

## **THE WHOLE AND THE SUM OF ITS PARTS**

### **Reflections on the Nature of Cinema**<sup>1</sup>

**Richard Morris**

a film is made up of 'extracts' of time and space.<sup>2</sup>

Jean-Marie Straub

In any shot, of any film, something happens.

This is true for all types of film, be they populist or avant garde, fiction or documentary.

The 'something' in question may be spectacular and momentous or elementary and mundane; might last a fraction of a second or an entire reel of 35mm film.

A given shot might, from this point of view, be classified according to two interrelated criteria – duration and complexity – as in the following examples:

#### **Long and complex**

This category would comprise such bravura sequence shots as the opening shot of Orson Welles' *Touch of Evil* (1958) or the queue-jumping entry of mobster Henry Hill into the Copacabana nightclub in Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas* (1990);

#### **Long and simple**

In this category only one notorious example can suffice: Andy Warhol's 8 hour, 5 minute static portrait of the Empire State Building, *Empire* (1964) (or any single reel thereof)<sup>3</sup>;

#### **Short and simple**

Perhaps an individual montage element from Eisenstein: the shot reduced to the status of a single word, syllable or hieroglyph whose significance might be said to be negligible once removed from the sequence of which it forms a part – the first of the three stone lions from *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), for example;

#### **Short and complex**

The most difficult to exemplify, this category may be more hypothetical than real. My best candidate would derive from the work of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, directors with a marked tendency towards long takes but who are also,

when occasion arises, masters of the cinematic lightning stroke whose impact is in inverse proportion to its length. My example comes from a sequence in their Kafka adaptation *Klassenverhältnisse* (*Class Relations*, 1983) comprising a startling split-second homage to the Keystone Kops of astonishing brevity and effectiveness. At fifteen seconds, the shot in question is not perhaps exceptionally short, but the impression of brevity is enhanced by the surprising nature of the event portrayed, by its position in the film as a whole, and by Straub/Huillet's absolute refusal to milk a piece of action for 'dramatic effect' only to attenuate its impact.

Opening abruptly on a segment of space not seen previously, the shot begins with a momentarily static, frontal, rectilinear framing: to the left a dark, deeply recessive space beneath a highway overpass; in the lower right foreground a policeman in American-style uniform circa 1912, complete with night stick, stands looking offscreen right, a directional cue prefigured by the small white arrow of a road sign in the centre of the frame. Having apparently placed his whistle between his lips immediately before the start of the shot, the policeman lowers his left hand from his mouth back to his side and gives two sharp blasts on the whistle. No sooner has this scene struck the retina with camera-shutter instantaneity than the camera undertakes a swift pan to the right, moving away from the policeman as he reaches to remove the whistle from his mouth, and looking up the length of a sunny residential street to reveal the protagonist, Karl Rossmann, running towards the camera with a second policeman giving chase a few metres behind. The camera continues its rightward sweep as Karl flies around a corner to his left, easily overstepping a low brick wall without breaking stride as he does so. Having traversed some 180°, the camera comes to rest again as Karl hurtles away from it down the length of a side street with first one, then the other policeman in pursuit, their domed helmets, billowing tunics and flapping feet lending them a distinctly cartoonish aspect. In marked contrast to its brisk rotation a moment before, the camera, having resumed its immobility, looks on impassively as the three figures recede down the street and Karl, clearing another low wall, cuts another corner to his left and disappears from view. As so often in Straub/Huillet, the complexity of the shot is enriched by such incidental details as the sounds of offscreen traffic, patterns of reflected sunlight on the pavement and the passing of cars in the uttermost depths of the frame.

In terms of what 'happens' in the above examples, I would suggest that the Eisenstein – even more than the Warhol – comes closest to the absolute bare minimum, comprising as it does the isolated image of an inanimate object uninflected by peripheral/incidental details, the 'event' in this avowedly rarefied instance consisting simply of the represented presence of said object for a specific period of time.

At the opposite end of the scale, and my citation of *Touch of Evil* notwithstanding, it is not my intention that this essay be necessarily devoted to those rare shots whose exceptional virtuosity earns them an honoured place in film history. Rather,

having sketched in some parameters for what a shot can be, my principal concern is with any shot whatsoever and with the place which a single shot can occupy in any given film.

At this point I would like to introduce a few basic concepts derived from an article by André Gaudreault entitled “Film, Narrative, Narration: The Cinema of the Lumière Brothers”<sup>4</sup> which I have summarised and somewhat re-ordered as follows.

Cinema is the heir of photography. At the modern standard rate of shooting and projection, one second of motion picture footage comprises 24 individual still photographic images, otherwise known as ‘photograms’, which, when shown in rapid succession, produce the familiar illusion of movement on which the cinema is founded. It is, however, essential to this illusion that we do not perceive these individual constituent images as such, hence Christian Metz’ contention that “the cinema is not a machine for the purpose of combining photograms, but rather for suppressing them and rendering them imperceptible.”<sup>5</sup>

A sequential succession of individual frames thus brings us to the basic unit of cinematic representation *per se*: the individual shot. As the title of his essay indicates, Gaudreault is concerned, in part, with the issue of what can be said to constitute a cinematic ‘narrative’. His approach to this question entails a relatively complex chain of reasoning which can, for present purposes, be circumvented by reverting to my opening statement: that, in any given shot, something happens. Furthermore, “it suffices that a statement relate an event, a real or fictitious action (and no matter what its intensity or its quality), for it to come under the category of narrative”.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, within these terms of reference, any individual shot does indeed constitute what Gaudreault christens a “micro-narrative”.

Whereas the first films in the history of cinema consisted of precisely one single shot, the conceptual transition to ‘a film’ as commonly understood today (as for the last 90 years or so) – ie a complex assembly of several hundred shots lasting some 90 minutes or more – entails an accompanying shift to a second narrative level deriving from the articulation of the constituent shots to form the “macro-narrative”.

However, whilst the macro-narrative (or film) owes its existence to the sum total of micro-narratives (or shots) of which it is composed, they remain two distinct species whose interactions are not entirely complementary since

“the second level can only operate by tending to cover up the first: spectators are not aware of watching a huge number of micro-narratives being linked together and accumulating piece by piece to create a macro-narrative. In other words, the macro-narrative is formed not by the micro-narratives being added together but by their being systematically disregarded as such.”

Hence, Metz' contention concerning the relationship between the photogram and the shot is echoed at a different level in that between the shot and the film, a point confirmed by Metz himself: "The sequence does not string the individual shots; it suppresses them".<sup>8</sup>

I am kino-eye, I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine,  
show you the world as only I can see it.<sup>9</sup>

Dziga Vertov

Notwithstanding archival discoveries as yet unknown and neglected pioneers as yet unlauded, the genre of the single shot film which inaugurated the cinema seems still to us today to have found its most perfect expression in the work of the Lumière Brothers. Indeed, the Lumière films appear to us today as - simultaneously, paradoxically - both old *and* new. On the one hand, the fact that they convey fragments of an era which is now more than a century removed from us renders their every detail of more than usual interest for what they can tell us of this now remote age, the first to be thus preserved. At the same time, they seem in some improbable way to have retained something of their newness as amongst the very first examples of cinema. One may quite reasonably object that this is merely the spurious effect of an anecdotal association – the myth of 'the first film' – but it is hard to resist the feeling that this perception of newness is, in some way, actually inherent in the films themselves. It is for reasons such as these that the Lumière films elicit an exceptional quality of attentiveness from those who care to look at them.

Over the years, reaction to these films has ranged from the naïve to the sophisticated, leading to their being characterised either as unmediated slices of life 'as it really is' or as the product of calculated authorial manipulation. In truth they can be said to exist between the twin poles of the willed and the unforeseen such that any individual title may be assigned an intermediate position more or less close to one or the other. A concise practical illustration of this can be found in the film *Barque sortant du port* (*Boat Leaving the Port*, Lumière Catalogue N° 9) shot personally by the 30-year-old Louis Lumière in the summer of 1895<sup>10</sup>, the year in which the Lumière Cinématographe first became operational.

In considering the work of the Lumières one can readily devise a hypothetical formula to describe something of the form and content of a number (but by no means all!) of their films; that is (to borrow once more from M Gaudreault): "the film opens, presents one action through to its conclusion, and then ends".<sup>11</sup> Thus in *Barque*, we open on a typically elegant composition of a body of water, stretching from the bottom of the image clear to the horizon, into which juts a stone jetty half way down the right hand edge of the frame, unobtrusively balanced by a pale silhouetted headland opposite. As the film begins a small boat is already entering from the bottom right corner propelled by two oarsmen

seated facing the camera at the far end of the boat; a third man sits facing them at the opposite end, his back to the camera. A group of two women and two little girls looks on from the jetty. In conformity with our template, it is clearly the intention that the boat should pass via the centre of the frame along a crescent-shaped path around the far side of the jetty and beyond the view of the camera, a trajectory perfectly tailored to the standard 17-metre/sub-60 second reels with which the Cinématographe was equipped. However, as the boat is about to round the jetty, powerful swells on a choppy sea sweep the vessel back centre-frame, whereupon the film ends.

In a sense the film is a failure: the template, which in this case can be reasonably assumed a close match for the author's actual intention, has not been fulfilled. With limited reel capacity and no recourse to editing<sup>12</sup>, Lumière began cranking his camera at a given moment from which there was no turning back. In point of fact, however, his expectations were not dashed but exceeded in terms of capturing a moment of the unforeseen whose dramatic nature would not, moreover, have been lost on contemporary audiences, albeit that the film ends on a curious moment of suspension.

A somewhat similar phenomenon can be observed in the case of *Repas de bébé* (*Baby's Meal*, Cat N° 88, Louis Lumière, Spring 1895), one of the most artfully composed titles in the Lumière canon. Andrée Lumière, the titular baby, sits centre-frame in her highchair flanked by parents Auguste (brother of Louis) and Marguerite.<sup>13</sup> The three are seated facing the camera in the grounds of their house at Monplaisir, Lyon<sup>14</sup> at a table placed parallel to the picture plane. Behind them a corner of the house recedes into the background left to right about two thirds of the way into the frame, broken up vertically by several windows, the right-most of which is centred over the baby's head, whilst the window ledge forms a diagonal at some 30° to the table. Various objects, at first glance casually disposed across the table are, on inspection, arranged with scrupulous compositional intent, notably a cafetièrre on a silver tray placed parallel to the window ledge and two cognac bottles and a cup and saucer which edge in from bottom right along a second diagonal which, projected, meets that of the window ledge in an apex precisely coinciding with Andrée's head. In the deep background at top right, behind M<sup>me</sup> Lumière's left shoulder is an area of trees and shrubbery balanced on the left by additional, potted, foliage behind Auguste.

All this compositional artifice in no way detracts from the 'discreet charm' of this casually engaging domestic scene as Auguste attentively feeds his young daughter who in turn offers a biscuit to an unseen bystander, her apparently spontaneous gesture serving as an entrée into the mysteries of offscreen space. However, if frequently cited legend is to be believed<sup>15</sup>, the film's initial audiences were struck above all by the foliage stirring in the breeze in the background. Just as *Barque sortant du port* captured an unforeseen turn of events, so in *Repas de bébé* an unheralded incidental detail proved an unexpected rival to the supposed main centre of interest.

It is a truth insufficiently acknowledged that cinema is the work of machines.<sup>16</sup> The self-evident care with which *Repas de bébé* was composed notwithstanding, one presumes that the audience's fascination with the moving leaves was not something which Louis Lumière would have anticipated. Thus, it is my contention that this represented a 'discovery' available only after the fact of recording the images by way of the camera's indiscriminate machine perception which, unlike human perception, is capable of devoting unwavering attention (subject to focus) to every square inch of a given field of view. (Similarly, as Italian critic Bruno Di Marino has observed<sup>17</sup>, Andy Warhol's *Empire* offers us an experience which is only available through the intermediary of a machine, ie: no human being would be capable of staring at the Empire State Building for eight hours in life. In a darkened cinema it is just about conceivable.)

It is in the indiscriminate recording in film after film of innumerable incidental fortuitous details that the work of the Lumières really comes into its own. The fact that they appear to have been content to work within fairly narrow technical and aesthetic parameters, and been largely uninterested in extending the language of cinema in the way D W Griffith or even George Albert Smith were to do, lends their work something of the purity and force of a conceptual artwork expressible thus: "at time x in location y I will set my apparatus in motion for a standard duration z thereby recording whatever may impinge upon a predetermined field of view".

Whilst revolutionary Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov would bring a panoply of innovative cinematic techniques to bear on his project for what he termed "the communist decoding of the world"<sup>18</sup>, I would argue that his description of the "kino-eye", quoted above, was already applicable at the very dawn of cinema to the films of the Lumière Brothers, ie: as products of a machine – the Cinématographe – which shows us the world as only a machine can see it.

It is not possible to step into the same river twice.<sup>19</sup>

Heraclitus

The Lumière films might be said to exemplify the micro-narrative *par excellence* and yet, as stated at the start of this essay, in every conceivable shot something happens, something is recorded and so, in theory, any shot can potentially be viewed according to the same mindset we bring to the work of the Lumières.

The fact that this is, generally speaking, no longer possible when shots are incorporated in a film as conventionally understood is due in large part to the effect of narrative itself in the sense that: a story is a narrative; that a line of argument in a documentary is also a kind of narrative; and that the term narrative applies ultimately to any kind of logic governing the articulation of shots within a larger structure.

Narrative might be described as something which exists in the interstices between shots or which hovers above the unspooling ribbon of shots laid end to end in the editing process; something abstract which dominates the fragments of concrete reality recorded and contained in each individual shot, giving motivation and direction to artefacts which, released from this articulation, have their own character and integrity which is of an order utterly different to the imposed logic to which they are subordinated (one should, however, bear in mind that the overwhelming majority of shots are conceived from the outset as parts of a greater whole, a fact which arguably compromises, but certainly affects, their status as documents of recorded reality). In a conventional narrative film, this logic has a tendency to make us 'skim' individual shots so that we only perceive such information as is essential to follow the narrative thread. Thus it is that to concentrate on a single shot from such a film entails a movement from the *general* to the *specific*.

I would venture that at the heart of this issue lies a fundamental problem faced by early filmmakers when they undertook the creation of progressively longer and more complex films, namely: how to manage the change from one shot to another or, to put it another way, to tame the inherent discontinuity of the multi-shot film. The success and durability of the resultant system of 'continuity editing' which eventually emerged is a tribute to the ingenuity of all those who contributed to its development. However, as my previous remarks have already indicated, this success was achieved to the detriment of the autonomy of the individual shot. (Confirmation of this trait of so-called 'classical' cinema can be found in veteran Hollywood cinematographer Leon Shamroy's remark, apropos of the lengthier shots deemed necessary with the advent of widescreen formats in the early 1950s: "this won't be apparent to most audiences because any well-edited film looks like one long uninterrupted strip of film anyway".<sup>20</sup>)

Whilst such considerations offer up distinct echoes of old debates concerning the relative merits of montage versus mise en scène forever associated with the distinguished film theorist André Bazin, it is not my intention to revisit them here. Rather my aim is to examine the possibility of a more equitable dispensation between the micro- and macro-narrative, to which end I now turn to a brief consideration of the work of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet.

As Barton Byg has observed, Straub/Huillet "have consistently stressed that each of their films begins with a place, a location, and is built from there"<sup>21</sup>, an approach which Straub contrasts with those he terms "the paratroopers [...] people who simply fall from the sky somewhere and boom, the camera is running already. They film something they have never even seen. They've never taken time to look at it. And to show something, one must have seen something. And to see something, one must have looked at it for years at a time."<sup>22</sup>

Of equal importance is their associated insistence on live sound recorded simultaneously with the image and their eschewal of the fabricated sound effects

and post-synchronised/re-recorded dialogue predominant throughout the film industry. The only exceptions to this rule are the occasional use of voiceover narration and a generally sparing use of pre-recorded music (the latter practice should however be contrasted with their several films based on pre-existing musical works and featuring a preponderance of live synchronous musical performance). Furthermore, Straub/Huillet might be said to foster a 'non-hierarchical' perception of sound according to which all manner of live ambient sounds are made available to the auditor-spectator under the implicit assumption that they are not inherently less important than the sound and signification of human speech. This attitude extends to all aspects of their work and amounts to a truly pantheistic philosophy of filmmaking, as evinced in Straub's following remarks:

"I suppose it comes from a long tradition of filmmaking, American films and others, that everything in the frame is not seen as equally important. Most American films are humanist, whereas we are trying to make films where the men in the frame are no more important than a small stone, rock, or a blade of grass, a breath of wind, a cicada, or a bird that passes."<sup>23</sup>

These tendencies acquired yet greater emphasis during the making of *Der Tod des Empedokles* (*The Death of Empedocles*, 1986), as Huillet has explained:

"It was torture to decide which takes to use, because we had at least four good ones of every shot. [...T]he light was very fluid and changeable [...]. So in the end we made four versions of the film, with the same shots but different takes, so you get different light, different sounds, and even the actors are different according to whether the sun is shining in their faces or the wind is blowing."<sup>24</sup>

Thus the film instituted a policy of multiple versions which has been applied to many of the directors' subsequent films (including *Sicilia!*, 1998 and *Une Visite au Louvre*, 2003) and which serves to underline what one might call the Heraclitean hyper-specificity typical of their work. This policy is, moreover, entirely in keeping with the ecological ethos which underpins their oeuvre. In Straub's words: "art against waste".<sup>25</sup>

Straub/Huillet's insistence on the equality of significance granted to every detail in the audio-visual field bears obvious similarities to my earlier comments in respect of the Lumière films, comments which apply principally to questions of *mise en scène*. However, I would argue that the films of Straub/Huillet are every bit as distinctive – if not more so – in terms of montage, by virtue of the exceptionally fine balance achieved in the articulation of shots between continuity and discontinuity, thus granting maximum integrity and autonomy to each individual shot without undermining the film's ability to function as a complex signifying entity.

A thoroughgoing analysis of Straub/Huillet's editing style is a highly complex undertaking far beyond the scope of this essay but it may still be possible, through consideration of a few specific aspects of their technique, to rise above the level of mere assertion. In particular, the aforementioned balance between continuity and discontinuity can be confirmed with reference to one such aspect, namely their characteristic practice of frequently shooting all the shots in a given scene – or, in the case of *Antigone* (1991), an entire film! – from a single, scrupulously chosen camera position.<sup>26</sup> This position having once been determined, the composition of each individual shot can then be achieved by a) pivoting the camera about its axis and/or b) changing the focal length of the lens to arrive at a wider or narrower field of view, which latter option also allows for the isolation/enlargement of a particular spatial segment – for a close-up, for instance. Thus the integrity of the space is preserved and an actual, true continuity achieved as opposed to the fabricated, illusory variety more commonly found in films.

On the other hand, it is equally characteristic that Straub/Huillet insist on the fundamental truth that cinema is composed of *fragments*, a truth which is honoured by the fact that shots obtained by the method just described are also frequently composed without any spatial overlap between one shot and another, this being just one amongst a whole repertoire of devices by which the filmmakers establish the requisite degree of *discontinuity* to ensure that each shot, each micro-narrative, retains its autonomy and remains perceptible in itself as a unique “extract” of time and space”.<sup>2</sup> It is by such means that Straub/Huillet have achieved the singular feat of creating films which maintain a perfect balance between perception at the micro- and macro-narrative levels.

To Danièle Huillet

1 May 1936 - 9 October 2006

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The following text is a revised version of an essay which previously appeared in Andrew Bracey (ed, uncredited), *Andrew Bracey: Freianlage*, Manchester: Castlefield Gallery Publications, 2007. Special thanks to Andrew Bracey and to Kwong Lee, Director of Castlefield Gallery, in recollection of a happy and fruitful collaboration.

<sup>2</sup> “Direct Sound: An Interview with Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet” in Elisabeth Weis and John Belton (eds), *Film Sound: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p 152. [Corrected] translation by Bill Kavaler from longer French version in *Cahiers du cinéma* 260-261, Oct/Nov 1975, pp 48-53 itself translated by Marianne Di Vettimo from Italian original in *Gong* music journal (date unknown). Interview conducted by Enzo Ungari.

<sup>3</sup> As with all Warhol's silent films, *Empire* was shot at 24 frames per second (fps) for projection at 16 fps – ie in relatively slow motion. The specified duration refers, therefore, to the running time as projected rather than the running time as shot. Filming commenced at dusk on Saturday 25 July 1964 at approximately 8:10pm from a vantage point in the offices of the Rockefeller Foundation in the Time-Life Building and concluded at approximately 2:30am the following day: a period of some 6 hours, 20 minutes. Were it to be shown at the original shooting speed, the film would last some 5 hours, 23 minutes leaving 57 minutes unaccounted for, a discrepancy presumably attributable to the time taken to change reels (the film comprises 10 reels of 16mm film, each with a running time of around 32 minutes at 24 fps or 48 minutes at 16 fps). Confusion between the shooting time and the projection time of *Empire* has occasionally given rise to the misapprehension that the film depicts a period extending from dusk to dawn, an error which I myself committed in the original version of this essay. In fact, far from culminating in the first light of a new day, the film ends in darkness, the floodlights on its principal subject having been extinguished around 1:50am, leaving the film's last projected hour or so almost completely black. For a detailed discussion and clarification of the pertinent issues see Callie Angell, *The Films of Andy Warhol: Part II*, New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1994, pp 15-18, upon which the above remarks are based.

<sup>4</sup> In Thomas Elsaesser (ed), *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative* (London: BFI, 1990, reprint 1992), pp 68-75 (essay translated from French by Rosamund Howe). Referred to hereafter as "Gaudreault".

<sup>5</sup> Christian Metz, *Language and Cinema*, trans Donna Jean Umiker-Sebeok (The Hague: Mouton & Co, 1974), p 191; quoted (with minor error) in Gaudreault, p 74, n 28.

<sup>6</sup> Jacques Aumont, Alain Bergala, Michel Marie and Marc Vernet, *L'Esthétique du film* (Paris: Fernand Nathan, 1983), p 77 (my translation); quoted, in a different rendition, in Gaudreault, p 71.

<sup>7</sup> Gaudreault, pp 72-3.

<sup>8</sup> Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p 45; quoted in Gaudreault, p 74, n 28.

<sup>9</sup> Annette Michelson (ed), *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, trans Kevin O'Brien (London & Sydney: Pluto Press, 1984), p 17. Referred to hereafter as "Vertov".

<sup>10</sup> Attributions, dates and catalogue numbers for the Lumière films are derived from the filmography in Vincent Pinel, *Louis Lumière: inventeur et cinéaste* (Paris: Nathan, rev edn 1994), pp 112-122.

<sup>11</sup> Gaudreault, p 69.

<sup>12</sup> "No recourse to editing": this is, to the best of my knowledge, true of those films shot personally by Louis Lumière himself. However, exceptions do exist amongst a small minority of the films shot by trained Lumière operatives, eg *Accident d'automobile*. Essentially a trick film edited 'in the camera', this title is featured on *The Lumière Brothers' First Films* (Kino Video DVD, 1998) where it is ascribed Catalogue N° 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Pinel, p 39.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Eg: Barry Salt, commentary to BFI compilation *Early Cinema: Primitives and Pioneers* (2-vol VHS edition, no date) and Pinel, p 39.

<sup>16</sup> Cf Robert Bresson's encomia to "camera and tape recorder" in his *Notes on the Cinematographer*, trans Jonathan Griffin (London: Quartet, pbk edn 1996), pp 26, 105, 112 & 129.

<sup>17</sup> Bruno Di Marino, introduction to 1-hour extract from *Empire* included on *Andy Warhol: 4 Silent Movies* (Raro Video DVD, 2004).

<sup>18</sup> Vertov, p 42.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted with commentary and scholarly references in Jonathan Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (London: Routledge, rev edn 1982, reprint 1996), p 66.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in David Bordwell, Janet Staiger & Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960* (London: Routledge, pbk edn 1988), p 362.

<sup>21</sup> Barton Byg, *Landscapes of Resistance: The German Films of Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p 20.

<sup>22</sup> In Manfred Blank's film *L'insistance du regard/Die Beharrlichkeit des Blicks* (Hessischer Rundfunk/Arte, 1993); quoted in Byg, p 21.

<sup>23</sup> Ellen Oumano, *Film Forum: Thirty-Five Top Filmmakers Discuss Their Craft* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985), p 112.

<sup>24</sup> Julian Petley, "Etna & Ecology: Straub/Huillet's 'Empedocles'", *Sight and Sound*, Summer 1990, p 150. For a partial inventory of the differences between the four versions see Byg, p 180.

<sup>25</sup> "Kunst gegen Verschwendung", comment during public discussion at Filmmuseum Potsdam, 21 February 1992; quoted in Byg, p 180.

<sup>26</sup> This technique is described by Straub in Pedro Costa's documentary portrait of the couple: *Onde jaz o teu sorriso? (Where Does Your Hidden Smile Lie?)*, 2001 which shows them in the process of editing their 1999 film *Sicilia!*. Available on DVD with English subtitles from the Portuguese website [www.assirio.pt](http://www.assirio.pt). See also Byg, pp 21, 193-6 & 226-9.

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