphere and allowing her to move forward in the shot. The camera follows her as she enters the doors of her office, the lights on the desks glaring harshly as she moves to the back of the room. Except for the young proof-reading assistant Milochka, the office is empty. Maria rushes to the windowsill and rummages for the copy of the proofs she had sent to be printed.

SHOT 33

B/W shot of the assistant exiting the office briefly to come back with Maria's colleague Lisa, mentioned earlier in the telephone conversation. Lisa asks her if she needs the proofs for the evening Goslit edition, her unshakeable confidence and calm suddenly giving way to a sense of fear.

SHOT 34

B/W medium-shot of the all three women exiting the doors of the office and quickly walking through the halls towards the cabinet of the print-shop in order to chase down the proofs. The halls are littered with paper and enormous industrial-size rolls of fresh but unraveled newsprint. As they walk, the atmosphere between begins to get tense: Maria's terrible silence, followed by Lisa's reprimands "there must never be misprints in the final proofs", and the assistant's weeping cry and gasp. The assistant is told to stay behind.

SHOT 35

B/W long-shot in slow motion. Lisa is seen rushing out to catch up to Maria in the room and to whisper something in her ear. Their voices and footsteps are drowned in the heavy noise of the steady, irreversible engines of the book-printing machines to their right. They turn into another room of giant newsprint machines.

The ominous suspension of time is strangely stretched out in the slow motion of the shot. This effects more than a stylistic investment in an unspoken psychological intrigue; this suspense meets with an even more powerful suspension. In this shot, the time-machine of film unravels and transforms the regular-time of the print-machine in the play of accelerated and decelerated motions; the sound of the

hard letters of movable type is rendered malleable, its newsprint rolls at a different speed on the reel of film, and an irregular interval of time is introduced in the suspension of regular moving beats.

SHOT 36

B/W medium shot of Maria walking through a series of connecting rooms, presumably dealing with the transfer of the proof to its more technical setting in reproducible type. In the overwhelming rhythmic clatter of the machinery she passes the drafting boards and an aisle of smaller printing machines which leads to a back room where the proofs are stocked in a cabinet. As she opens the cabinet several technicians come towards her,

Her worried impatience attracts more attention and her boss, Ivan Gavrilovich, who follows her out, tries to calm her, and flippantly and enigmatically answers her affirmation that she is not afraid, “let some work and let others be afraid.”

SHOT 37

B/W medium-shot. Maria hurries to sit down by the window on the other side of the room to examine the proofs alone. A small crowd of technicians and typesetters crowd around her, one of whom tells her that these proofs have already been set so “if something’s wrong, they are already run.” The small black printing-machine beside her, its arms and frames rising and falling regularly, reveal a revolutionary poster of Stalin’s face set against a cluster of portraits of revolutionary workers. Maria studies the proofs, and flips the pages to verify what we can only imagine to be some of special collection or edition of Stalin’s work (this is confirmed by Tarkovsky’s screenplay but never mentioned directly in the film). She looks up in puzzled bewilderment and relief, gathers the papers, crosses the typesetting machines and the poster of Stalin and as she heads to the back of the room without saying a word to anyone, all of the arms of the machines lift and become silent as if the machines, as well as the people behind them, were astonished and surprised.

SHOT 38

B/W close-shot. After turning the corner of the print-shop, Maria is seen walking alone in a long white, well-lit corridor. The camera pulls back keeping just ahead of her and the vanishing perspective of the window-lines and white industrial pipes creates a sense of luminous spatial depth. Over the click of her footsteps, the voice-over of the poet, Arseney Tarkovsky, reading “From Morning On” is heard. The poem is not presented as if it were being remembered by consciously her but rather as if it were calling out to her, speaking to her in the pace of her steps down the corridor, in the anxious loneliness of her breath. Moreover, her own sense of being perhaps “freed from suspicion but always too late for happiness” is echoed in a poem expressing the melancholy of “irrecoverable belatedness.”

From morning on I waited yesterday,
 They knew you wouldn't come, they guessed.
 You remember what a lovely day it was ?
 A holiday! I didn't need a coat.

You came today, and it turned out
 A sullen, leaden day,
 And it was raining, and somehow late,
 And branches cold with running drops,

Words cannot soothe, nor kerchief wipe away³.

As these words close, her face darkens as she passes into the threshold of another room; the image lingers behind her, gathering the duration and the pipeline-perspective of the corridor. Lisa is seen in the back walking towards the screen.

SHOT 39



B/W medium shot of Maria bent over her desk in her office, weeping into her hands and then apparently laughing as Lisa sits down next to her. Maria whispers secretly into Lisa's ear the error she had imagined committing and both roll eyes and laugh. Their boss, Ivan Gavrilovich, steps in and offers them alcohol to drink. As Maria stand up, wipes the tears of relief from her eyes, and declares that she will go take a shower, the camera switches to Lisa and the mood changes suddenly.

SHOT 40

B/W close-shot of Lisa sitting, her face in the shadows of the glaring light, staring hard at Maria as if the scene of friendly conspiratorial confession had turned sour and become an invitation to diabolical interrogation. She tells Maria that she reminds her of Maria Timofeevna (a minor character from Dostoevsky's novel, *The Devils*) the half-witted sister of Captain Lebyadkin and wife of Nikolai Stavrogin. As Lisa stands and raises her voice, she compares Maria to a character who seems to expect everything to be at her beck and call. This gives way to an irritable expression of open hostility directed at Maria for her self-sufficient and emancipated ways, her inability to admit her mistakes, and her incapacity to keep her marriage afloat. The tirade continues even as Maria drops to her knees in tears. Johnson and Petrie account for this shift of mood brought about by this interdiscursive literary allusion as a way of conveying the overall situation and individual strain of "the atmosphere of Stalinist suspicion, terror, mistrust, and repression" (1995;121).

³ This translation of "From Morning On" is taken from that made by Kitty Hunter Blair in *Sculpting in Time*, 1986; 123.



Maria opens the desk-drawer for a sponge and soap, stands without a word and leaves. The phone is heard ringing.

SHOT 41

B/W medium shot in slow-motion from the dark corridor outside the office. Maria is shown leaving in haste and Lisa calls out to her “Masha!” (a common diminutive of Maria) imploring her to wait. The corridors echo the clicks of her heels and she continues on without turning, closes the shower-room door behind her and leaves Lisa fumbling with the door handle. Lisa turns and exits down the corridor, jumping and clicking her heels like a little girl, reciting the opening line of Dante’s *Inferno* “In the middle of our life I found myself in a dark wood.”

Whatever we make of the symbolic use of the literary allusions themselves—in relation to the *Mirror* and Tarkovsky’s overall citation-like dialogue with various traditions of art and literature, we can at least say that this is also directly a *mise-en-scène* of the effects of the culture of literacy and the mass culture of print upon the consciousness and conscience of individuals. Major and minor characters throughout the film remember, compare, copy and cite literary texts as if the very fabric of their memories were constituted by the textual warp and woof of the moveable type of print. It is perhaps no accident that Dostoevsky and Dante are cited in these shots; they are cornerstones of a canon of classic works in Western Literature shared by a large community of readers (and viewers), a canon of printed works that has developed the workings of a national consciousness by building the historical structure of “timeless” national literatures; works that might be revalorized by “guardians of tradition” like Tarkovsky himself and metonymically transmitted in the medium of film.

However, to state this without going further would be to miss a more ambitious argument about the problem of mediation. For this historical consciousness, transformed by the workings of mass reproduction in print culture and having internalized a potentially infinite collection of citations, becomes internal to their “citability.” The question concerning “the work of literature in the epoch of its citability in film” does not concern simply the survival or the death of the literary. In fact, film shapes another kind of literacy for the subject (director; character; viewer; critic) by making available a position or positions from which the course of History and historical events (the intrigues of daily life under the Stalinist regime) might be made legible or readable and hence intelligible. The intermedial practices of citation and transference in *Mirror* raise the problem of mediation and rhythm to another level: What is the relationship between audio-visual technique and this literacy that conditions the way we are

historical and the way we insert or position our understanding of events? Does the rhythmic basis of the time-image of film merely render this capacity to read the historical event more complex or does it radically alter this capacity? If film does not radically alter but only renders literacy more complex, it may still transform the conditions under which it operates. This would raise another equally important question: If the audio-visual technique of film produces another level of literacy of the historical, does it also reproduce and reaffirm the ontological underpinnings for the production of national consciousness or does it radically intervene and unmoor subjectivity from its “Statist” relationships to being, language, social belonging, and territory? While the political and epistemological stakes may be outlined in these terms and articulated throughout the analysis of the shots and sequences of *Mirror*, an adequate response to these questions may not be made available to us.

SHOT 42



B/W medium shot of Maria in taking a shower which is cut short by a shortage of the supply of water. A metallic scraping sound, very similar to the one heard opening the sequence (shot 28), is heard through the pipes as Maria holds out her hands, waiting for the water to return. The camera closes in, the scraping sound becomes more heaving and hotly gurgling.

Maria turns around, hands clasping her face and her back against the wall, and a sense of comic frustration overcomes her. As she pulls her head back in momentary relief she is again overcome but with some other painful emotion. The materiality of the shot, the heavy sounds, the dripping water, her short breath, the expressiveness of her face, although they may give a sense of the inner state of a character, show how memory is activated by the motions of the material world. As Proust has so suggestively written in *À la recherche du temps perdu*, the past is somewhere out of the reach of the intellect in itself—and unmistakably present in some object or in the sensation some object “arouses” in us, although we may never know which and may never even have the chance to come across it again.

SHOT 43

Quick cut to a very brief long-shot in color: a burning fire in the distance of a green countryside at dusk, the reverberating electronic sound of a dissonant organ-chord echoes heavily. Although it is a somewhat different setting than the scene of the burning barn (shot 17), it seems to echo the memory or image of it; certainly it has this effect for viewers and the two have often been conflated. Then again, it may be

an image of another time and place which is reverberating with this image and memory of the past, since it effects the transition into the different chronotope of the next scene.

Like the brief image of the child's hand in prayer, this image flashes and pulses, linking images, subjects, memories without the help of language or narrative framings.

SEQUENCE VI (Alexei quarrels with Natalia over Ignat's upbringing and his own)

SHOT 44



Color, close-shot of a young woman studying her face and blowing against the surface of a mirror. Although this woman is played by the same actress who plays Maria, Margarita Terekhova, visual cues do identify her as another woman; she seems younger, her facial expression harder, her hair straighter

and combed down. At the same time, the image as an image is nonetheless constituted by the resistance of the material inscribed in it, and the unavoidable participation and emanation of the face of the actress we must identify over against, or alongside, the fiction of her re-presentational playing of any character whatsoever. The uncanny resemblance and strange difference between this young woman (identified for viewers as Alexei's ex-wife "Natalia" only much later) and Alexei's mother Maria, is stressed even more forcefully when we hear the off-screen voice of Alexei state "I always said you resembled my mother" and she replies, "That's probably why we broke up."

As she talks into the mirror, Alexei still invisible and off-screen, she adds that she "shrinks to see Ignat becoming more like his father," ironically smirking "neither you nor I could communicate."

SHOT 45

Color cut, medium shot, situated in the chronotope of the 1930's/dacha and Alexei's off-screen voice adds "When I recall my childhood and my Mother...somehow she always has your face." In the image we do not see her face but instead the face of a maidservant, who enters the screen holding a sleeping child and exits in profile left (played, interestingly enough, by Tamara Ogorodnikova, the mysterious woman who appears to Alexei's son Ignat in the Pushkin-reading scene to come (Sequence 10; shot 91) and whose face clearly resembles that of the celebrated poet Anna Akhmatova). As Alexei continues, "I think it is because I feel sorry for both of you" the camera tracks right to show Maria's from the back as she slowly walks up the gradual incline to the dacha in her white linen dress, walking in pace with--but away from--the manservant at her side.

SHOT 46

Color cut, medium shot, situated back in the chronotope of the 1970's/Alexei's apartment. Ignat is shown facing the camera from the doorway of his father's office, passively observing his parents argument, and holding a crystal glass of wine in his hands. His father's voice, abruptly changing tone from the tender reminiscence of his childhood, tells him to put it down.

The camera pans left to a close shot of Natalia's pale face and hardened expression, set against the cold reflections of the metallic wall behind her. Out of the cool, belligerent exchanges of their conversation viewers learn that Alexei has equally strained relations with his ex-wife and with his own mother lately (confirmed already by the telephone call, Sequence 5, shot 27). This becomes understandable because he only seems to entrench himself more deeply by directly and very impertinently blaming his self-centered egotism on his "upbringing by women"; he urges Natalia to get married so that Ignat might avoid the same fate. This seemingly relentless "repetition of fate" between Ignat and himself⁴ reveals that his estrangement with Natalia very clearly repeats something of that strain between his father and his mother Maria (of which we learn by hearsay).

Alexei is heard sadly remarking that he and his mother are "drifting apart" and Natalia teases him for his plaintive stammering as he says this. The camera pans left behind Natalia's head and then at an angle there is a long-take of her face looking into another mirror. The reflection is hazy, unclear, and paradoxically distant—as if the face were coming out of another time, a face circulating in the distance between Natalia and Maria—the resistant materiality of the face being itself magically and metamorphically warped across time, producing a sense of half-recognition to the face seen earlier in the diaphanous layering of face/landscape in shot 25. However, the time-image can only be "crystallized" at a point of indiscernability because it emerges out of the rhythm of the cinematographic image itself. In the crystalline order of the image, time is not arrested but ceaselessly splits, passes, and receives the current from other images.

SHOT 47

Color, medium shot of Ignat, leaning against the threshold of a door eating an apple. Off-screen voices are heard speaking Spanish. After taking a bite, Ignat walks left behind a wall and leans into another doorway, the camera following and taking us from the frame of one space into another. By framing the

⁴ Although autobiographical detail need not explain the composition nor the motivation of sequences and shots, it may be mentioned that such an unhappy state of affairs was also deeply felt by Tarkovsky himself, vis à vis his own parents' irreconcilable separation and divorce; whether or not the dramatized projection of these feelings in film would constitute an exorcism or catharsis of his feelings of anger or guilt we will leave to other psychoanalytical investigations.

passage into another doorway, the film prepares viewers for the introduction of an “outside” into the time-space of the family drama.

As soon as Tarkovsky has set up these personal links between past and present in the complex visual structure of the chronotopes, he prepares to expand the broken history of an individual family across the history of generations of other families broken by the events of WWII, in Sequences VII-IX. This “other” history, against which the broken history of two Soviet generations is understood, is metonymically figured by a mysteriously unidentified group of Spaniard-guests, whom we learn are refugees exiled from their homeland and living an ex-patriotic life in the Soviet Union with no hope of return. The quiet antagonisms, unexplained silences, and bitter alienations of the narrator’s family (his parents/himself as a parent) are set against and shot through with the pre-war and post-war experiences of these “deterritorialized” refugee-immigrants.

SHOT 48

Color, medium shot of a Spanish man in profile calling out to someone off-screen named Maria and asking her what is happening.

SHOT 49

Color, close-shot of Natalia’s face. Alexei’s voice directs her off-screen right, asking her to go distract the Spaniard from his repetitive tirades about the homeland. Her glazed eyes look off left, then down, and then sadly and heavily right. As she moves into the passage she looks at herself once again in the mirror and the heavy expression of her face has changed back to the hard glare she gave in shot 44. She arranges her hair and hotly breathes into the mirror, a breath that takes us immediately into the roar of a crowd in the next televised newsreel sequence.

SEQUENCE VII (The Exilic Chronotope of the Spanish Refugee-Immigrants)

SHOT 50

B/W televised newsreel sequence of a matador in the bullring, facing an ultimate moment of the “kill.” The off-screen roar of the masses in the stadium rises to an even more excited pitch as he elegantly stabs the head of the bull with his upraised sword.

SHOT 51

Color, medium-shot of the enthusiastic Spaniard in profile near to the television set, explaining and imitating the mobile postures and minute gestures of the matador. Entranced by the masterful patience and lithe skill of the matador, he entrances everyone in the room with a replay performance.

SHOT 52

Color, close-shot and very short cut to a second Spaniard in the room with a Christ-like face and beard, seen in profile shaking his head in light-dismay and lighting a cigarette.

SHOT 53

Color, close-shot of Natalia laughing in surprise and asking about this man and his performance. A third Spaniard, sitting next to her, explains that he is imitating the famous Spanish matador, Palomo Linares.

SHOT 54

Color, medium shot of the matador-fan facing the screen with outstretched arms, shaking and unable to contain his passionate attachment to the model on the screen.

The brief clip reveals the exile's quasi-fetishistic relationship to the mediated newsreel sequence of the homeland, one based in the mimetic relationship between technology and the body; mimetic because he incorporates the mediated rhythms of the newsreel into those of his own body, quasi-fetishistic because he seems to be irrecoverably transfixed by the images and sounds through which massive presence of the matador, bullring, and crowd is produced.

SHOT 55

Color, close-shot of the face of an older Spanish woman, whom we will learn is named Luisa, lifting her disheartened eyes and turning her head to the light on the right. Her gaze introduces the next brief cut to a B/W newsreel clip, the direction of her eyes indicating already the direction of the movement in the clip.

SHOT 56

B/W documentary newsreel images of several soldiers running across a city street, one person is visibly handicapped and is being transported on the back of another. Most critical reviews concur that these are documentary images taken from the Spanish Civil War.

SHOT 57

Cut back to color, medium shot, in the space of the apartment with the Spanish guests. Two girls, presumably twins, with austere faces, long hair, and heavy, gray, wool-knit sweaters are seen in the corner of the room. One of them walks diagonally right and sits down, and the kinetic thrust of her movement will be taken up and carried back and forth by other figures in the next two shots, the rhythm being carried from the materiality of one body/epoch to another.

SHOT 58

Color, close-shot of the Christ-like face of the second Spaniard, walking pensively to the left. In the background we see a wall of antique mirrors in the narrators apartment.

SHOT 59

Silence. Cut back to the B/W newsreel sequence of the Spanish Civil War. To the right, a woman is seen crossing the poor district of a city street lined with sandbags. As she passes in front of the ruined gates of storefronts holding a long-mirror which is chipped and broken, another off-screen voice of a Spaniard is heard: "He was overwhelmed by the farewell..."

SHOT 60

Color, medium-shot of the matador-fan looking sadly down, his profile set against the wall of mirrors. As if the joy of participation in the televised replay of the matador's bullring were founded in the sadness of some deeper loss, he is seen and heard in the background reciting a more personal historical anecdote in Spanish about his leaving the homeland as a refugee child. The off-screen voice continues the translation for Natalia: "The entire city saw him off but his mother couldn't, she was ill. His father stood sadly on the sidelines. He knew that they were both thinking the same thought: would they ever see each other again?" After he shrugs and assumes his heavy downward gaze, we may guess that his family and friends wish to change the inevitably bitter and despondent turn of his tales. The off-screen sound of traditional flamenco music is heard, the strong strumming of the guitar accompanied by the strident call of the singer.

SHOT 61

Color, close-shot of the pale and austere young woman responding to the music and assuming the posture of the flamenco dance. The camera moves from her turning head to capture the gesture of her twisting hands, and then focuses in on the rocking of her hips. Although sincerely executed, she seems a little awkward in the dance, as if the rhythms of the music and the dance she interpreted were not quite her own. If flamenco music and dance transmits the identity, memory and tradition of a people it must transmit this through a particular practice of the body. What happens this tradition, memory and identity of a people when the practices no longer inhere in the performing body?

SHOT 62

Color, medium shot of the matador-fan (who we learn is also the father of this young woman) violently interrupting her dance and slapping her for a performance that seems to be directly "mocking" him. The record needle is ripped across the surface of the record and the song ends in disruption.

SHOT 63

Cut to a short take in color. A close-shot of the face of the older Spanish woman, Luisa. She is nervously playing her fingers on her lips. Off-screen voice of the matador-father exclaiming that even after years of training she stills does not know how.

(This image to the left does not appear in the final copy of *Mirror* but is interesting for what it shows about the “frames” of the apartment: in the background is a portrait photograph of Arseney Tarkovsky, behind Luisa the “Christ-like” figure, in the background near the windows, one of the shy twins.)

SHOT 64

Color, close shot. Luisa’s voice is heard saying, “He was living in Spain but he didn’t understand a thing.” Cut to the image of a series of Russian-Orthodox iconic-inscriptions and religious motifs, drawn in black pen by another figure (presumably Luisa’s husband). The camera lifts to show this passively observer who seems bored, lost in his cigarette smoke, and listlessly doodling. It would seem, from her voice and her face, that she is cut to the heart by witnessing the “mockery” of these nationalisms : that of the half-witted, ex-patriotic “performance of Spain” from the matador to the flamenco dance and that of her disinterested husband lost in his orthodox emblems.

When the off-screen voice of Natalia asks Luisa if she ever did wish to go back to Spain, she explains that she cannot because her husband and her children are “Russian.”

SHOT 65

Color, long-shot of the whole apartment room of guests. Luisa stands up in front of the desk where her husband is drawing and without a word to the other guests, makes a move right to quickly exit the apartment.

The camera turns into the entrance-corridor; in the still-frame we see Luisa fleeing the others, even those who cry out to her asking what is wrong. Natalia follows her and cries “Luisa!”

SHOT 66

Color, close-shot of Luisa’s face turning right against the door in the shadows and light. Her face literally “folds” into the next documentary sequences, just as her face had signaled their passage earlier.

SEQUENCE VIII (B/W documentary of Spanish refugee children)SHOT 67

Cut to B/W newsreel. The flamenco music heard earlier during the daughter's dance returns now to accompany the entire series of shots in the newsreel sequence. The fast rhythm of the music, its reverberating refrains and echoing response-cries from another singer, and the clattering of the castanets give another dimension to the explosive urgency of the sequence itself. The music does more than accompany the images but together with the silent materiality of the newsreel footage creates a kind of new, organically connected entity.

Medium-shot of a mother and father running for shelter in a building across a city street. They are holding a baby and duck into the darkness of a large doorway.

SHOT 68

B/W images of air-borne planes releasing bombshells.

SHOT 69

B/W. Explosions of debris are thrown out onto the smoke-filled screen.

SHOT 69

B/W. Long-shot of city street. Two well-dressed young women holding large flower-arrangements are rushing across traffic down to the subway entrance.

SHOT 70

B/W. Medium shot of another women running, camera pans up and smoke fills the sky.

SHOT 71

B/W medium shot of a group of boys wearing special large hexagonal war tags with numbers on them. They are walking along a quay beside a seaport, the bridges and pale towers of the city looming behind. The camera follows one of them walking ahead as he wipes his tears with a cloth.

SHOT 72

B/W Medium-shot of young women and mothers crowding around the dock in tears.

SHOT 73

B/W close-shot of a tiny little girl sitting on the ground in between the frocks and long coats of adults around her. She is toying with her coat and dress and wiping a stain.

SHOT 74

B/W close-shot of another young girl, facing the camera and wailing, an image of wailing that rends her mouth and the viewers eyes so much that it seems to consume the image itself.

SHOT 75

B/W close shot of the crowd of parents and children, swaying in their mass of movements, the camera swaying in the movement of unrest. As the flamenco music dies down, the last cry of its refrain blends in with the voices and sounds of the historical milieu of the shot itself. Over the clamor of voices, a child's wailing cry is heard—tearing through the image. The camera follows one small boy as he receives his father's kiss and makes his way through the crowd with his little suitcase, moving forward—like a gentleman, never looking back.

SHOT 76

B/W cut to an older woman kissing her daughter.

SHOT 77

B/W cut to a younger mother kneeling down to the level of her son and giving him a last kiss. He kisses the head of his little sister, a nursling still in the arms of her mother, and darts off to the right.

SHOT 78

B/W cut to the face of an older woman seen against a brick wall just outside the heart of the crowd, holding her hand to her collar in astonishment, holding herself back from her next breath.

SHOT 79

B/W cut to a family walking along the quay, all the children wearing their tags and holding their bags, the father walking at their side and other children seen straggling behind.

SHOT 80

B/W cut to an older pale gentleman wearing a beret seen in the mass of the crowd kissing his son, holding his head in his hands with intense affection.

SHOT 81

B/W cut to a medium-shot framed by several young women in black flocked around two children. As the heavy boat horn sounds—the white apparition of their faces.

SHOT 82

B/W close shot of yet another little girl holding a doll who turns to the camera. Her expression is impressively recorded in the duration of the shot, turning from a kind of listless drifting gaze to that of total surrender to that of absolute interrogation. Viewers are confronted with that gaze, “faced” with the question in her eyes: Is it possible to give a face to the grievous wailing and loss of that irremediably historical moment, weighed in the wake of the heavy silence of the boat-horn ?

SEQUENCE IX (Documentary Newsreel of the Historic Soviet Balloon-Flight)SHOT 83

Cut to another B/W documentary newsreel of the record-breaking Soviet ascent by balloon into the stratosphere (early 1930's). Total silence. Long-shot from below reveals a soldier seated on a swing dangling from a perfectly round hot-air balloon. This balloon and soldier are seen juxtaposed next to the loose strings and enormous presence of a mother balloon.

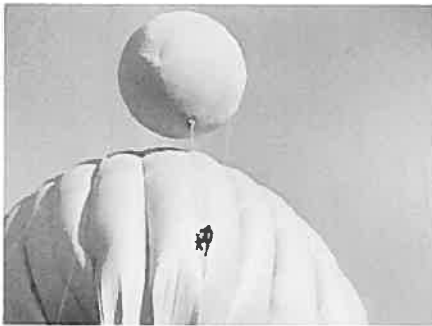
However unexpected the cut to this sequence from the last, there is a corresponding sense of rhythmic drift, and from the images of the children taking final leave of their parents to this image of man's fragile body in flight—there is a corresponding figuration of orphanage and human un-securing in the age of technology and war. Neither sequence would have the same effect without the other, nor either have the same astonishing quality of speaking to something else beyond its frame.

SHOT 84

B/W long-shot, in silence: two pilots seen suspended in swings from small balloons on either side of the enormous mother-balloon. The heavy measure of their suspended drift prepares the opening to a musical outside.

SHOT 85

B/W long-shot of another image of one of the pilots and balloons against the surface and the tremendous shadows of the mother balloon. The violins of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, No.12, open into this image and seem to be holding the weight of the balloons.

SHOT 86

B/W long-shot. One of the small balloons is seen against the brightly lit surface of the mother balloon, the pilot soldier brushes up against its surface and kicks off. The rhythmic alternation of the violin bows on the solemn sound of the strings interacts dynamically with the historical duration and floating presence of the images.

SHOT 87

B/W long-shot of the terrestrial horizon with the landing of one of the balloons as it passes behind another landed balloon. A crowd of spectators looks on as the pilot and balloon drift to the left. In the hazy glowing light, the sun appears small but a kind of aural glow envelops the image, especially since it is seen in the processional musical cadence of the Pergolesi's music.

SHOT 88

B/W medium-shot of the pilot descending, seen from below. In the quick rhythm of the shot, he seems to be jerking and shaking on the dangling cords of his swing as if he were a marionette; he is pulled down by a camarade.

SHOT 89

B/W medium-shot. A CCCP balloon takes off for flight, the basket-balloon rising from below, gently drifting and rising towards the left of the screen, an image striking for its majestic poise and pause.

SEQUENCE X (May Day Celebrations, Ignat's déjà-vu, and the Apparition of Akhmatova)SHOT 90

Confetti shot of May Day Parade of 1939. B/W Documentary newsreel shot. Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, No.12, heard instrumentally opening previous documentary footage of balloon-flight, opens in this confetti-shot with the otherworldly voices of children singing the liturgical refrain: *Quando corpus morietur fac ut animae donatur paradisi gloria* (While my body here decays, may my soul Thy goodness praise, safe in paradise with Thee). This brief parade shot is paradoxically worldly and otherworldly, invoking celebration and warning, asserting social unity in the parade-procession and yet dissolving in the dispersion of shadows and lights like an impressionist painting: world at peace, world in dispersion, impressionist world.

The impressionist image is also an image of the body of the people, but that of a different body, the image of the "mass" is not identified and restored, for film produces a different mode of "presence"—than that which we are accustomed to seeing in a stadium or on the stage of the theatre for example. Nuancing the problem of the cinematographic presence of bodies that André Bazin first articulated in relation to the mediation of the visible, Deleuze remarks:

Mais, si le cinéma ne nous donne pas la présence du corps, et ne peut pas nous la donner, c'est peut-être aussi parce qu'il se propose un autre objectif: il étend sur nous une « nuit expérimentale » ou un espace blanc, il opère avec des « grains dansants » et une « poussière lumineuse », il affect le visible d'un trouble fondamental, et le monde d'un suspens, qui contredisent toute perception naturelle. Ce qu'il produit ainsi, c'est la genèse d'un « corps inconnu » (« Cinéma, corps et cerveau, pensée » dans *Image-temps*, 1985 ; 262).

If the rhythm of this shot participates in the genesis of another body, in the temporal inscription of luminous flecks and in the suspending drift of the children's voices, then this rhythm participates in the future, in the unknown. Rather than being an image of cheering solidarity, rather than being an image of mere commemoration of the dead and the living, it puts viewers in touch with the genesis of something "phantomatically embodied" that is not yet an action or a figure of action: in other words,

with that which impresses viewers with the absence of the dead, and that which—for the “ordinary man of the cinema” (Schefer, 1980) opens up another mode of the visible and engenders other possibilities for life. This is the political-ethical dimension of the poetics of rhythm in film, the unthought in traditional cinema-studies.

SHOT 91

Diagonal-oblique color-shot of DaVinci’s middle-aged, self-portrait in profile, drawn in red chalk, reproduced in the Broghaus edition. The well-measured choral music continues to sustain the reverential continuity of the shot. This autoportrait opens what we might call a « scene » because another DaVinci autoportrait, (also drawn in red chalk but at a much older age and not in profile but obliquely facing), is pictured twenty minutes later (Sequence XVI, shot 154), open-face on a picnic table outdoors with pine needles in its margins ; it literally folds the entire « scene », in the logic of autoportraiture (Michel Beaujour, 1980), through the figure of the wise philosopher/master-artist/father of tradition. But what does the scene fold, if it is not the irrecoverable absence of the father and the shattering of tradition ? This loss and this absence is figuratively imagined in the temporal gulf that opens between Ignat and Alexei, the child of the narrator and the narrator as a child.

We are given to pause upon the un-veiling of those images that participate in this historical ambivalence, between the impossibility of sacred art and the explosive potential of humanist art featured in the red chalk portrait in profile of Isabella D’Este ; the charcoal study of the angel for the painting, *Madonna of the Rocks* ; the cartoon-study of the figures of Mary and St. Anne holding the Christ-child, a study for the finished *Virgin and St. Anne* and recalling the central disposition of the unfinished tableau opening Tarkovsky’s *Sacrifice, The Adoration of the Magi* ; and finally, the charcoal drawing of Christ (Cod. Forst., III, folio 29) upon which image a leaf is placed to mark something of its life and love in the eyes of its former beholder.

Finally, Alexei folds over the most emblematic image of all, in which we see a tableau-study of different pairs of hands in prayer, hands opened, cupped, clasped, and all emerging from the darkness and illumined in their gesture upwards. As intimated already, *Mirror’s* relationship to images as images is analogous to a kind of cinematic prayer organized topically around important “stations of the cross” which are folded and transposed in the rhythmic temporalities of the film medium. The sacred choral music once again sets the *cantus firmus* for such a prayer, itself never spoken but suggested by the lofty suspensions and cadences of Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater*. We hear the heavy book close. Darkness. Slowly the camera lifts to Alexei’s face illumined by the window. This light and this gaze out the window

permits the passage to another epoch, from the narrator as a child (Alexei) to the child of the narrator (Ignat)⁵, a gaze that generates a vision from father to son, passing through the 1930's to the 1970's.

SHOT 92

The light from the window passes through Nathalia's shining hair, despite herself, as she is genuflecting. As she gets up, the Requiem music abruptly stops, and she asks Ignat to come over since she is leaving. We see him sitting on a table nearby the window, daydreaming, parallel to the position of his father as a boy. He moves and we hear footsteps, and as he passes into the corridor we briefly notice a nineteenth century world-map on the wall.



Nathalia gets up and turns around only to lose her purse, spilling its contents on the floor. Ignat brushes her back with his hand and falls to the floor to help her pick them up. She says « When you're always in a hurry !...Just pick them up... » (This phrase about being in a hurry is echoed at the beginning of the film, spoken by the stranger-doctor who falls from the fence of the dacha with Alexei's mother, Maria).

As she hurriedly picks up paper belongings, Ignat slowly gathers coins, buttons, or earrings and, reaching for the final one, receives an electric shock. He says « It feels like electricity...It feels like it all happened once, but I've never been here before » and as he says these words, the percussive electric music of Eduard Artemyev begins to ring out the metallic dissonance's that will punctuate and underlie the rest of the shot. Nathalia responds : « Stop imaging things and give me those coins ». As she adds « And tidy up a bit » we hear the dim voices of what we may call Artemyev's requiem refrain. She gets up, takes her coat and the camera follows her closely as she moves quickly and makes a complete 360 degree turn, the electronic music suddenly making a dizzying flourish, around the corridor and opens the door. In three seconds there is the disquieting strangeness that time has been warped.

SHOT 93

Significantly, the camera cuts to a medium-shot of the white, cold-light of the tattered ceramic wall of the backroom, now looking like a prison-space, and travels alongside the wall to Ignat's face, warmly kindled in yellow light against a dark library-wall of books. Ignat and his mother are both separated by the heavy, glossy-white oil-painted door, that hinges between the two warmly-lit spaces, precluding

⁵ Note : most commentary confuses the identity of young Alexei and Ignat in this shot (Ex : Johnson/Petrie, p.122), an understandable mistake since both roles are played as doubles by the same actor Ignat Daniltsev. Yet judging by the uncut hair, heavy coat, and pale features it is Alexei.

them from being seen together. Nathalia's face, leaning in and out, and suffused with that iconic, golden light, says « Don't touch anything. And tell Maria Nikolayevna to wait if she comes » (the name indicates that it must be the boy's grandmother). Ignat closes the door and his face receives the pallor-coloring of the door. Looking up, back, and then turning round again he is followed alongside the dark library-wall, this time his face is pale and we hear again the ghostly chant-refrain; he touches a book, makes a 360 degree turn and hears a teaspoon clinking : time is warped again.

SHOT 94



A woman (played by the actress Tamara Odorodnikova, left) with a maid makes her apparition, sitting at the table for tea-time (the same table on which Ignat was sitting earlier as he was daydreaming in the window-light) and hearkens to Ignat : « Come in. Hello. » Light fades,



Most film critics fail to identify her unmistakably allusive evocation of the poetess, Anna Akhmatova, (image on the right), her maid—the image of Fate or her Muse⁶. As she remarks to the maid, « A cup of tea for the young man, » the camera follows her out of the room, around the corner and the frame of the world-map and opens backwards in a depth-of-field shot that seems to extend the spaces of the room. Centered and open to view : a baroque-looking, elaborately carved chair with red satin cushion, an oddly curious furnishing, fit for Prince Hamlet. Electric organ music seers and suspends the dissonances heard before. The maid turns off the hall-light and walks on, the theatricality of the scene

⁶ Tarkovsky's is known to have disavowed this resemblance despite its especially "evocative" and "talismanic" power. For example, when discussing some of the image-riddles of his films, images without much explanation but with quite a lot of evocative power, Tarkovsky added: : "For example, people would say: "and who is this older woman sitting over there asking him to read the letter from Pushkin to Chaadayev? What woman is this? Akhmatova?" — Everybody says that. She in fact does look a bit like her, she has the same profile and she could remind her. The woman is played by Tamara Ogorodnikova, our production manager, she was in fact already our production manager for *Rublov*, she is our great friend whom I photographed in almost all my films. She was like a talisman to me. I didn't think this was Akhmatova. For me she was a person from "there" who represents a continuation of certain cultural traditions, she is attempting at all cost to tie this boy to them, tie them to a person who is young and lives in this day and age. This is very important, in brief — it's a certain tendency, certain cultural roots. Here is this house, here is the man who lives in it, the author, and here is his son who somehow is influenced by this atmosphere, those roots. After all it is not precisely delineated who this woman is. Why Akhmatova? — A bit pretentious. This isn't any Akhmatova. Simply put it is precisely this woman who mends the torn thread of time — just as in Shakespeare, in *Hamlet*. She restores it in a cultural, spiritual sense. It's a bond between modern times and the times past, the time of Pushkin or perhaps a later time — it doesn't matter." (*Res Publica*; 1987)

heightening the spectral nature of the visitors—themselves always already at-home, as if the world of the dead were one co-terminus with the world of the living. Akhmatova and her maid are thenceforth always associated with this switching off and on of lights, the theatrical symbolism of their being « shades » is clear. Their « apparition », in the phenomenological sense, takes them beyond mere symbolism since they do not merely stand-for the dead-absent, but show-forth in the plasticity of light and darkness, in the magical mirror of the image, and allow things to appear as agents of vision and visibility since they set the screen/stage of seeing.

SHOT 95

Ignat is shown in profile ; he makes another about-face turn when he hears the teaspoon clinking. Akhmatova is seen between two windows, a radiator and a ruinous, water-stained, plaster wall and replies: « Get the notebook on the third shelf » Ignat pulls the well-thumbed, leather volume from the shelf and turns to face her as she tells him to read from the book-marked page. Music is subdued and finally silenced. We see Ignat in profile, lit from the back by a light that catches his ear as if to emphasize the catechism-like attention to be given to an important recitation. He reads a fragment copied in the notebook: «In replying as to the effect the arts and science have on our mores, Rousseau said, `A negative one` » She interrupts him and directs him elsewhere, telling him to read only what is underlined. He recites a fragment of a letter from Pushkin to Pytor Chaadayev (we learn this only after the recitation), a letter, the interpretation of which fires a debate about historical discourse among the film's many contending critics.

For the bureaucrats of the Goskino/Mosfilm studios, as well as for many Soviet critics, the recitation of this letter was an appropriate endorsement of Soviet nationalism since it alluded to the nationalist debate that took place a century earlier: « it was a key text in the Salvophile-Westernizer controversy raging in the second quarter of the nineteenth century : should Russia adopt the West as its cultural and political model or look to its own indigenous religious and historical traditions ? » (Johnson & Petrie 1994 : VII, 124). For foreign critics it was denounced as an unfortunate and rather embarrassing instance of the manipulative ideology of Russian messianism or an example of historical mythology and popular legend, to be excused, compensated, or ignored only in the light of the director's otherwise masterful talents ⁷.

⁷ For example, many critics would agree that Ferro's comparison of Eisenstein's *Nevski* to Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev* might easily be extended to include *Mirror*, in which his remarks on the advent of another kind of history are always tempered in ideological terms : Le regard érudit, positiviste, n'exclut pas l'appel à d'autres critères. La réalisation de *Nevski* ou de *Rublev*, par exemple, est due à deux artistes aussi attentifs l'un que l'autre à ces exigences : ils n'en ont pas moins ressuscité les mêmes moments de l'Histoire (ou presque) en réalisant deux films qui ont une signification inverse : dans *Nevski*, l'ennemi mortel est l'Allemand, le

John B. Dunlop has also discussed, in the context of the production of Soviet films of the 1970's, the often refractory and "indigestible" Russian nationalist themes systematically expressed in a quasi-Aesopian manner to avoid censorship. Citing the French critic Jacques Grant, he agrees that *Mirror* is less a means of reflection than an a-Marxist barrier (barrage) placed between the filmmaker himself and a world he refuses to see and to discuss, this scene of the recitation of Pushkin's letter being an exemplary case in point. "In opposition to the Soviet ideocracy, Tarkovsky places "thousand-year-old" Christian Russia" (1992; 242). Dunlop argues that scene by scene, *Mirror* literally mirrors all the concerns, fears, and hopes pitting Russian nationalists against the legitimizing ideology of the Soviet regime, Marxist-Leninism, as described below.

[...] Russian nationalism can be seen primarily as a desire to *preserve*: to preserve ethnic Russians themselves from socio-demographic attrition (the result of such perceived plagues as the break-up of the family, plummeting birth rates, and juvenile delinquency); to preserve Russian historical monuments, especially ancient churches, from the wrecker's ball and bulldozer; to preserve the endangered Russian environment from defilement and pollution; to preserve the national religion, Russian Orthodoxy, from extinction. It also seeks to preserve the nineteenth century Russian classics (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, etc.) from neglect, and it manifest a strong suspicion of modernization, urbanization and the so-called "scientific and technical revolution (1992; 231).

Again, Dmitri and Vladimir Shlapentokh discuss Tarkovsky's films as one of the hallmarks of movies made in the period of Brezhnevian conservatism (1968-1985), movies that challenged "the regime with movies that were still loyal to official ideology but contained some elements that irritated officials" (1993; 147). They argue, for example, that *Mirror* is an excellent example of the use of diversified official ideology for social critique, as it sets the liberal wing of the Russophile ideology of the political elite over against the other core Brezhnevian, neo-Stalinist, and neo-Leninist (or liberal socialist) ideologies. Films like *Andrei Rublev* (1971), *Solaris* (1972) and *Mirror* (1974), far from being xenophobic projections of Western consumerism and promiscuity or facile adulations of Russians as models for the world, all speak to the special destiny of the national traditions and Orthodox Christianity of Russia.

In his somewhat autobiographical film *Mirror*, Tarkovskĭ was again absorbed by the fate of Russia. He referred to the polemic between Alexander Chaadaiev, a Russian philosopher in the beginning of the nineteenth century, and his famous contemporary, the poet Alexander Pushkin. The director sided with the poet and argued against Chaadaiev's pessimistic vision of the future. The characters of the movie, refined Russian intellectuals, commend Russia for the salvation of Europe from both the Mongol invasion and the Nazis. Even Stalin's terror has some positive implications in that it would cleanse Russians through suffering, thereby raising their spirituality (1993: 162).

Teutonique, et dans *Rublev*, le Tartar, le Chinois. Ici, ce qui sauve la Russie, c'est sa sainteté, son christianisme; alors que dans *Nevski*, le héros est volontairement laïcisé (1987; XIX, 219-220).

It is unnecessary to refute the facile provocations and reductions of such ideological commentary and much more interesting to test the limits of such a position by demonstrating how Pushkin's letter to Chaadayev is handled cinematographically in Tarkovsky's *Mirror*. We may profit from a heightened sensitivity to the mise-en-scène of the recitation of the letter, which far from being simple, is quite complex and intriguing and contributes as much to the sense of the letter as the letter itself, taken at face-value. Letters are, after all, messages sent ; the medium of their transmission, as McLuhan reminds us, is also the message. How is a letter, originally sent from the poet-figure Pushkin, selectively copied and underlined by the father-narrator and recited by a child to the apparition of Akhmatova, and filmed in the audio-visual techniques of the poet-cinematographer Tarkovsky ? Film-critics are still too closely tied to the culture of literacy even to ask this question and reduce the film to an ideological paraphrase of the letter, the transmission of the letter in the context of the film being understood in the rhetoric of the synecdotal figure of the literary "dispositif."

As I have argued, a careful consideration of the materiality of the medium of film has another, non-discursive power, a power that is not motivated by the effort to "preserve" a nationalist politics and people that already exist but which carries out, in the practice of rhythm and the emergence of a new order of the visible, the invention of a politics and a people who are not yet, who might emerge in the future tense of this not-yet, in the darkness of the experience of this hope which must be carried by the figure of the child.



Ignat begins : « *The division of the church separated us from Europe. We did not take part in a single one of its great events. But we had our own special predestination.* » At this moment in the recitation, the camera turns and focuses out from Ignat's profile, and peeking over the pages

focuses in on Akhmatova, the ghostly refrain-chant echoing here. The camera makes a gradual close-up on Akhmatova and her tea-ceremony as we hear only the voice of Ignat reciting : « *Russia and its vast expanses absorbed the Mongol invasion. The Tartars did not dare to cross our Western borders. They retreated to their deserts and Christian civilization was saved. To achieve this goal we underwent a change which, while preserving us as Christians, alienated us from the rest of the Christian world. As for our historic insignificance, I cannot agree with you.* » Lighting is dimmed, receiving a cue from Akhmatova's nodding, and as the camera reaches a medium-shot profile she reaches out to take a sip of tea. Ignat continues : « *Do you not find something significant in Russia's position to amaze the future historian ? Although I am truly attached to the Tsar...* » Camera pans left to the still-life composition of the rounded, marbled, glass tea-cup, saucer, and biscuits on the table,

a still life that recalls, if only dimly and in the horizons of the French and Dutch masters of similar still-life tableaux, the symbolic power of the Eucharist, of taking the body and the blood of Christ . « *I am not at all inspired by what I see around me. As a writer I am annoyed, I am insulted* » Lighting changed and brightened. Cut to a close-up of Akhmatova's profile (left) suddenly facing opposite to her previous profile : «... *but not for anything would I change my country...* » Camera face to face with Ignat, himself backed against a dimly visible photograph, a face-to-face portrait of his grandmother, Maria Nikolayevna (in real-life, Tarkovsky's mother) as he ends : « *or choose another history, than the history of our forefathers, as God ordained it. Pushkin to Pytor Chaadayev, Oct 19, 1836* »

If we do propose an ideological reading of this recitation we may say that the discourse of Russian Messianism is performed in a speech-act that takes on the burden of its historicity and by transforming what is easily reduced as its nationalist-impulse in the light of its prototypical imitation of Christ. We see the cinematographic development or « glose », explored in the careful choreography of darkness and light, sound and image, of the very Byzantine imaginary under discussion and the problems of its safeguarded transmission. The Son reads the Words underlined by the Father (Alexei and Pushkin) to the Holy Ghost (Akhmatova). The religious economy of this recitation, while originating in Christian theology, does not necessarily support the Orthodox church, but serves to relay or to mediate a message of salvation, in the residues and ruins of a Christian world, through the breath and the eye of the poet (Pushkin-Akhmatova-Tarkovsky (father and son). In other words, it does not, as a speech-act preserve the rooted identity of the past in its repeated transmission but, remembering the loss of this tradition in the material fragments of previous visions of utopia “sparks them back into flame” in the moment of their re-articulation, and moves thought into the space of the invisible and the not-yet in the duration of the image.

Ignat finishes, pauses, turns his head towards Akhmatova who returns his gaze and tells him to go open the door. In the elaborate choreography of the corridor and its eerie, diabolical lights, we are given to sense a kind of Bulgakovian attention to the dwellings of the commune apartment (*The Master and Margarita*). The camera follows as Ignat turns his head back around again, as if following the circulation of her gaze and is lost to view in the darkness ; all the time the soundtrack is heard dimly but percussively chanting-chiming and building crescendo's that parallel the kinetic thrust of his gesture to open the door. The first inside-door is opened, and Ignat crosses in the darkness the threshold that earlier he had been separated from, precluded from the view of his mother Nathalia, and makes a gesture to open the outside-door. It is opened, apparently from without, or perhaps both hands have touched the doorknob at once. The glossy-white oil-enamel door dramatically and suddenly erupts the darkness

of Ignat's space, reflecting the light from the outside corridor of the commune apartment building ; the choral voices, built up in haunting momentum, are released and coalesce in their evanescence with the strange voices, whispers and echoes from the corridor outside so that we cannot tell the difference between the living and dead.



Ignat is face-to face with his grandmother, Maria Nikolayevna (Tarkovsky's own mother), the same woman against whose photograph he was standing before Akhmatova. Apparently he does not recognize her nor she him. She looks up, perhaps to check the apartment number, says « Oh, I've got the wrong apartment » turns and leaves.

Ignat peeks out briefly and then closes the door. Darkness. Ignat crosses into the window-light of the back room where Akhmatova made her appearance and has now disappeared; the music is low and hollow, and we hear Ignat's footsteps awkward and heavy.

The shot seems to unfold in itself, in terms of a dialectic economy or *oikonomia* of light and darkness, in terms of what makes sight and seeing possible, of what makes the invisible or opaque cede to visibility, what crosses or does not cross that threshold of night, allowing subjects to be seized by light. Light is the dynamic principle that makes vision and visibility possible and its circulation, from windows, mirrors, and thresholds is also the dynamic principle folding the figures of the family into each other. Maria, herself estranged from her son as well as her grandson, cannot cross the threshold or be folded in this body of light but must still remain as though visible only dimly through the frame of the picture on the wall, only seen in still-life, in the impenetrable distance and unattainable proximity revealed in the mirror-magic of the photographic image itself.

SHOT 96

The camera cuts to a close-up of a humid vapor of a water ring vanishing on the table—the surface of which is crossed with reflected panels of window-light. The music rises again in all its intensity, warped as the voices of the low chant are drawn out, accelerated, and concentrated into the terminal pitch of the alarm.

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climatic cry displaces the perception of the gradual, vanishing celerity of the humid mark, by surpassing the rhythmic water-pressure, irrupting and accomplishing itself outside of its material duration in time; breaking the sound-barrier it seems to pass “out of time.”

This disjunction between soundtrack and time-image allows for a new category of perception—the dynamic principle of material mediation—and we literally stand suspended and gaping before the phenomenality of something so ordinary and yet unperceived, the inevitable collapse and the eternally fleeting sense of material being in time. This perception is accentuated by its being a natural, elemental mediation of vapor, its being between the elements of water and air, being between visibility and invisibility, and being between death and eternal metamorphosis/transfiguration.

Audio-visual technique such as this operates an allegorical inscription in the Benjaminian sense of the term, as allegory is distinguished from symbol (*The Origin of German Tragic Drama/Trauerspiel*): rather than symbolizing the eternal moment, it allows time to seep into and materially inscribe itself in the eternally fleeting nature of the work of art as a fragmented passage, ruin, and reminder of the immanence of death in historical being. Paradoxically, and this is also one of the insights of Tarkovsky’s allegorical audio-visual technique, in its very grounding in the material-elements, in its thinking-through material being in time, and by presencing the phenomenological horizon of death, it places the cinematographic medium into contact with something more, beyond, accelerated out of, invisible, yet accessible to, or in dialogue with that hope and that memory generating the more-than-mortal-being-in-time, and death is merely a function of this transformation. The heat-mark from the absent tea-cup evaporates the magical water of Lethe in order to remember the truth (a-letheia) of that eternal side of change and mortality, just as the rhythmic gap of the musical reverberation bears more than mere silence/absence of voices but continues to affirm the ontology of their tonal presence in the weight, lifted by the overtone, of their echoing memory. The poetry of Tarkovsky’s cinematography, from this point of perspective, mediates this resurrection-experience and again, this is why the heat-mark is left appropriately by the apparition of the poetess-figure Akhmatova.

SHOT 97

We see Ignat facing the window, medium-shot, and just as he announces his wonder « Eh ! » we hear immediately, and with jarring familiarity, the telephone-ringing. He crosses the corridor, face again illumined against the dark walls and reaches for the telephone. His father Alexei calls him and asks if his mother Maria came to which he replies that a lady came and left because she had the wrong apartment. Clearly estranged from his son and trying to cope with Ignat’s indifference, we hear the voice of Alexei asking him if he might want to invite over a friend or a girl perhaps. We see Ignat’s lip tremble with

amused embarrassment as his father recalls a memory of his love for a redhead : « Her lips were always chapped. Our shell-shocked military instructor like her. » Again we notice the economy (oikonomia) of the transition between shots : the voice of the father, transmitted to the son, opens effortlessly out to a vision in memory during WWII.

SEQUENCE XI (Afasyev's Prank on the Shell-shock Instructor)

SHOT 98

The redhead is seen up-close in profile and the change to radiant red-color from the chiaroscuro of shot 5 to 6 is striking. She moves swiftly and silently towards the left, past the shadows of several dark figures, out of focus and in the background. As her figure becomes clearer from the receding distance we notice the tight-fitting winter clothes she wears and we hear the well-measured trudge of her boots as it literally operates a rhythmic prelude to Purcell's chamber music. As her trudge disappears into the music we see her full-figure operating a visual passage into art since she literally walks into the winter landscape of what we shall be exploring in the next few shots as Tarkovsky's cinematic derivation of Peter Breughel the Elder's tableau, *Hunters in The Snow*. She is an important figure for understanding the audio-visual intermediality of *Mirror*.

SHOT 99

We see the pained expression of Alexei, medium-shot, as he looks back ; the violins of the music flourish this sense of feeling. Alexei drops his head against the railing, facing diagonal-left, and we see only the back of his leather cap. This gesture is not only one of disappointment but of prayer and desire. It is reflected, doubled, and inverted in a later scene in which we see Alexei alone in the dark, warm interiors of what we may call the *dacha of abundance* (during the famine, he has accompanied his mother in order to sell her earrings to a wealthier, more fortunate, and pregnant woman), looks into the reflections kindled by the gentle wick of a candle and sees, for an instant, the golden radiance of this Redhead of his desire nursing an infant by the side of the stove-fire.

SHOT 100

Close-up shot of the round aim-piece and black muzzle of a rifle, held at the same angle as Alexei's head. The rifle symbolically interrupts the drift of this desire but visually links Alexei, since he is facing the muzzle of the rifle and as the camera gradually pans left down the muzzle, to that of the child holding the rifle who is brought into focus, medium-shot, oblique left.

SHOT 101

We see full-figure and lined diagonally to the left, three children (Markov—young Alexei—Afasyev) ; the first two are turned about-face towards the targets according to the master's instructions. Afasyev resists the about-face and faces the camera instead as if frozen with determination and fear. Interrogated as to whether he has studied the manual, he insists that about-face means a 360 degree turn. The camera closes in on his face as he says this. The instructor steps behind Afasyev (we do not see his face) orders him to forget the degrees and turn about face—Humpf! Again, Afasyev disobeys and turns full circle. The instructor crosses in front of the rebel as if ignoring his recalcitrance, and unable to exact any discipline, nevertheless shouts orders for the boys to get down in their firing-positions. He turns around, obviously disappointed, and declares : « I want to see your parents ». As we hear Afasyev ask « What parents ? » we watch the instructor close in from behind the child, enveloping the space in which he stands and we hear the giggling background of the children, amused to see things taken so far. The camera travels closely down from the angry face of the instructor to the tearful face of the child as he asks « which position ? ».

The camera follows the Instructor's profile as he methodically steps in front of the boys, completing a half-circle that panoramically distorts as it takes in the surrounding scene as in a bowl ; during which time he asks Markov « What are the parts of a.... ».

SHOT 102

The camera cuts to Afaseyev as he makes his way off the platform in a straight line backwards, up the stairs, to join the kids who are hanging on the railings and wrestling above. Out of this rhythmic gap, the Instructor resumes his question « of a...of...a rifle ? »

SHOT 103

We follow the march of the Instructor (much in the same way as we do Domenico's attempt to cross the drained spring with lighted-candle in the last scene of *Nostalghia*) as his itinerary visually marks the pattern of the prayer of the cross : he marches down the nave of the gallery, marked by Markov, circles around him and bow to the ground at the right end and picks up his bullets like rosary-beads and proceeds left, bending down at regular intervals, the camera's focus on the hands as they distribute three bullets to each of the three children taking aim. Markov's slowness to answer the question of his catechism concerning the rites of the rifle foregrounds the comedy of the scene « The stock...the muzzle... » As the Instructor sardonically replies « You're a muzzle...» Alexei asks, in all sincerity, « Then what's a muzzle ? » The instructor does not answer but takes his chair to the snowy corner, back left, to supervise from a distance.

SHOT 104

The camera cuts a view from above, long-shot, in which we see from behind, the three figures of the boys shooting their targets at irregular intervals. We hear once again the cawing of birds and see the trees as in a hazy landscape as the camera moves in gradually to focus on the target-wall, a wall which suddenly takes on the aspect of the dacha, turned inside-out (See Sequence XVI, shot 150 for another visual correspondence of this).

SHOT 105

Darkness. Medium-shot, from above : Afasyev sitting in the upper deck and unpacking a hand-grenade from his leather bag. The camera follows his hand as he sets it down on the table. The following sequence is slightly disorienting and filmed mostly in close-up. The rowdy voices of the children are bandied about like birds-caws and an unknown hand grabs the grenade, and passes it around as if to emphasize its being handled by the entire group. Darkness and lattices of light ; in the ensuing noise the camera pulls back to show the Instructor below, handling a firearm. In the excited shuffle and traffic above we see a hand set down the grenade on the table and hold the pin. Close-up of this hand and Afasyev's right hand clasping the grenade in a golden light. Afasyev pulls the pin, rolls his body down the stairs and throws the grenade before the Instructor on the platform.

SHOT 106

Shouting « Afasyev don't do it ! » and « Get down ! It'll kill you ! » the Instructor throws himself on the platform and rolls over the top of the grenade.

SHOT 107

Absolute silence. The camera gives a close-up of the hands clasping the grenade for two seconds. Focus-out.

SHOT 108

Pan back, medium shot. From behind, we see the Instructor curled up absolutely still and in foetal position. At the same time, we hear growing gradually louder and louder—the rhythmic pulse of his heart.

SHOT 109

Perspective reversed. Cross back to a position above the Instructor, looking back, depth of field. We see a trinity of children, (Afasyev, standing left—unknown, face down—Markov, right, bent forward on knees). The camera dips down and we see the Instructor's skull-like shell-cap, a diaphanous hemisphere turned up like a bowl. As the heartbeat intensifies and throbs irregularly, the camera continues to dip obliquely, pulled out of focus as it does so, into the dark impenetrable surface of the wooden-platform

until it moves in vertically above the Instructor's head. The beat overheard is now joined with the visual close-up, revealing dimly, the throbbing pulsation coursing to his wounded-scalp.

This shot literally takes spectators through the specter of immanent death, of the anamorphic distortion of the skull (a cinematic derivation of the optic tricks of the mirror, as in Hans Holbein's *The Ambassadors*). The anamorphic skull is all the more « real » since it's apparition is consumed in sight and sound, by being pulled spatially and pulsed temporally in the screen of the set and in the surgical-magical vision of the camera. On a phenomenological rather than a psychological level, this temporal experience may be described in Heideggerian terms as a projection, from out of the temporality of military routine, into the authentic temporality of being-towards-death.

Finally Afaseyev announces : « It's a dummy ». The rebellious prank is revealed to be the vanity it is however in the light of the Instructor's ultimate gesture of sacrifice and Afaseyev stands « dumb ». The sound of the pulse fades and the Instructor lifts himself. He faces Afasayev and Markov, puts on his skull-cap and says : « To think you're a Leningrad boy».

SHOT 110

The camera follows closely from behind the back of the Instructor as he trudges down the side of shooting alley, diagonal left, towards the targets, all this time his head is equal to the horizon of the boards, between sky and earth ; we hear the slow methodical sound of boots crunching the snowy boards. He turns half-circle in the other direction and sits down on the stool, his head descending down alongside the ruinous, salty whitewash of the boards, cap covering his eyes from view. This thoughtful descent transforms his down-cast gaze into a vision of memory :

SHOT 111



Silence. Close up of the shawled Redhead, turning her face to the camera, laughing (we do not hear a sound). She glances down briefly and touches the blood from the open sore of her chapped lip ; all this time the camera closes in on her face and we hear in the distant background Artemyev's requiem-chant orchestration, the pound of tympanies and the haunting neumatic voices.

As the camera halts on her still face, fingers parted from her lips with the touch of blood, eyes open, face radiant . For a brief two seconds her face assumes the sacred repose of an epiphanic transformation ; she is paradoxically terrible and beautiful, diabolical and divine, erotic and pure ; her image carries something of the halting power of great iconic images, situated somewhere between the Mother Mary and Mary Magdalen, she may be likened to the strange-familiarity of a bewitching Theotokos (God-bearer).

The rhythmic intensity of this radiant vision reverberates outside of its duration in the frame of the shot and is precisely all the more bright for its brief beaming : this shot, foregrounded by the ominous music, introduces us to this gap and this noise of time, never resolved in its painful difference, but experienced on a visceral level by the Instructor and explored like a parable throughout the following shots (between the newsreel footage and the recalcitrant children) of an irremediably historical and unendurably secular experience of life structured by the Messianic temporality of Apocalypse and Hope. Again, the Instructor intimates an imitation of Christ, since this vision of the blood-chapped lip is made visible by a man who would sacrifice his life for the salvation of children

SEQUENCE XII (B/W Documentary Newsreel of Lake Sivash, Soviet Advance during WWII, 1943)

SHOT 112

Artemeyev's orchestration continues the war-requiem. Medium shot, looking down from above : a naked man carrying a heavy crate down a muddy slope, soldiers seen swimming and loading artillery and supplies on to a raft. The camera shifts as the raft tips, wheels crash, supplies slip ; piano chords resound as if a piano were being moved and had fallen on its head.

SHOT 113

Afaseyev is seen, long-shot, from the targets of the shooting-alley, trudging up the stairs to the gallery above. As he makes it up to the top of the stairs, the children, still crouched and huddled from the expectation of the grenade-explosion, take his lead, stand, and follow, profile left, to march behind him. This brief shot makes the children's march parallel to the newsreel footage of the trudging soldiers. It is from this point of perspective that the footage is to be seen; this is not to say that they are marching in the steps of their fathers—but that a powerful historical analogy is performed and imagined between orphan children and lost fathers by crossing the rhythms of their steps.

SHOT 114



The camera faces the backs of a processional host of soldiers pushing the canon-cart over the ruts of a muddy earth; we hear, however, the splashing of boots wading in the water. Tarkovsky notes the aching poignancy of this documentary sequence because the simple people filmed are recorded “in one single event continuously observed” by an extraordinarily gifted camera-man who penetrated the dramatic moment of the Soviet advance through the Crimea in 1943 (1986; 130-131).

SHOT 115

Panorama of an officer, brightly buttoned and carrying a camera, and a troop of soldier-engineers slowly wading through the water holding notebooks, pikes, poles, and surveying equipment.

SHOT 116

Two soldiers seen marching without pants or boots carrying backpacks and rifles: one, looking like a Mongolian, briskly marching ahead, hat flapping; the other, morosely carrying on. The horizon between the eternally monotonous sky and the gray murky water is seamless ; splashing water. Close up of their feet pattering ankle-deep in the water.

SHOT 117

Continuous shot in profile, left to right, of two files of men, immersed knee-deep in the water, pulling the cords of the boat-raft. The camera travels from the first man holding the cord and slowly backwards to each man ; one feels, in the visual link of the cord pulled gravely into and outside of the frame, something of the effort and the heaviness of the physical pull itself. Water splashes are slower, more regular, and deeper sounding. Camera halts at the raft which we do not see in total perspective, but framed at medium depth, allowing for the bodies and the pained, weary, and stern faces of an entire, monumental host of men, hanging on to the cords of the raft or pushing its wooden poles, to pass through its lens.

SHOT 118

Pieces of paper seen floating on the opaque surface of the rocking water. Boots are heard irregularly splashing.

SHOT 119

Two soldiers, seen close neck-down, trudging in the thick mud around other boots ; camera lifts to show them hunched under the weight of missiles held in each hand and strung around neck or shoulder. The monotonous tone of chant-refrain hums like a breath, building and falling within the drum rhythms.

SHOT 120

Panorama shot of the raft, packed with wheeled cannons, crates, and the men hanging, standing, pushing it or wading around its periphery; a shot fascinating for its uncanny resemblance to the sculptures of war-monuments, except that what is usually a solid unified mass of sculpture in which the motion of bodies are frozen in stone representations is here literally a mass of heterogeneously moving bodies *sculpted in time* in all of its historical survivance on screen.

SHOT 121

Long shot, probably from the perspective of the raft, showing the back of a man blowing the smoke of a cigarette, and a host of soldiers carrying rifles dispersed, trudging forward and converging at the horizon, their heavy, feeble boots ankle-deep in the uncertain water and mud. As boots splash, drums intensify.

SHOT 122

Long-shot of the backs of two groups of men carrying the muzzles of cannons like enormous crosses and here again, the newsreel seems more-than-real in its living allegory of Christ's passion. Voices chime in the dull sustained breath of the chant, drums pound and build.

SHOT 123

Medium-shot of the moving-monument, parallel to seq.7, this time we see two officers moving against the current to encourage the men with the wave of their hands to continue onward and onward. Music and water give way, in the insistence of this very gesture to push onwards, to the steady, musical, heraldic voice of the poet, Arseny Tarkovsky, reciting his poem « Life, Life » (Translation below taken from Kitty-Hunter Blair, *Sculpting in Time*, p.143.)

I do not believe in forebodings,

SHOT 124

Parallel to seq.9. **nor do omens frighten me, I do not run from slander nor from poison. On earth there is no death.**

SHOT 125

Parallel to seq.6, as if continued ; the camera focuses on the feeble mud-stained legs of the two soldiers bearing missiles. **All are immortal. All is immortal.** Camera lifts to show another soldier, seen in front of these two, and loading the missile into a crate with the help of other officers. **No need to be afraid of death at seventeen, nor yet at seventy. Reality and light exist,**

SHOT 126

Long shot, but nothing to focus upon but a small island of stone, no horizon ; lake and sky are shown as a seamless gray glowing light. **but neither death nor darkness.** Medium shot, and the monumental-raft pulls into view again in closer detail. **All of us are on the sea-shore now, and I am one of those who haul the nets when a shoal of immortality comes in. Live in the house---and the house will stand.**

SHOT 127

Long shot, this time reversing the usual perspective as the horizon is seen behind the entire army of hundreds of men who face the camera marching in a line obliquely left ; they seem to brim over the edges of the screen endlessly advancing. **I will call up any century, go into it and build myself a house. That is why your children are beside me, and your wives, all seated at one table, one table for great-grandfather and grandson, the future is accomplished here and now,**

SHOT 128

Medium shot, profile of procession of soldiers traveling left. **And if I slightly raise my hand before you, you will be left with all five beams of light. With shoulder blades like timber props**

SHOT 129

Long-shot, from behind : soldiers trodding in knee deep water as they proceed to carry the canons, their cross. **I held up each day that made the past. With a surveyor's chain I measured time and traveled through as if across the Urals.**

SHOT 130

Close up of boots lifting mud. **I picked an age whose stature measured mine.** Camera pulls upwards, medium-shot, as the procession, endlessly continued is gradually brought out of focus into a fuzzy light. **We headed south, made dust swirl on the steppe. Tall weeds were rank, a grasshopper was playing,**

SHOT 131

Although the newsreel sequence ends, the recitation of the poem continues to its end as we watch Afasyev scramble up the snowy landscape, literally falling into the snow-scape, like the Redhead (shot 7), Tarkovsky's cinematic derivation of Breughel the Elder's tableau, *Hunters in the Snow*.



brushed horseshoes with his whiskers, prophesied, and told me like a monk that I would perish. Significantly, Afasyev gets up at this moment and climbs into the lower space of the frame, as the camera pulls up panoramically to view the landscape, and its layered intricacy of everyday life : children rambling, horses pulling a sled, people standing etc...the view of the shooting gallery below blocked out by Afasyev's approaching, tear-chilled face, gradually dominating the screen, lips puckered in a light but shrill whistle. Watching the life of this tableau-landscape-turned-face take shape, we hear : **I took my fate and strapped it to my saddle ; and now I've reached the future I still stand upright in my stirrups like a boy. I only need my immortality for my blood to go on flowing**

from age to age. I would readily pay with my life for a safe place with constant warmth were it not that life's flying needle leads me through the world like a thread.

SHOT 132

Close-up of Afasyev face-to-face as he turns his head profile right, a tear on the right cheek, and whistles. A mere turn of the head, from face to profile, and a lightly shrill whistling, and we are propelled into the future of WWII and its ending.

SEQUENCE XIII (B/W Newsreel sequence of the end of WWII, Prague/Reichsberg/Hiroshima)

SHOT 133

Urban scene. Night. The blast of the barrels of canons, pointed heavenwards, are illumined in the darkness by the blast of the light of their fire, overheard.

SHOT 134

Urban scene. Day. Long-shot looking down at intersection. A tank rolls through the cross of the intersection, piled high with men as we are taken through the liberation of Prague, 1945. Camera lifts to show the facade of storied buildings out of the windows of which we see people waving hands (like that shown in Shot 1, May Day Parade 1939). Tank shown at ground level, soldiers wave. The speed with which this sequence passes in the urban labyrinth does not provide a perception of the celebration of peace and it is underscored, not by applause, but by the blast of cannons heard before, and a dissonant alarm of trumpets.

SHOT 135

Night. A split-second perception of thin slivers of shooting, hovering, and falling lights, as of fireworks, and a panel of projected light from a building: a haiku-like perception of light scintillating in the darkness. Bombasting echoes of the soundtrack continue to blast, roar, and rip underneath this dazzling impression of beauty and we hear the slammed sound of the bass-chords of a piano continue to reverberate and evanesce.

SHOT 136

Day. Close up of the window ledge and the arms of men and a pole, and traveling down the pole we see a dark torn-flag waving in the air, probably signaling German surrender.

SHOT 137

Close up, down right, of the corpse of Hitler (face and torso) in uniform, a book laying open on his the right side of his uniform. Cut back and lift. Camera shows an officer kneeling by Hitler's side in the

trenches, surrounded by sand-bags, and filming him with an early film-camera. It is as if we have moved back to see the apparatus that filmed the first image. Soundtrack : trumpets blowing and building a dissonant crescendo as of an alarm or warning of bombing.

SHOT 138

Acoustically, we hear the sky ripping, as a missile tears sound or as a body might take air in too-suddenly. Visually, the sequence is parallel to seq.1 ,3, and 5, as if they were compounded, compressed, accelerated, and made more powerful : 1) Night, canons and trees revealed in the flashing light of the dark ; 2) Total blackness and then immense showers of blasting light ; 3) A flashing glimpse of a flag in the night-sky. In the showers of light fired heavenward we sense something of the cosmological trance of technology and war.

SHOT 139

Capturing the reverberations of seq.6 we hear the dark echoes of dissonant piano chords and close in on a photograph of the body of a corpulent man, head bent against the wall of the trenches with his left fist shielding his eyes, one arm propped against the wall of earth and clutching the crutch beneath this elbow ; a young boy behind him is looking at him in wonder. Camera pulls out two seconds, in order to impress a sense of duration to the image and to create a certain habit of attention in its viewing, nor is there any musical accompaniment but only the suspension of silence. Emblematically, the entire film is mirrored in this photographic image and the attention given to it, in the relay of the gaze, from within the trenches, of the child to the spectacle and the grief of war.

SHOT 140

Overhead view of mushroom-cloud explosion. Electric organ music holds a dissonant, echoing chord growing in volume according to the volumetric expansion of the cloud.

SHOT 141

Outside shot of war plane in the distance hovering above the clouds. Camera cuts to the inside of the plane behind the pilots. Organ chord sustained.

SHOT 142

Nuclear explosion of mushroom-cloud over Hiroshima continues, this time not from above but in profile, the mushroom dispersing the hazy cloud of light in the sky and expanding, distending and rising in a colossal column of darkness and light and disclosing the surface below : black dots of islands rocked like boats around the surging base of white. Again, organ music gives way to the dark chords of a piano, and the tones of their reverberation. As I intimated earlier, this shot forms an audio-visual

visual correspondence to the vanishing ring of the humid vapor left by a cup of tea in the Akhmatova/Pushkin scene (Sequence X, shot 93).

SHOT 143

Cut to Afaseyev in the Breughel-like snowscape : facing the camera obliquely, medium shot, his brief gaze seems to contract and to hold this vision of the Hiroshima cloud, not projecting but receiving its rhythmic thrust as if from out of the future.

He turns his back to the snowscape and we see below, as in all Breughel's paintings, the work of everyday life, sleds, horses, people, continuing their rounds and ignorant of their being in the midst of mythical events of holy-otherness and horror. Artemyev's requiem-refrain underscores the scene ; the ominous, hollow, rhythmic beat of the tympany joined by the voices rising and falling in the breath, sustained as the *tenor* for the viewing of the film and punctuating the film-sequences in its suspended, gaping, mono-pneumatic tone.

Afasyev turns right facing the tree and is fixed in the duration of the scene for several seconds, medium shot. Suddenly a small bird flies up in the slow motion of the film rhythm from the left corner of the scene to perch on his head, fluttering its wings. In *Mirror* the bird has the rhetorical power of mediating temporal rifts between shots and scenes, by transforming the gaze into vision, and the everyday into the apocalyptic.



As explored in the essay, the bird functions like the temporal enigma of a hyperdiegetic trope, and is associated with the transmission of memory and signals the eschatological horizon of time ; it is the emblem of the rhythmic gap of Ivan Il'ych's dying breath and wish (Tolstoy), cinematically transformed and launched (itself being mortally enfeebled) by the hand of the father-figure/dying narrator in *Mirror* in the final shots of the last sequence (Sequence XXI; shot 202). In this sense, the bird, clasped at two separate moments, also effects or enacts something of the rhythmic gap in the phenomenal experience of viewing the film, since the vision of its being launched towards the end of the film effects a memory of this sequence with Afasyev, a sequence which is itself launched forward in memory/forgetting later through the glowing light of the narrator's dying, outstretched, open hand. The importance of the experience of this gap does not lie in the effort exerted by viewers to make sense of a causal, narrative

chain of sequences, or perhaps this is only the beginning of the problem, since it points to a deeper, epistemological dilemma of how human narrativity, normally sanctioned by death but impotent before the velocities and mass destructiveness of modern warfare (Benjamin), might be negotiated by another kind of rhythmic-temporal mediation of events. Individual and collective memory are linked and lost in light, between a dying narrator and an orphaned child, circulating back and forth, gaping in time.

SEQUENCE XIV, (SHOTS 138-146, B/W Newsreel of Mass-Maoist euphoria, P.R.China, 1950s -1960s)

SHOT 144

Medium shot framing the faces, extending infinitely beyond the frame, of peasant women and sun-burned farmers ; a communal body of voices reciting, shouting and lifting Mao's « Little Red Book » itself a eminently portable and fetishistic ideological weapon of empowerment for a largely illiterate class of workers demanding agrarian reform and cultural revolution in the « Peoples Republic » of China. This image presents with startling clarity the historical problem of gaining literacy, of modernizing language with respect to the urgent demands of building a nation-state that would accommodate the pressures of social and industrial change.

Whereas European intellectuals have looked to China for a revolution in poetic forms in the twentieth century, the Chinese intellectuals were concerned above all with the problem of “cleansing” their language of the retarding effects of traditional language, making language more useful for the masses and usable by “the people.” Commenting upon this problem in terms of the mediation and the speed of language, Rey Chow writes:

The first criterion for the construction of a “national” language was simplicity and expediency: Chinese was to be cleansed of all the traditional residues that stood in the way of the nation's progress. Because language is explicitly linked to a purpose: nation-building—it is thoroughly mediatized in its conception: Language is understood primarily in terms of a medium whose efficiency results from being stripped of its past and thus, we might say, of its memory. (Hence old “literary” qualities were the first to come under fire as obstacles that dragged the nation down.) Cleansing language meant speeding it up. Furthermore, as in linguistic and cultural revolutions elsewhere in history, the newly constructed Chinese language was said to be based on the vernacular—the people's *speech*. (“Media, Migrants, Matter” In *Writing Diaspora*, 1993; p.175)

SHOT 145

Close-up of Mao's thick fingers, flipping methodically through the pages of his book but too-quickly to be reading. Indeed, in this sequence and in the sequences that follow, we see that reading was not necessarily to be practiced as a moment of interior-reflection upon print-language and to be interpreted in private by a cloistered subject (like Alexei's attention to Leonardo) ; on the contrary, it was hardly

read at all except as a social practice for the gesture of solidarity, a talisman to be carried, waved, and caressed for its powerful ability to openly assert, as a text, a massive sphere of publicity (a space of public-ness) and a long-march for a territory of power. Indeed « The Little Red Book » was itself written and exclaimed in this public space ; it is itself an anthology of oratorical exhortations, categorical insults, and worldly-wise proverbs taken from Mao's speeches over several years and placed side-by-side in dramatic juxtaposition, originally titled *Quotations from Chairman Mao* and compiled by the leader of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Lin Biao in the 1960's.

Explaining the belated rise and fall of the sphere of writing and literacy in the age of audio-visual culture, or what may be called the confrontation between the "graphosphere" in the age of the "videosphere," Régis Debray comments upon the typographic cult of the book, the printing press and the poet in Eastern Europe, Russia and China in mediological terms.

Et du *codex* rouge, la Chine maoïste s'est fait un talisman. Après guerre, c'est à l'Est, ce grand conservatoire de formes révolues, que la graphosphère s'est immobilisée. Comme un musée de la Lettre, un grand gel des sources vives d'antan. Studieux et scolaire, le « socialisme réel » a l'âme typographique. Les pays communistes où l'économie ahane et l'audiovisuel retarde, battent tous les records de papier imprimé. Si vous voyagez dans ces provinces au charme suranné, où notre XIX siècle se survit à lui-même, vous verrez le culte du livre, l'idolâtrie populaire des écrivains (les stars russes sont des romanciers et poètes, non des vedettes de la chanson et de l'écran), l'omniprésent dévoration du journal. Atrophie de l'image et du son, hypertrophie de l'écrit, dont la censure rehausse l'*aura*. (Debray, 1991; 271-272)

SHOT 146

Long-shot. Parade-procession of organized students (we see their young faces, white shirts and red cravats) carrying the glassy-frames of Mao's portrait. The power of Mao's portrait, as a mobilization of social energy, should not be underestimated. He very masterfully tapped into the political potential for the mechanically-reproduced poster, distributed easily and economically, and grafted this political power on to the religious-economy of iconic art, the same Buddhist art which he attempted to extinguish later, endowing his « saintly » image with the passionate force of the conviction of salvation. Although the conflict between the economies of Mao's image and his word may be doubtful, yet, one senses that the immediate intelligibility of the image held sway over the more mediate intelligence of the word. This sequence, and its contrast with the next, situate again the problems of Mao's rise to power historically as the problem of organizing and bringing under control, these differential celerities of the word and the image to cover the territorial distances and social-difficulties of attaining mass-literacy on the one hand, and political allegiance/obedience, on the other : in this case, the students must march behind the image, demonstrate themselves as a silent, communal body for its support and mobilization—and defacing the potential power of their speech.

SHOT 147

As if to emphasize this issue, the camera literally blurs quickly through the faces of the crowd to the left. As it halts we see the older faces and costumes of the working class, shouting and lifting the « little-red-book ». Another shot, emphasizes this same crowd moving as dark ocean of bodies pushed left ; in between them and standing still, we notice the white shirts of students. This shot is an emblematic prelude of the cultural white-wash, public trial and confession, brutal encampment and murder of the threatening intellectual class of artists and writers in China (from « The Hundred Flowers Movement » of 1957 through the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1970 and beyond).

SHOT 148

A sequence in three successive frames and fade-outs, of expanding images of a single photograph showing an army of sculptures of Mao, lined up in labyrinthine trenches and in several sizes, as if to insure the immortality of the communist « emperor » as he would march mythically through time— analogous to his march in the time-series of the infinitely reproducible image of his cult-photographs.

SHOT 149

A young peasant boy is shown face to face, in the blurred image of the camera, shoving the Little Red Book forward ; on one page the portrait of Mao, on the other page the printed word of his quotations. This image sums up all the stakes of literacy, accumulated in the remarks made regarding the preceding sequences.

SHOT 150

Drumbeats roll and the camera moves in jolts and blurs into the scene of the Russian army's effort to contain physically the Chinese demonstration at Damansk Island, 1959.

SHOT 151

Oceans of Chinese peoples, crowded in the extensive panoramic frame and brimming outside of it, cheering and holding the poles of red flags, banners etc...The immensity of the social noise, underscored by Artemyev's orchestration of drumming and trumpet-alarms, is a jarring contrast to the quiet tidal close of silence in the following sequence.

SHOT 152

Close-up, face to face shot of the impenetrably austere and boyish naiveté of a Russian soldier, his face juxtaposed to the right, for two seconds, with the anonymous hand of the Oriental-other holding his own breviary.

SEQUENCE XV (Father's Farewell, dacha/1935)SHOT 153

Medium shot. We see Alexei's mother Maria (Marusya) from behind, kneeling on the floor of the dacha, the floorboards of which are white-washed with soot and ice and she pivots to the right (her kneeling on the floor recalls the corridor-scene between Nathalia and Ignat 1970s). The black wicker chair beside her, without a cushion, is ruinously scared and scabbed with white rings and salty water-marks (recalling the dream-sequence of the lumps of plaster-ceiling) and a kitten wanders in forlornly in the background. She is holding a dull knife and cutting a piece of floorboard in a set with an uncanny resemblance to the shooting alley.

It is as if the dacha were turned inside-out, its floorboards dismembered during the famine of the war for kindling, its walls and floorboards opened to the elements outside. The utopian image of the dacha and its warmth and plenitude is inverted in this dystopian image of the ruined dacha and its cold and desperate poverty. The topical correspondences of the floor/dacha/apartment in *Mirror* convey this kind of double-figuration of utopia/dystopia; rather than being produced by the metaphorical polysemy of one image, however, it emerges in the metonymic series of fragments of images that produce a serial effect of "layering" and "unlayering" visual patterns and material correspondences.

Suddenly the male voice of Alexei's father is heard (absent during the entire film) : « Maruysa ! Where are the children ? ». She gazes upwards from out of her blackened, burdened eyes :

SHOT 154

The camera looks up, medium shot, to the face of the father/husband dressed in uniform and brushing his hair to the side, framed as he is in the dimly glowing light, with the aura and the patina of an early photograph. Is he home briefly from the war ? Is he off to the battle-front ? Whatever the answer, his image speaks for him as being somewhere between « the already and the not-yet », a kind of apparition departing in his appearance, a presence invested already with the nostalgia and expectation of his immanent loss.

SHOT 155

Outside the dacha, in the forest of autumnal trees and on a dilapidated picnic table, Alexei is shown leafing through the Broghaus edition of the DaVinci volume of prints seen earlier (shot 2). His sister Marina threatens to tell the parents that he has stolen the volume and he retorts « Tattle-tale ! », physically shaking her shoulders and forcing her to cry. The camera moves to follow her moving alone, to a separate space with her back-turned. The father's voice is heard booming out « Marina ! ».

SHOT 156

Again, « Marina ! » and Marina's head, wrapped in a black shawl, turns (recalling the same iconic-gesture of the redhead). It is possible that this little girl and sister, seen only once in the entire film in this image, is meant to symbolically evoke the memory of poetess Marina Tsvetaeva (1892-1941) since she is an important part of the literary imaginary of the shades of poet-figures evoked throughout *Mirror*. Likewise, one might say that the face of the father-figure bears some resemblance to the novelist-poet Boris Pasternak (1890-1960).

SHOT 157

Camera shot, depth of field, of both children halted in the voice of the father. They race through the leaves. As they disappear in the horizon of the dacha through the trees, the camera dips down into the leaves (just as it did before the Instructor's heartbeat in shot 18, in what was described as an anamorphic transformation), we hear a dark and dim bassoon-melody and tympany accompaniment, and the camera focuses obliquely on the DaVinci volume open to view at the red chalk drawing of the aged-master's autoportrait with pine needles dropped carelessly in the margin.

SHOT 158

Children seen, long shot, facing the camera and racing towards it. Alexei trips on a twig falling face-forwards, and repeating the gesture of the « fall », noticeable so often in the film and acquiring importance with each separate falling ; it is not a question of original sin but, on the contrary, a comic, breughellesque reflection of those instance of daily life which reveal the absurdity, fragility and mortality of being in time.

SHOT 159

Maria shown, close-up, and against the darkness of the dacha walls and the windows of a pair of door-panels, her face is suffused with that golden, nostalgic, iconic light ; a face and a light seen earlier in the first scene of the film as she tearfully remembers her absent husband. She stares with eyes full of melancholic dispossession, and turns her head to face the darkness.

SHOT 160

Weeping and sniffing heard from the children. The camera faces the uniformed father-figure embracing his children : the daughter Marina on the left, shawled, folded in the father's arms and lost to view ; Alexei's troubled and pale profile is seen trembling, left. The camera travels gradually up the torso of the father and as his head turns right and left in the emotion of the moment ; as if compounding and confirming the iconicity of the Trinitarian disposition of the father to the son and holy ghost, we hear the organ sound and baritone-tenor of the evangelist-voice from a recitative of Bach's St. Matthew Passion.

This hybrid, intermedial moment, at the center of the film, is perhaps also its most powerful. Significantly the father is shown folding the son and his face into his enveloping chest. The triptych has been closed and light released :

SHOT 161

Bach's recitative fades as the camera jumps into another intermedial space : DaVinci's finished oil portrait of Ginevra Benci, selected for her terrible beauty and her uncanny resemblance to the actress Margarita Terekhova, herself doubled between playing Nathalia and Maria, divorced wife and alienated mother to Alexei ; (although not included in the film-portion, the image of this tableau is translated, as it were, into its negative-image as we see Nathalia's face set against the darkness of the following sequence). A globe of light, suffuses and distends on the surface of the tableau (recalling the heat-mark and the mushroom-cloud) and travels right as we hear the swell of dark organ chords reverberating.



SEQUENCE XVI (B/W Natalia and Alexei, Moscow/1970's)SHOT 162

Medium shot of Natalia's face, the narrator's voice is overheard off-screen. This scene presents itself as the continuation of Sequence VI, shots 44-49, perhaps one week afterwards. Together they are discussing whether Ignat would like to live with father permanently after his brief visit. The camera pans left to Ignat, who refuses. The camera pans right to photos of Natalia with "Maria" the mother of the Narrator (featured in these images as Tarkovsky's own mother). Alexei still wants to reconcile with his mother but doesn't seem to know how, he is too arrogant, and his mother wants him to be a child again

SHOT 163

Medium-shot of Ignat, seen wandering through the corridors and the French doors.

SHOT 164

Close-shot of Natalia conversing with the off-screen voice of Alexei. As Johnson and Petri observe, "The use of real time (at 3 minutes 55 seconds the film's longest shot), the mirrors, the restricted color scheme, and the camera's almost exclusive focus of Natalia in close-up or medium shot create a powerful sense of claustrophobia, echoing the dreariness and repetitiveness of their arguments, marked by Alexei's empty sarcasm and Natalia's weary helplessness" (127).

She is seen against a bookcase, asking Alexei if she should marry the journalist she has been seeing, a writer whom Alexei mockingly observes has not been published as a real writer and who is not named Dostoevsky...She smirks, and adds "You've changed so much"



Alexei, apparently looking out at the courtyard where Ignat has started a fire. He sarcastically calls his son a "dunce" and tells Natalia that he thinks Ignat may even end up getting "drafted" into service, for her lack of responsibility as a parent. She moves left, in the hard light, against the mirror, rocking herself against the surfaces of two mirrors. Her ex-husband

begins a discourse about the "bourgeoisie" and the threat of the Asians on the other side of the border. As he does this, she moves against a dark raining window, turns her back to camera, combs her hair, and half listens to her ex-husband talking about a friend's son who calls them hypocrites and threatens to leave home...As he speaks in more moralizing platitudes, he goes on to berate her journalist friend who may think that he's a writer: "He just can't understand that a book is a deed not a paycheck. A poet

must stir the soul, not nurture idolators.” Ignat is seen outside stirring the sticks of a small fire outside in the courtyard in the light drizzling rain. Natalia backs from window as if receding into another pane, evoking, for an instant, a strange parallel to shot 25.

She asks him “Should we send him to a military school ?” and then looking out of the dark interior of the room to the outside where Ignat is burning sticks, she asks: “Who appeared to Moses ?” Alexei answers, “The angel appeared.” Natalia shakes her head, bends forward, wiping her tears and says “Why didn’t anything like that ever appear to me ?”

SEQUENCE XVII (Alexei’s Utopian Dream of the Dacha)

SHOT 165

Long-shot in sepia. Brief shot of bushes and beechnut trees near the dacha rustling gently in the wind

SHOT 166

Narrator’s voice-over: **“I keep having the same dream”** dark interiors of dacha, medium shot of young woman face moving in and out of darkness, camera pans right along wall and opens into the well-lit living room **“It seems to be forcing me to return to the bittersweet site of my grandfather’s house”** Child seen medium shot, on a table unhinging a lamp above; the camera tracks down to a child (same as first dream sequence) sitting on a matt and playing with a mirror which he decides to hide under a book on the table. **“Where I was born on the table over 40 years ago...Something always prevents me from entering”**

Mother Maria passes through the room in her simply country linen dress, passes into the corridor and turns back to ask the child something as she reaches the doorway to the pantry . Voice-over: **“I keep having this dream”** Mother passes through corridor **“When I dream of the log walls and dark pantry, I sense that it is only a dream ”** Mother exits outside, beautiful image of child on deck outside in the sunlight kneeling down to replace the oil in the lamp. In front is a large round glass jug of water, inside dried flowers on the table capture the sun’s light. This still frame of the image remains for several seconds, gives the impression of depth and duration. **“Then joy is clouded, for I know I’ll wake up...sometimes something happens and I stop dreaming of the house and the pines by the house of my childhood. Then I grieve...”** Mother enter and turns left.

Camera follows mother from behind as she walks through the house again in the darkness and outside the other door. Silhouettes. **“ and wait for the dream that will make me a child again...and I’ll be happy again knowing...that all still lies ahead”**

Camera tracks back left into the darkness of the interior. The “child-figure” lights a match and illuminates the darkness in the soft brief glow “**and nothing is impossible.**”

SEQUENCE XVIII (Alexei’s Dystopian Dream of the Dacha)

SHOT 167



This black-and white sequence begins with a close-up of a glass vase with the inside of a clock mechanism immersed in water (wheels, togs, and a metallic loop spiraling around them)... A figure of the dissolution of clock-time and immersion into a suspended and cyclical dream-time. We see the vase inside a windowsill near a branch of drying leaves, beside the fringes of the lace curtains, and next to an open pocket-knife: reading the still-life image allegorically we might say that this non-chronological, immersed dream time co-exists with the time of nature’s generation and corruption (leaves) and the time of the works and days of art (lace), and the time of the imminent ending of fate/chance/destiny (knife). We can momentarily see through the vase the blurred movement of the child-figure outside the dacha as he moves to the right. His image moves across the vase upside down and then disappears upwards in the curve of the glass.

Camera pans right and pulls back, medium shot, following the boy as he moves outside past the fences towards the dacha. He moves towards a table with a white cloth, a lamp and a broken loaf of bread.



The camera slowly brings the dacha in focus in the dark light—the boy outside the picture on the right. As the camera moves us closer to the one of the side windows and highlights the branches of a young sapling, we hear the boy whisper, “Mama...”

SHOT 168

Medium shot, from behind we see the boy facing the dark wooden door. A hand gestures lightly off screen right and the door creaks open as if beckoned from the outside.

SHOT 169



A hen or a cock breaks open a window panel with its beak and makes its way out of the dacha.

SHOT 170

The bushes are seen on the side of the dacha, wind rushing through the trees, the movement is captured in slow motion. Camera tracks down right towards the table, the lamp is knocked down and rolling off

the edge of the table, the broken loaf of bread swept to its side, and the table cloth is blowing, caught at the table's end, the apples in its folds holding it down.

SHOT 171

Trees and bushes blowing near the dacha, a long white curtain blowing in the wind, camera slowly to the left. In slow motion we see the boy running around the corner, past the well and hanging pail and around towards the front of the house. This beautiful image gives the simultaneous impression of lightness (curtain) and weight (slow motion of child's feet) the sensori-motor action seeming to peel itself from the sheer impression of the stretching and running of time.

Rain falls luminously upon the young sapling as it sways in the wind, falling like a sudden shower of feathery seeds from another tree above.

SHOT 172

Slow-motion close-up of the boy as he advances up the stair towards the pantry-door of the dacha, camera following him from behind, his shaved head and the white of his shirt contrasting starkly with the dark panels of the door.. He tries to open the door but cannot. He turns and we see his face briefly as he descends again.

The camera focuses on the door and tracks down, we see the moisture seeping through the bottom of the door as if it were flooding from the inside.

SHOT 173

The door opens in slow motion to reveal another beautiful image, a swinging movement not unlike that of the panels of triptich altar pieces that open and fold to reveal the topoi of the Annunciation, the Birth or the Passion of Christ : Maria is just beyond the threshold kneeling down in her dress gathering and counting small potatoes as if to ration them, she looks younger here and her face holds a mixed expression of empty melancholy and hopeful waiting, the interior seems dry but we can see and hear the curtain of rain falling on the other side of the panels of a window behind her. The small dog by her side trots across the threshold and steps outside, moving the camera into the next sequence and into a another temporal order of memory and experience. Dogs are often the dream-messengers in Tarkovsky's films, transiting between worlds and different time-orders.

SEQUENCE XIX (Maria and the Prosperous Doctor's Wife)SHOT 174

Color image of a farmstead, long shot, bathing in the lush green and blue light of dusk.

SHOT 175

An image of Alexei, by now a little older in his teens, pacing back and forth in front of the house. When a woman (later to be identified as the wife of a prosperous doctor) exits the front door with a wash basin of water to throw outside, Alexei runs nervously to the left. The dark and rich fabric of her satin dress contrasts already sharply with Alexei tattered clothes and bare feet.

Alexei runs around the corner of the house, Maria stops him, runs her hands through his hair to calm him and tidy him, and they make their way over to present themselves nervously to the doctor's wife (played by Larissa Tarkovsky, Andrei Tarkovsky's second wife).

SHOT 176

Not immediately inviting them inside with the light rain falling outside, the woman is seen emerging from the dark interior, asking who they are. When Masha (nickname for Maria) explains that she is the step-daughter of a man who was a friend of her husband, she enters back in the darkness of the house.

SHOT 177

Alexei, seen huddled against the wall, glumly enters and looks back strangely to mother

SHOT 178

As the doctor's wife explains that her husband has left for the city—the camera focuses on the trees outside.

SHOT 179

The woman beckons to Masha to step up into the room above, and she enters the well-lit room.

SHOT 180

She reminds Masha to wipe her feet. As Masha wipes her feet she loses her precious earrings and stones that she has presumably brought with her to sell in exchange for food during the famine that hit Moscow after the outbreak of WWII. She bends to pick up her valuables. Alexei's muddy feet are being wiped on the rag on the floor.

SHOT 181

Alexei strolls into the opulently furnished room, dark log walls and an oil lamp in the corner suffusing it all with a warm glow.

Masha tells him to wait while she discuss her "private matter" with the doctor's wife in the next room beyond. They close the door and leave him alone.

Alexei slowly explores the room in real time, sits down on a chair in the middle of the room with his head hunched low and his hands together.

SHOT 182

Close-up image of two small potatoes on a shelf, near a small pool of spilled milk. The camera moves down along the shelf as the milk drops from the edge of one shelf to another, brightly polished brass cup as it does so.

SHOT 183



Medium shot of Alexei in profile as he looks into the oval and convex-mirror leaning towards him from above, a mirror that captures that folds the entire room into its center where Alexei begins to stare at himself. Purcell's is heard dimly (the same that was heard during the scene with military instructor, Scene X, shot 94). The camera angle is at a diagonal capturing the relay of the gaze between Alexei and his reflection, the camera moves in towards the mirror. The lighting effect is changed on the reflected face, so that the glowing light of the right side gives way to a colder blue light on the right side, but the change is very subtle. The movement of light suggests that Alexei has passed to the other side of the mirror.

SHOT 184

Camera abruptly changes angle and now faces Alexei on the chair, looking above with saddened but determined eyes. Camera moves in close-up of his face.

SHOT 185

Close-up of glowing coals or embers of wood, a small mirror is embedded in the embers or coals and, as the flames lap gently around its frames, it dimly but opaquely reflects a figure moving.

SHOT 186



A hand imposes itself from off-screen right and gently pushes a mirror-panel or door of some kind in its place. As the mirror is pushed back into place it reflects the red-headed girl seen in the military-instructor scene walking and blood-chapped lip in scene X. She occupies a small portion of the right hand part of the screen, and seems to be sitting and nursing a baby near a chimney fire-grate with an open fire. The camera closes in on her glowing face.

SHOT 187

Very momentary and close-up shot of a hand held out in a gesture of prayer, holding a burning wax stick. The fingers glowing in red shades. It is not clear whose hands these are, Alexei's or the red-headed girl's he dreams of and desires? The processional baroque music stops.

SHOT 188

Alexei shown in profile, looking towards the lamp, close-up of the oil-lamp and the milk-glass globe over the flame as it flickers and sputters. In this shot, the perception of the rhythmic passage of time is inseparably linked to the flickering and glowing of light.

SHOT 189

This shot carefully brings into focus and out of focus, into light and out of light, all three faces in the scene: the doctor's wife, Masha, and Alexei. In the background we hear the trickling of water, as if hearing the dripping of a strange subterranean fountain. The ambiguous abstraction of sound, and its dissociation from the reference of the image, once again allows the mysterious aspect of the image to be evoked—one that connects it to the complex temporal layering of other sequences in the film.

The doctor's wife moves into the focus of the image while trying on and showing off her newly acquired earrings (mirror of vanity); she fades back into the darkness and is seen in profile moving behind Masha, whose sad and perplexed face is brought into focus; the doctor's wife emerges again into the light showing off her earrings once more, then fades from focus; the indistinct and dark image of Alexei's face against the dark wood is gently brought into relief and the sound of water becomes more evident.

SHOT 190

Doctor's wife offers to show off her sleeping baby, bends down to look into mirror again. Masha follows her. Alexei is together with the door as it creaks open (it seems to be paneled with hay for insulation).

SHOT 191

She proudly leads Masha and Alexei in to the room, camera medium shot, of brightly bedecked and curtained bed, overflowing with white lace, goose-down pillows and covering and ruffled lace bedclothes—where a healthy and happy baby boy is sleeping. As the doctor's wife prattles on about her baby in the lustrous setting, Masha is seen stroking Alexei's hair nervously. Very subtle and dark music underscores, the high-pitched and mellifluous voice of the doctor's wife—as if there were constantly a negative noise that might at any time upset this opulent light and serenity.

Masha's face is seen, her eyes almost filling with tears. She puts a hand to her neck and turn abruptly around as if choked by the scene, or about to vomit.

SHOT 192

Door closes from outside, medium shot, Masha seen rushing into the outer room. The doctor's wife follows, pause to look at herself again in the mirror, Alexei seen from behind. Camera tracks across room where Mahsa tell her that she is not feeling well. Putting a vest on her shoulders and offering her a glass of water from the samovar on the table, she asks her to stay and eat and wait for her husband who has the money.

She asks her to help her slaughter a cockerel. And her insistence seems to overcome Masha's reluctance. She hands her a cock, an axe and helps her to place the animal on the cutting block. The slaughter happens off scene, the cocks cry and feathers indicating its death. The doctor's wife turns towards Masha with what seems to be a stern gaze.

SHOT 193

Tarkovsky apparently regretted the insertion of this shot for its contrived and harsh lighting and overly explicit symbolism: Masha's face is seen in close-up, face to face with the camera as she lifts the heavy lids of her eyes and reveals a diabolical smile, her face seen against the dark panel of the wall—dripping with water behind.

SHOT 194

Masha's gaze is transformed into a vision in the transition to this shot in black and white, its langorous duration making it seem all the more hallucinatory: under soft organ music, her husband's pale visage is seen as if looking from the other side of the mirror. He turns around in slow motion, and we see him stroking the hand of his wife who is in the levitating-repose of sleep. This is the first figuration of the levitated repose of the mother-wife, taken up in various scenes in later films (*Nostalgia* and *Sacrifice*).

The two exchange coddling words of affection and devotion, he asks her if she is ill and she tells him gently that she loves him. The camera pulls back to reveal her figure levitating above the bed, her hair stretched in a kind of classical manner, and a dove rises from the right screen above. This fantasy reaffirms the impression, given in many sequences and shots, that certain kinds of experience do not



belong to any one character's memory or lived-experience but are carried outside of subjectivity in a hall of communicating mirrors.

SHOT 195

Suddenly and abruptly Masha exits the room, camera shows the door open from the outside as she steps out into the darkness.

SHOT 196

The two are seen in the brightly lit interior fleeing from the apparently astonished woman.

SHOT 197

Exiting quickly outside, unresponsive to the woman's pleas to stay for dinner and her husband's return. Masha and Alexei step down through the dark green brush and move out of the camera, right.

SHOT 198

Riverside shot, Masha and Alexei walking the 15 km distance home before nightfall. As the two are seen walking, Arseniy Tarkovsky is heard in a voice-over reciting one of his poems "Eurydice." **A person has one body, singleton, all on its own, the soul has had more than enough of being cooped up inside a casing with ears and eyes the size of a five-penny piece and skin—just scar after covering a structure of bone.** The camera focuses gradually on Masha's face as she stops to pause. **Only through the cornea it flies into the bowl of the sky, on to an icy spoke, to a wheeling flight of birds...**

SEQUENCE XX (The Child Entering the Dacha)

SHOT 199

Black and white sepia shot of trees nears the dacha, the camera moves ominously and slowly **...and hears through the barred window of its living prison-cell, the crackle of forests and corn-fields the trumpet of seven seas...**The winds emerges powerfully through the forest like the poet's *pneumos* and sweeps into the bushes below. **A bodyless soul is sinful like a body without a shirt—**
No intention, nothing gets done, no inspiration, never a line. A riddle with no solution: Who is going to come back after dancing on the dance-floor where there's nobody to dance? An image of the table, the lamp falling and rolling aside, the broken loaf of bread tumbling and a potato and a spoon rolling near the corners of the cloth (an image repeating shot 164 with a difference). **And I dream of a different soul dressed in different clothes : Burning as it runs from timidity to hope,**

SHOT 200

Another sepia image that repeats shot 166 with a difference: The child-figure climbing up the stairs towards the door of the dacha which now opens to him **...spirituous and shadowless like fire it travels the earth, leaves lilac behind on the table to be remembered by...**the child enters the mysterious dacha in slow-motion, an empty room with a series of long lace curtains hanging from the ceilings.

...Run along then child, don't fret over poor Eurydice, bowl your copper hoop along whip it through the world, so long as even quarter pitch with cheerful tone and cold in answer to each step you take, the earth rings in your ears. (Aseniy Tarkovsky, Trans. Kitty Hunter-Blair, In *Sculpting in Time*,1986; 157)

The shot continues as the camera tracks left. The stillness of the dacha is broken by the breath of the wind as it fills the lacey sails of the sheets hanging above the pantry room. We hear them blow and watch the glass-water tank on the table as the water stirs and waves from side to side as if it had been invisibly rocked to its side.

As the wind blows, the camera pushes its way through the curtains which billow out and raise themselves to reveal the dark glass of a mirror standing in the background. After a moment of almost total darkness, the angle is slightly shifted and the mirror reflects the child-figure in the half-light of the room, holding a large glass vase or jug filled with milk (the image is still shot in slow-motion and the milk heaves from side to side as the water in the glass-globe did on the table). Out of the soft darkness of the mirror the child is seen holding the vase in relative stillness for several long seconds, the duration of the image impressing itself upon us. Darkness. Focus-out.

SEQUENCE XXI (The Dacha of Childhood Returned)SHOT 201

Child swimming in real time, doggy-paddling to the edge of the shore where his mother is wringing the clothes and setting them out to dry.

SHOT 202

Curtain opens into the very dry light of the dacha, furnishings in place and suggesting the ease and comfort of the holiday. A puppy is playing on the table, birds chirping outside. Camera moves across the objects in the room, the large glass vase of dry flowers, the lamp on the chair, the eggs and the open book on the windowsill as it looks out to figures in the distance (revisiting the topos of shot 13).

This window frames the image of the child-figure walking beside the tall pines near the dacha towards the two figures in the distance—his sister as a little girl and his mother as an older woman.

SHOT 203

Alexei calls to her as if she were the mother of his childhood and she stares at him in puzzled amazement. What usually remained a juxtaposition of chronotopes in the film (dreams and memories of the 1930's contrasted with present in the 1970's) is fused into one image in this shot—as characters belonging to present and past appear together. She assumes the same sort of position as Maria in the opening sequence, smoking with her back to the camera, looking out into the distance of the forest.

SEQUENCE XXII (The Narrator's Death-Bed and The Dacha of Memory)

SHOT 204

Color, medium-shot in what is presumably the chronotope of the narrator's apartment (1970's). A series of antique mirrors hang from the wall behind, wooden door-screens are set in front of the sick-bed, and in front of the screens a corpulent doctor stands in his white frock talking to the two mysterious women (Fate and Akhmatova) who appeared to Ignat earlier in the "Pushkin-Chaadaev" Sequence X, shot 89.

They discuss the fragile health of Alexei, the doctor explaining that the even the physical illness of the "strep throat" can be dangerous because there are deeper causes and wounds than this. He walks pensively and explains, "It's a usual occurrence; a mother, wife, or child dies suddenly...and a person wastes away in a few days."

The camera gradually zooms in behind the back of the Akhmatova-figure who says, "But no one in his family died." The doctor shrugs and says, "No, but there's his conscience, his memory..." As he says this in his well-measured words, he passes in front of the camera and exits off-screen right. The camera zooms in slowly to a close-shot of the Akhmatova-figure as she lifts her head, showing the profile of her face. She speaks, "What does memory have to do with it?"

Such a question, spoken from such a recognizable figure, must be heard with a kind of anguish, for the careful viewer/listener must recognize at once that the answer can only be heard in the silence echoing in response to her question: "It has everything to do with it, everything when memory is constituted by forgetting and the difficulty of remembering-forgetting."

The camera follows the doctor as he continues his slow pacing right and left. Behind him, the other maid or figure of Fate is brought into focus. Out of the heavy silence the Akhmatova figure is

heard off-screen, asking, “Is he guilty of something ?” The Fate-figure responds “He thinks he is!” She looks off right and we hear Alexei’s irritation “Leave me alone!”

SHOT 205

Color, close-shot of the Alexei laying in his sick-bed behind the screen. This is the first and only time he is seen and only from the neck down; he is played by Andrei Tarkovsky himself, the only cameo appearance he makes in this semi-autobiographical film.

The camera tracks right past his chest down the sheets to his arms at his side. He tells the doctor once again to leave him alone. His hand, lying on the sheet next to bird-droppings, reaches out to pick up a small wounded bird with wet feathers. In slow motion, the hand clasps the bird, turns gently and then caresses its head which peeks out beneath the thumb. Alexei, with shortened breath—an ominous sign of his last breath, says, “Everything will be all right” as if addressing the bird. Again he sighs and whispers “Everything will be...” and he is heard breathing and expiring... In the softness of this expiration, the camera lifts and holds the frame of the image just above his hand; the rhythm of the breath and of the duration of the image emphasize this contemplative suspense of this lifting. In slow motion and silence the arm lifts into the frame and the hand, capturing the light of the sun, opens: the bird is tossed into this light, lifting into the horizon of the next image.

SHOT 206

Color, long-shot. The camera moves slowly right and panoromically (180°) to take in the landscape and horizon of the Ignataevio forest in the light of a sunny summer afternoon sky, the fields of barley extending below. Crickets are heard, barely audible, and then they are overwhelmed by the instrumental opening of J.S. Bach’s *St. John’s Passion*, an intense but processional sequence in which the slow but high-pitched melody of the oboe is churned underneath by the curling current of an orchestra of violins.

The camera holds the frame of the image still when it reaches the shadows of the forest in front of the dacha, then retreats back and descends into the green shadows of the alder bushes, past the picket fence and down to the image of Alexei’s parents lying in the grass below, his mother leaning on top of his father who is chewing a strand of barley while lying flat on the ground. Presumably, this image of the young parents takes viewers to the moment of the narrator’s “conception” before birth.



The camera tracks in for a close-shot of the mother alone; the father is heard off-screen asking, “Do you want to have a boy or a girl ?” Over the course of twenty seconds, Maria’s face makes several

expressive changes—as if in the pause of the question her face were anticipating a lifetime of tremendous events: passing from anxious curiosity to warm surprise, from hopeful bewilderment to pure desperation. Without answering, she bites her lip and, as the camera pulls back and the instrumental music of the *Passion* builds up to the choral refrain, she violently turns her head.



SHOT 207

Cut to a color-shot of young Alder trees as the opening refrain of the Bach's *St. John's Passion* powerfully sings "Herr, Herr ! Und ser Herr ?" (God, God ! Where art thou ?). The camera pans right and the mother as an older woman (played by Tarkovsky's own mother, Maria Tarkovskaya) steps into view from behind holding a wash basin. She is accompanied by a young child, presumably the image of the narrator as a child. Together they behold the image of the hill where the dacha used to be. The co-existence of different temporalities reaches



a climax in this image; for we have passed from the image of the young mother Maria in the last shot (early 1930's) to the image of herself as a old woman (1970's) and paradoxically, we have passed from the deathbed of the narrator who now remains the "ageless model" of the child—holding hands with his aging mother.

SHOT 208

Cut to a color, close-shot of a granite rock. The camera turns right in a kind of blur across small plants, and rotten wood-logs on which small insects are crawling, moss-covered stones, white wild flowers seen next to an old green-glass bottle, pulling back on the image of one of the heavily chipped corners of a log-construction (the site of the old barn or of the dacha itself).

The camera pulls back to show some old metallic chairs in the densely forested background of the ruin, then the image dives down into the ground with a slow impassivity. The image takes viewers into the ruined frame of the well, pausing to take in the surface of its standing water littered with colored glass bottles and rims.

SHOT 209

Cut to a long-shot of the forest. The camera frame descends to the horizon and, in pace with the strong chorus of the *Passion*, follows the strident walk of the older mother (Maria Tarkovskaya) who has emerged out of the darkness of the leaves, who has also taken the hands of the figure of the "ageless girl," and walked past the figure of the "ageless boy" across the site of another frame of ruins which seem to be the old wooden fence in front of the dacha, now overgrown with weeds and bushes.

SHOT 210

Color, close shot of the young Maria (Margarita Terekhova) as she was seen in the previous image, shot 206, with her head turned away. She turns her face back forwards, her glazed eyes shedding tears, her teeth biting her lip. She glances up in a kind of wishful anguish and then turns her head back once again.

SHOT 211

Color, long-shot of the older mother walking through the white-flowered fields of barley with the boy and the girl. In the still image of the frame they walk up forward towards the screen and as they approach the right hand side, the mother turns to look over her shoulders anxiously.

She moves off screen to the left with the girl and we are left with the image of the boy in the field, the image of a wooden "cross" looming in the distance where before there were only telephone poles, and nearby, the strange presence of another figure looking on at them (it seems to be the uncanny, half-recognized double of herself as the younger Maria).

The camera pulls back into the gradually dimming darkness of the scene, the distant figure and the cross still visible in the last measure of the music of the *Passion*.

As the camera tracks gently right, these images and sounds are replaced. Directly following the end of the *Passion* the boy's yodeling call reverberating in the fields is heard offscreen. The frame retreats far back enough to hold the image of the boy, the girl and the "mother" wandering off of a muddy trail rutted with puddles; through the barley fields they cut their own path, out into the light of the sun setting gently below the tops of the fir trees in the distance.

Silence, then crickets are heard, and the hoot of the familiar owl. The camera retreats behind the trees. Although they are moving forward into the field and the camera moving backward into the forest, the camera seems to be itself paradoxically moving both ways, at once farther from the three figures walking through the fields, and then seemingly closer to them as they are glimpsed through the openings of the trunks and pine branches. Finally they are set loose from the visible frame of the image as the camera recedes into the distance and into the darkness of the middle of the wood.

Conclusion

I

In the mirror, reality is not reconstituted but refracted and fragmented and another world is reflected out of its debris. In the inaccessible depth and enigmatic surface of Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975), historical reality, cultural memory, and temporal experience are all transformed. How does one inquire into the principles of the transformation of temporality, memory and history in the medium of film ?

Throughout the dissertation, I have insisted that such an inquiry, guided and grounded in the site of Tarkovsky's *Mirror* and theory of rhythm, must pass through a series of epistemological shifts. The critical theory of rhythm is critical precisely because it interrogates the mirror-theory of the knowing subject and puts into question the epistemology of representation, characteristic of the knowledge practices of Modernity. In the wake of this critique, another conception of knowledge and knowing is made possible in the epistemology of "mediation."

Aesthetic categories have been critiqued in order to make room for political and ethical ones: rather than study film as a "work of art" and situate an approach on the side of the director or the apparatus, I have argued that film is above all a magical and organic "medium of relationships" conducting the material-phenomenal agency of the world. The audio-visual technics of rhythm reveals another way of knowing and coming into contact with the world, one in which the potential of living substance and action is never fixed and objectified in the substrates of representational knowledge, but "productively embraced" in that movement of knowing by which the subject yields to the unknown, a movement in which a dynamic poetics of relation and immanent being become thinkable. This movement is measured, witnessed, and relayed in all of its singularity, duration, and alternation; inscribed in the materiality of the filmic medium, rhythm articulates and

constitutes another form of temporal experience and puts thought and action in touch with the unknown.

The concept of metamorphosis has become central to the elaboration of this epistemology of mediation. More than a thematic way of discussing the powers of the image, metamorphosis names the image as a milieu of material transformations. Here the image is not a screen around a secret to be deciphered but a material membrane of contact which inspires, respire and aspires-- allowing beings to breathe: being more concerned with the "pneumas" than with the "logos," the cinema is not an instrument in the service of a subject to reveal a pre-given and rational order of the world that the image would "identify" and "repeat," but a dynamic medium of material contact with a world that resists its rational and linguistic given-ness, a world that escapes linguistic identification altogether. This form of knowing has a radically temporal character, and audio-visual technique, by blurring and dissolving the distinction between the phenomenal temporality of the world and the noumenal temporality of thought, holds out the possibility of putting thought in touch with something else, the virtual properties of the world : the "not-yet", the "open", the "unthought", and the "other".

Between the phenomenal image of time reproduced and the living medium of the reproducible image, a mobile series of relationships between perception, memory, experience, and newness become discernable and thinkable. The materiality of the cinematographic image can then be considered a medium of contact which--in its middle-ness (milieu)--opens itself to the outside in a state of active and intransitive becoming; it inscribes "clots of life" because it releases the residues of experience and the layers of memory recorded and deposited in its enduring temporal traces. Such a principle allows us to think about what founds our relationship to the image as an image, metamorphosis being that which, always underlying the subject (hypokeimenon), remains in the medium (milieu) of the image in a state of dynamic potentiality. More,

metamorphosis bridges the knower and the known: the metamorphic membrane of the film bridges the psychic and phenomenal flux between the “screen” and the “spectator” and a kind of mythical contact with the world is made possible and viscerally attractive.

II

Le poète est le gardien des métamorphoses... -Elias Canetti-

This mythical contact marks the moment of a form of knowing very close to the activity of poetry. The practice of poetry, as a practice with the memno-technological mediations of the word, designates another, equally important epistemological shift: audio-visual technics mediates another relationship to language than that consolidated by literacy, the literary “dispositif,” and the knowledge practices of the mass-culture of print. Audio-visual technics does not replace nor compete with language, but questions the “sayability” of being; renouncing the transcendental aspiration to Being, it moves in the opacity and the distance of the “chaos-world” of beings and produces a “poetics of relation” out of the traces of film. In the time-based medium of film, this poetics of relation in the chaos-world of beings is articulated and constituted by the multiple rhythms it inscribes, the irreducible historical-ontological traces of time left in the ribbons of film—these rhythms being analogous to the rhythms of poetry, the living breathing imaginary of the word.

In order to intimate something of this mythical relationship to language, I have discussed several aspects of a non-linguistic theory of language and film: the movement of the word in haiku-technics, the breakdown of the logical/grammatical treatment of the image in montage, the narrative meltdown of the stuttering speech act, and the electrality of historical consciousness.

For example, I showed how the practice, technique, and form of knowing exemplified by haiku allowed Tarkovsky to explore a relationship to the medium of film

always carefully articulated within the constellation of concepts of language, image, and life. As a milieu, the cinematographic image opens a relationship to language that halts, suspends, and negates the transcendental aspiration to the fullness of being and meaning; emptying this aspiration, the reproducible image, calling attention to the way it indexes the organic and singular breath of life in the medium of its inscription, moves alongside the immanent eventfulness of the ad-venture of language. The exemption of meaning in haiku, by suppressing the impulse “to read” the filmic image, places viewers in touch with the deictic potentiality of the image. Yet this deixis points beyond hermeneutics and the burden of conceptual reference. The pre-narrative silence that inherits words in the practice of reading haiku shows, by analogy, how the material agency of film puts viewers in contact with the shadows and the motions of memories before they are discursively named and conceptually defined.

Again, we have discussed how and why, in the purview of the modern tradition of film-study, the temporal materiality of film, its rhythm, has been occluded, tamed, or reduced *as stylistic metrics*. Recognizing the limits of what can be thought under this modern paradigm for film-analysis we investigated the potential for developing a theory of rhythm that would be articulated outside of the discursive framework of aesthetics, film-art, and narrative-linguistic analysis. Revalorizing its plastic temporal materiality, its a-logical and a-grammatical organization, we have shown how and in what way rhythm releases the “noise of time” and makes language stutter.

I have demonstrated how this stuttering effect is materialized in Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*, how the work of memory constituting inter-generational historical knowledge is itself sustained by hyperdiegetic strategies of acceleration, pneumatically respiring and expiring like the last breath of Ivan Illych. Finally, I have defended the idea that, in the face of the speeds of modern events indexed by the phantasmagoric power of reproducible images, the narrative capability that traditionally frames and organizes the

irruption of events—breaks, or melts, down. When the forces of time outstrip the narrative capability of history then time can no longer be slowed down or “made human” by written language; for the passage of time in the image would make written language stutter, not in order to get back to some pseudo pre-linguistic reality but in order to melt language down, to make it shudder and become the medium of a passage of a world of examples that do not have their co-ordinates in us, that are no longer organized as utterances to speak themselves in a manageable scriptural and textual economy.

I have also argued that the historical transmissibility of experience, although impoverished by the fraying of story, is mediated by the audio-visual practice of poetry. The poetic practice of film constitutes another form of historical mediation: it puts viewers into contact with something like an earlier epic-form of oral memory, a kind of secondary orality articulated by audio-visual technics; materially independent of subjective consciousness, this “electr-orality” of historical consciousness is framed by the duration of life itself, compressed, accelerated, expanded, and repeated in the medium of film to continue itself as an infinite series of experiences. The ideas regarding the “electr-orality” of historical consciousness might be extended beyond the purview of film-studies into the domain of media studies generally. The question concerning the transmutation of historical knowledge and experience in the post-literate age of audio-visual technics has only begun to be traced.

However, one of the important implications of the conception of electr-orality, as it intervenes in the discourse of cinema and history, needs to be highlighted once again. The historical-ontological traces of the image are not to be thought of as a kind of “supplementary proof” to be added to, or which would stand apposite to, written historical knowledge—even in the post-literate age of historiography. These traces introduce a poetics and a politics of memory that come out unaffected by the operations of historical discourse, a poetics and a politics of memory that might challenge the

dominant discourses of history by setting loose the “inert presences” of other histories and memories which are “awakened” by the *ethos* of film, the material debris and flotsam of time which is compressed, accelerated, and expanded in the multiple rhythms of film. Rather than represent, supplement, or even contest historical experience and knowledge, these irreducible ontological-historical traces mutate historical experience and constitute a different form of historical knowledge altogether, one that—in its structure of awakening to the personal and collective forms of remembrance--opens an allegorical and utopian dimension of the future.

III

For many years I have been tormented by the certainty that the most extraordinary discoveries await us in the sphere of Time. We know less about time than about anything else. -Andrey Tarkovsky-

Tarkovsky intuitively understood the necessity for thinking of Time in its material manifestations and this is why he thought of the cinema as a time-machine and the cineaste as a time-sculptor. I have valorized the Aristotelian traditions of the philosophy of time because subjectivity is conceived together with the mediations of temporal experience that constitute it. I have transposed Meschonnic’s conception of rhythm in the inquiry into audio-visual technics because it shows how subjectivity is invented and transformed by the empirical passage and passing experience of images of time. As I argued at the end of Chapter 1, this experience of passage may be imagined in the figure of the time-passer: the one who has lost an absolute horizon of temporality in order to pass into multiple and heterogeneous temporalities, the witness and the ferryman who becomes the point of passage of the alterations and velocities of images that trace and render visible the passing of time.

In the experience of the time-passer, the movement of a negative suspension or emptying is accompanied by an availability to becoming "charged with time" and by an openness to witnessing the radical alterity of the future. While the time-passer may designate some ideal director, spectator, or critic, it designates above all, the experience of pure passage made possible in the mobile continuum of relations of the film's production, reception and critical appropriation. The possibility of the time-passer is the figuration of an experience constituted in the metamorphic powers of these multiple temporalities into which the viewer/witness is inserted. The temporal "membrane" of the screen becomes a kind of liminal slipzone where subjectivity can be transformed by the material traces of time.

One of the major implications of this experience of passage is that the time-passer has lost the absolute horizon of the empty, homogeneous temporality consolidated by the processes of the nation-state. Having lost the temporality of an absolute law which is organized by the vector of an accomplishment to come, no longer engaged by the temporality of a national History articulating the progress of a people, and no longer anchored to the temporal nostalgia of origins, the time-passer would not organize experience, memory, and knowledge upon the systematic continuity of an abstract chronology. The experience of the time-passer would be founded in an ethical duty to affirm the value of pure passage and to think and to act in the world with a knowledge of temporal finitude, contingency, and discontinuity. In the audio-visual technics of film, the time-passer would experience the foreignness that comes into the heterogeneity of temporalities that pass by the law of generation and corruption. Charged with other temporalities in the multiple rhythms of film, the time-passer would become the point of passage for the revolutionary potential to continue life, transforming the temporal conditions by which life survives, acts, and transforms itself.

Filmography/Videography

The Mirror (*Zerkalo*)

Director: Andrei Tarkovsky

Production Company: Mosfilm, Unit 4

Producer: E. Vaisberg.

Production Manager: Y. Kushnerov.

Assistant Directors: Larissa Tarkovskaya, V. Karchenko, Masha Chugonova.

Script : Andrei Tarkovsky, Alexandre Misharin.

Photography : Georgy Rerberg, Sovcolor with b/w newsreel sequences.

Camera Operator: A. Nikolayev, I. Shtanko.

Lighting: V. Gusev.

Editor: Lyudmila Feiginova.

Art Director: Nikolai Dvigubsky.

Sets: A. Merkunov.

Special Effects: Y. Potapov.

Music: Eduard Artemyev, J.S. Bach, Giovanni Batista Pergolesi, Henry Purcell.

Costumes: Nelly Formina.

Make-up: V. Rudina.

Sound: Simon Litvinov.

Poems: Arseny Tarkovsky, read by the poet.

Leading Players:

Margarita Terekhova (*Masha, Alexei's mother/Natalia, Alexei's wife*)

Filip Yankovsky (*Alexei, age 5*)

Ignat Daniltsev (*Alexei/Ignat, age 12*)

Oleg Yankovsky (*Alexei's father*)

Nikolai Grinko (*male colleague at printing shop*)

Alla Demidova (*Lisa*)

Yrui Nazarov (*military instructor*)

Anatoly Solonitsyn (*doctor passing by*)

Innokentky Smoktunovsky (*voice of Alexei, the narrator*)

Larissa Tarkovsky (*rich doctor's wife*)

Maria Tarkovskaya (*Alexei's mother as an old woman*)

Tamara Ogorodnikova (*woman in Pushkin-reading scene*)

Y. Sventikov, T. Reshetnikova, E. del Bosque, L. Correcher

A. Gutierrez, D. Garcia, T. Pames, Teresa des Bosque, Tamara des Bosque.

Length: 106 minutes.

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