Jean-Luc Godard's diptychs.
Rethinking cinema through the essay film

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Enunciative Devices of the European Francophone Essay Film

Abstract

The beginning of Jean-Luc Godard's essayistic practice is intrinsically linked to the use of the diptych device. Thus, a previous work is the cause of an essay film that aims to reflect on the cinematic practice carried out. This article aims to analyse the use, function, and evolution of this device in the beginning and consolidation of the Godardian essay film. While *Camera-eye* (1967) offers a prefiguration of this new filmic form in relation to *La Chinoise* (1967), *Letter to Jane* (1972) results in its first realisation concerning a previous fiction, *Tout va bien* (1972), in order to continue the reflection on the intellectuals' role in revolution. Thanks to the decisive arrival of video technology, essential for the essay film practice, *Ici et ailleurs* (1976) takes up the material of the never released film *Jusqu'à la Victoire* to generate self-criticism in militant practice. Finally, with *Scénario du film Passion* (1982), Godard offers a new subsequent essay film that generates both temporalities, before and after the creation, in order to offer an essential self-portrait of the audiovisual essayist. This series of diptych works reveals a hypertextual audiovisual thinking process that rethinks cinematic practice.

Keywords: essay film, thinking process, diptych, interstice, rhetorical elements.

1. Introduction

The filmic form of the essay film is deeply linked to the figure of Jean-Luc Godard, its highest representative together with Chris Marker, in the francophone sphere. As the materialisation of the audiovisual thinking process carried out by one or more subjectivities, the essay film will involve both the hybridisation of materials and the self-reflective nature of the result. As he states in his *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1988-1998), the culminating work of this filmic form, it materialises as "a form that thinks." The essay film can only be understood from the experience of cinematic modernity and the appearance of the time-image theorised by Gilles Deleuze (1985). It is the autonomy between visual image and sound image that reveals the notion of interstice between both and also among images and sounds. Thus, the essay film develops an audiovisual thinking process from the relationship of different materials, containing two complementary sides: the "parataxic thinking" defined by Josep Maria Català (2014) and the "interstitial thinking" theorised by Laura Rascaroli (2017). Jacques Rancière analyses *Histoire(s) du cinéma* from the concept of sentence-image, which combines this dual nature of the audiovisual thinking process: "The sentence is not the sayable and the image is not the

visible. By sentence-image I intend the combination of two functions that are to be defined aesthetically –that is, by the way in which they undo the representative relationship between text and image" (2009, 46). Thus, this thinking image oscillates "between two poles, dialectical and symbolic [...] between the image that separates and the sentence which strives for continuous phrasing" (58).

This article aims to analyse how the beginning of Godard's essay film creation is intimately linked to the device of the diptych; an enunciative device rarely used but of extreme interest, in which the essay film is then generated from the reflection on a previous work. While *Deux ou trois chose que je sais d'elle* (1967) and *La Chinoise* (1968) are situated in the space of fiction, although they contain essayistic elements, Godard begins the filmic form with the short film *Camera-eye*, belonging to the collective film *Loin de Vietnam* (1968). For the first time, his voice and his self-portrait expose a subjective reflection that aims to be developed in an audiovisual way. This first, incipient exercise of audiovisual thinking is completely linked to *La Chinoise*, the film he has just ended and on which he wants to reflect. However, this exercise of subjective reflection is interrupted by his experience of militant cinema as part of the Dziga Vertov Group, in which precisely authorial subjectivity is removed in pursuit of an ideological expression and a revolutionary cinematic practice. The group activity ends, and Godard's second essay film, *Letter to Jane* (1972), co-directed by Jean-Pierre Gorin, is born again from the reflection generated by the creation of *Tout va bien* (1972). A finished fiction film generates the need for an essay film that reflects on it, due to the feeling of failure about its result. As Godard himself explains in *Voyage à travers un film Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (1981): "I find the truth from the mistake […] the image is interesting because it does not show you the truth, it shows you the mistake. And that it is necessary to build another afterwards, and that it is the whole that will restore justice." The beginning of the new stage in Godard's creation is completely determined by two facts: the collaboration with Anne-Marie Miéville and the use of video technology. Due to its possibilities of manipulation in editing, video becomes the suitable nature to the essay film, since it allows to use different materials and manipulate them as well as enabling all kinds of interactions with the written text. *Ici et ailleurs* (1976) inaugurates this stage. Godard's third essay film in diptych, on this occasion co-directed by Miéville, is generated, once again, as the analysis of a previous film experience: the film *Jusqu'à la Victoire* by the Dziga Vertov Group. The piece was never released, but multiple montages were made, and it meant a kind of trauma for Godard. Then, the filmmakers define the essence of the

diptych device regarding the essay film: "rethinking about that." Later, Godard explores the device as an exercise of audiovisual reflection prior to the film creation. *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (1979) aims to explore the objectives of the future fictional work. This same exercise is repeated with *Passion, le travail et l'amour. Introduction à un scénario* (1981) and *Petites notes à propos du film Je vous salue, Marie* (1983). I will argue that these three essay exercises, prior to the fictional films on which they want to reflect, lack the materiality needed to create the audiovisual thinking process defining Godard's essay work. Thus, the filmmaker cannot *rethink about that* as in the previous pieces, since the *elsewhere* defining the essay film does not exist yet. This fact implies that the thinking process losses its audiovisual features. This necessary differentiation between essay films made before and after the work they reflect on finds confirmation in *Scénario du film Passion* (1982). Once again, the essay film generated as the reflection on a film already completed finds the essential materiality for its realisation in it, showing the key differences between the prior and subsequent pieces. In this way, I will analyse the works cited in order to conclude the characteristics of this enunciative device, the diptych, which by its nature –generated in reference to another work– is revealed as an almost inherent nature of the essay film, as indicated by Jean-Louis Leutrat: "I think the form of the diptych is perfectly suited to the essay 'about' cinema. Why? Because it reveals something about the functioning of cinema, at least as we project it imaginatively: the principle of communicating vessels (one reel gets empty while the other gets filled, the vampirism of cinema...)" (2004: 242).

2. *Camera-eye*: Retransmit the revolutionary cry through fiction

Godard uses the first-person enunciation for the first time in *Camera-eye*, his participation in the collective feature film *Loin du Vietnam*. As Jacqueline Meppiel, editor of the film, recounts in the interview collected by Laurent Vernay (2015: 105), and confirmed by Sébastien Layarle (2008, 2016) and David Faroult: "He made […] some shots for his contribution to the collective film *Loin du Vietnam*, accompanied by a recorded text, with rushes from *La Chinoise*. He provides these few shots in which he films around his camera or films some details, and he entrusts the whole to Jacqueline Meppiel and Chris Marker who will ensure the editing for him" (2018: 111-112). These facts raise two questions of enormous interest to the analysis. First, Godard's contribution is based on the diptych: fictional material from *La Chinoise* and documentary material from a voice-recorded reflection that can undoubtedly be referenced to the previous creation. Second,

the person in charge of the editing, including material filmed in France and Vietnam and other archival materials, is Chris Marker. Therefore, Godard's first first-person cinematic expression, and also the first materialisation of his self-portrait, which will become the prefiguration of the Godardian essay film, owes its montage to the other great name of the francophone essay film, who in turn, at the moment, has already made two essay films: *Lettre de Sibérie* (1958) and *Si j'avais quatre dromadaires* (1966). Thus, the piece includes both the expression of the filmmaker's subjectivity and the hybridisation of fiction, non-fiction, and archive materials. The question then is whether the short film manages to materialise an audiovisual thinking process, which in this case would belong to both authors: Marker as editor of the film, and Godard in the relationship between the recorded audio and two materials: the self-portrait and the rushes from *La Chinoise*. It is essential to point out the understanding that Marker shows of Godard's material regarding the criticisms of narcissism received:

> He had the lucidity to comment on this examination of conscience […] The franker and more modest he was in describing his internal conflicts, the more he was accused of being conceited. In my opinion, he arrived in the film to a very high degree of frankness and openness. He says, here I am, and submits to his own judgment as an artist rarely does (Ritterbusch, 1967: 67).

The first-person enunciation is produced on and off screen, offering the first self-portrait of the filmmaker who stands behind the camera, looking through it and manipulating its elements (Figure 1). Thus, Godard stands in the position of the *filmeur*, which will be the position of the militant filmmaker in the cinematic practice in which he will subsequently engage through the Dziga Vertov Group. However, after the militant cinema experience, when he takes up subjective expression and the first-person enunciation defining the essay film, he shows that the place of the essayist is not behind the camera but in the editing room. The essayist's work is not capturing the present images, but that of their subsequent review, a present of reflection that can only be subsequent to the past filming. In *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (1982) and *Scénario du film Passion* (1982), Godard already occupies that position, in which the essay film creation takes place in the editing room; a reflection that emerges from the viewing of the audiovisual material. It is also essential to point out the innovation of Godard's oral enunciation, which materialises as if it were a spontaneous reflection, radically

differentiated from the written and recited text, as a flow of consciousness –hesitations, interruptions, reformulations– that is, undoubtedly, another of the defining elements of his essay films. In this way, and still from the *filmeur's* position, Godard begins his reflection by generating a kind of intellectual shot/countershot between his image and that of the cinematic apparatus, between the filmmaker's subjectivity and the device that enables its audiovisual creation. This shot/countershot already materialises the social isolation of the intellectual, the break that is the object of the reflection. During this self-referential beginning, Godard recounts his ideas about filming in Vietnam and the refusal of the Vietnamese government to his visit, as he will tell later (Brenez and Faroult, 2006: 398-399). The break he reflects on has three realisations: between Godard and the Vietnamese people; between Vietnam and France; between the French society and Godard. These three breaks materialise in the simple and rational parataxis among the images belonging to the three spaces, which only alters at the end of the piece. It is the account of the rejection by the North Vietnamese government that moves the film towards the images of its people, more specifically those of a school, the scene of Godard's script idea. According to the filmmaker, it would be the rejection of Hanoi that triggered the filming of *La Chinoise* and in turn the appearance of its images in the short film: "This refusal from Hanoi proved to me that since I was living in Paris, there was no reason not to make films in Paris. So, I decided that in every film I made, I would talk about Vietnam, in one way or another, but rather *through* it." A total of nine shots from *La Chinoise* appear in the piece. The first four, at this moment, establish the opposition besides the archive images. They correspond to the moment of the fictional film in which the war conflict in Vietnam is addressed through the metaphor, as analysed by Jacques Aumont and Jill Forbes (1982). Besides the documentary image, the montage opposes the fictional image, the metaphor, in which Vietnam is embodied by Juliet Berto. She asks Kosygin – Soviet Union– for help while being attacked by the United States, incarnated as an armed tiger –in allusion to Mao's description of American capitalism as a paper tiger. We also see him speaking on the phone with Kosygin: "Hello, Kosygin, how are you?" In alternation with this fictional space, Jean-Pierre Léaud offers the reflection that explains the metaphor: Soviet communism has become an accomplice revisionism of American imperialism in its fight against the true communism, that of China and Vietnam.

Figure 1. *Camera-eye* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1968)

Godard's words become then the critical argument from which to analyse *La Chinoise*: "So, what I can do best for Vietnam is, I believe, rather than trying to invade Vietnam with a kind of generosity which necessarily makes things unnatural, it is, on the contrary, letting Vietnam invade us. And we are made to realise what place it takes in our everyday life, wherever we are." Thus, *La Chinoise* is the materialisation of the reflection he makes in *Camera-eye*: Not to show the images from Vietnam, but to offer one's own experience of what happens there, the impact in one's own life. This differentiation between the experience of revolutionary protagonists and committed intellectuals materialises in the parataxis between Juliet Berto's incarnation of Vietnam and the real Vietnamese soldier, on which the documentary shot makes a 360º movement; between the intellectual creation of metaphor and reality.

The reflection continues on the second break, between Vietnam and France, through the Rhodiaceta workers on strike. In this case, current images filmed by Bruno Muel (Layerle, 2008: 81): "For a Rhodiaceta worker, the struggle in North Vietnam should be in his mind when he is fighting with his union. He should draw lessons from it." Finally, the third break, between the French people and Godard, is generated again through the parataxis between the self-portrait material, another four shots from *La Chinoise* –repeating the different characters of the metaphor–, and the documentary material, both from France and Vietnam: "Me, as a filmmaker working in France, I am completely isolated from a majority part of the population, and most of all, from the working class […] The working class doesn't see my films. Between them and me, there's the same break as I have with Vietnam." It is essential to point out that the notion of the materiality of thinking already appears; the association between cinematic thinking and its materiality through the filmmaker's hands, regarding Denis de Rougemont's expression that Godard will repeatedly use, as in chapter 4A of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* or the prologue of *Livre d'image* (2018): "the true condition of man is to think with his hands" (Rougemont, 1936 147). Marker's montage reiterates Michel Deguy's photograph from *La Chinoise* through a close-up of his hands, followed by Godard`s manipulating the camera. It is precisely at that moment in *La Chinoise* that Anne Wiazemsky recognises the same break regarding the working class. Fiction and non-fiction continue to hybridise with a colour shot from a demonstration, in which we can recognise the protagonist of Alain Resnais' short film. Thus, Marker introduces a new variation of the reflection; a sort of insertion of the intellectual in reality while Godard says: "We don't know each other. I am in a sort of cultural prison and the Rhodiaceta workers are in a sort of economic

prison. Vietnam today is a stronger symbol of resistance than others. So, we must constantly talk about it."

The short film is already in its denouement and Godard's thinking process has not truly materialised in a specific audiovisual way yet. To conclude, he introduces a new idea that Marker's montage tries to *make audiovisual*. The filmmaker enunciates a quote from André Breton, in which the cry would symbolise the need for revolution. Godard's digression has been accompanied by the self-referential shot of the camera, which this time ends with an abrupt zoom in to emphasise that cry. The montage thus abandons the sobriety of the previous parataxis to show the distance between the developed rational reflection and the cry that is intended to be retransmitted: "We, in France, are not in a revolutionary situation. So, we must shout even louder. Maybe the others can shout less. Régis Debray doesn't shout, neither does Che Guevara. They are true revolutionaries. We are no longer or can't be yet. So, we must listen to these cries and retransmit them as often as possible. Cut." Thus, the break materialised through parataxis until this moment tries to become interstice, transmitting the abyss that encloses the coexistence of the distinct realities shown. The zoom in on the camera is followed by a dizzying montage of close-ups in which all the previous materials are mixed –including the ninth shot from *La Chinoise*–, and archival images take on a greater rawness. The verb shout appears again on a zoom in on the camera; the element with which the piece concludes since the role of cinematic creation concerning revolutionary struggles is the object of the reflection. Godard thus wonders about the cinematic nature of that cry that must be retransmitted. Is the fiction of *La Chinoise* the ethical-aesthetic way of giving voice to the revolutionary cry? Militant cinema of the Dziga Vertov Group will give a different answer, abandoning a subjectivity that will only be taken up again four years later in *Letter to Jane* (1972), together with Jean-Pierre Gorin. The importance of this first Godard's first-person enunciation is confirmed by its inclusion in chapter 3B of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, in which the filmmaker's self-portrait behind the camera is superimposed on the text TOI, and then crossfaded to an image of Charles Chaplin and Godard's own words: "our mistakes was to think it was a beginning." Thus, the filmmaker shows the relevance of that first self-portrait, symbolising the beginning of the essay film three decades earlier, which reaches its summit with *Histore(s) du cinéma*.

3. *Letter to Jane*: Analysing the social function of intellectuals

At the conclusion of the Dziga Vertov Group's activity, we find the second Godard's diptych creation, accompanied by Gorin, which we must consider as the first complete materialisation of the essay film, after the initial experience of *Camera-eye*. *Letter to Jane* responds to the essay film definition given by José Moure: relational operation of different cultural materials; revelation of a thinking in act; simultaneity of speech and reflection on itself; presence of the author's self, of the essayist; dialogic communication with the spectator (2004: 37-38). The film emerges as a reflection on a fiction film *Tout va bien*, based on a new material: a photograph of its protagonist, Jane Fonda. Months after the French premiere of *Tout va bien*, negatively received by critics and public, *L'Express* magazine published, on July 31st, 1972, a report on Jane Fonda's visit to Hanoi, in support of the North Vietnamese government and against U.S. intervention. For Godard and Gorin, the article's main photograph represents the synthesis image of the contradiction they try to address in *Tout va bien.* For this reason, they decide to include it in the brochure that accompanied the presentation of the film at its premiere in Venice, New York, and San Francisco festivals. In September, they make *Letter to Jane*: a fifty-minute essay film based on the famous photograph. The intention of its creators is that this work accompanies *Tout va bien* at its premiere and tour in the United States. At the end of that same year, a French version of the text, enunciated in English in the film by Godard's and Gorin's voice-overs, is published in the magazine *Tel Quel* under the title "Enquête sur une image" (Godard and Gorin, 1972: 74-90). I will quote the original text in English.

The film title defines the cinematic object created, an audiovisual letter addressed to Jane Fonda –the starring actress of *Tout va bien* and the militant actress starring the report published by *L'Express*– about the photograph-testimony of her visit to Hanoi. The letter aims to reveal the contradiction that this image contains, which the filmmakers wanted to address in *Tout va bien* and that they consider a failed attempt. The mistake made in fiction is tried to be corrected in the essay film. Through the semiotic analysis of the photograph and its dialectical confrontation with stills from the fiction film and other photo materials, the filmmakers try, from the field of the essay film, to address the same question that *Tout va bien* proposed in the fictional territory: What is it the social function of intellectuals –a militant actress in this case– in the revolution?, and to reveal the contradiction of its put in practice: Does Jane Fonda contribute to the cause of the Vietnamese people with the publication of this photograph or does she help the political

manipulation by U.S. government? In the dialectical spirit of Godard and Gorin, the epistolary device is revealed to be the most appropriate to create a discourse addressed to different recipients: Jane Fonda, spectators, critics, militants, and the empire. The work aims to reveal the silenced speeches –that of the Vietnamese people represented in the citizen that appears in the image– and to destroy the imperialist discourse that lies in the photograph thanks to its realisation and manipulation. This letter-film makes the direct appeal to the responsibility of intellectuals possible through its personification in the figure of Jane Fonda. In this way, the semiotic analysis of the photograph of the actress in Hanoi is the scientific experimentation addressed by the filmmakers to reach a political practice by confronting the analysed photograph with other images, especially those from the film *Tout va bien*. The dialectics between fiction and non-fiction, a constant back and forth between both territories, aims to formulate the thinking, to materialise it through the letter. The suitability of the epistolary device in the Godardian essay film is later confirmed in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (1982) (Monterrubio Ibáñez, 2018: 338-349).

The two reception levels indicated –personal-individual and public-collective– correspond to the discursive differentiation of the duality generated in the figure of Jane Fonda. While the actress-recipient will be addressed in the second person, the actress-photographic object will be invoked in the third person in order to create a first linguistic differentiation. This duality corresponds in turn to the opposition subjectivation-objectification: subjectification of the actress to whom they write in the second person and objectification of her photograph that they analyse from the third person. Thus, the epistolary device becomes a discursive tool capable of creating a series of interstices from which to generate a new film form that destroys the procedures of the movement-image to give rise to the Deleuzian time-image (Monterrubio Ibáñez, 2018: 89-130). The interstice is the void that allows the questioning of both visual and sound images. This revealed gap is materialised *in Letter to Jane* (and in other works by the Dziga Vertov Group), first of all, through the black image, thus emptying the cinematic matter to provokes reflection:

> "The absence of image", the black screen or the white screen, have a decisive importance
> in contemporary cinema. For, as Noël Burch has shown, they no longer have a simple
> function of punctuation, as if they marked a change, but enter into a dialectical relation
> between the image and its absence, and assume a properly structural value […] what is
> important is no longer the association of images, the way in which they associate, but the

interstice between two images […] which belongs neither to one nor the other, and sets out to be valid for itself (Deleuze, 1989: 200).

If we observe the appearances of the black screen in the film, we can determine its nature of interstice in relation to the epistolary elements and the creation of an audiovisual thinking. The spectator, reader of the letter, will produce a reflection from it. And the filmmakers, as writers of it, will receive the spectators' reading in response. In this way, it is possible to generate, through the letter, the political reflection that arises from the dialectics between fiction and non-fiction, between cinema and photography. The black screen represents the zero degree of the image from which a new audiovisual thinking must emerge and be constructed, also as a metaphor of the immaculate surface of the missive to be written: "The black image constitutes the most obvious plastic element in a non-mimetic, non-reproductive relationship of images to the world, since it is no longer a question of reproducing it but rather of changing it" (Brenez, 2018: 41). This filmic matter is constructed in a dialectical back and forth that continually refers to the essential reflection. *Letter to Jane* leads us through its reading, through the process of its writing, from the cinematic form to the construction of its thinking. Thus, Godard materialises the different functions of the black image exposed by Nicole Brenez and adds another one. Not only to "make time for reflection" (2018: 40) but to generate it audiovisually. The film is then divided into three distinct parts. The first is delimited by the identification of Jane Fonda as the epistolary addressee, which allows the presentation of the essay film and the enunciation of its purpose. The second part focuses on the analysis of the photographic image, moving the figure of Fonda from the addressee to the object, and incorporating the spectator not only as the recipient of the letter but of the photograph, which he/she is invited to observe under a new perspective. The third part makes the passage from scientific analysis to revolutionary political practice based on the conclusions of the former.

From the black screen, the filmmakers' voices present the photographic image on which the cinematic reflection must be built, which in turn is followed by a still from *Tout va bien*. In this way, the dialectics between cinematic image-fiction and photographic image-non-fiction is established: "We are going to see, if one may use the expression that way, how *Tout va bien* is working in Vietnam." The same premise expressed in *Camera-eye* is thus revealed. The oscillation between the photograph and the film frames is the starting point of the epistolary visual image, to which new dialectics will be added during

the thinking process development. Godard proposes the first step to analyse the photograph: "This photograph answers the same question that the film is asking: What part should intellectuals play in the revolution? To this question, the photograph gives a practical answer (the answer it gives is its practice)." The question posed by *Tout va bien* has a practical answer in the Hanoi photograph. That is to say, while cinematic fiction has remained in the theoretical field, photographic reality has imposed its practical answer. Next, three frames from *Tout va bien* summarise the dialectics pursued by the film: the couple made up of Suzanne and Jacques in the face of the political action of the Salumi workers' strike. The authors then discover the first manipulation that the photographic image can perform: proposing old questions, within the system, that prevent the necessary reflection to generate the revolution. The creation of new questions, therefore, will be the task of the revolutionary cinematic image, and it will be the task of *Letter to Jane*. Later, the parataxis between the photograph and the film stills is produced by means of a new procedure. A frame of *Tout va bien* does not change by hard cut to Fonda's photograph, as has happened up to that moment, but instead, the frame is revealed as a photograph when it is moved to the right of the frame to reveal Fonda's photograph. A new film image enters from the left of the frame to impose itself on the photograph. The two frames of the workers' strike, along with the photograph, offer the bond between France and Vietnam presented in *Camera-eye*. The immobility of thinking that photography represents is opposed to the mobility of reflection that cinema invokes. The materiality of Godard's thinking process will be represented by his manual manipulation throughout its entire development. While in *Camera-eye* the filmmaker manipulated the camera, now he displaces the visual elements that are presented in front of it. The spectator's reflection must focus on the social function of the cinematic medium through the dialectics between the photograph and *Tout va bien*. The filmmakers reveal the photographic nature as a built reflection of reality, which leads its interpretation and conditions the question it proposes. *Tout va bien*, however, tries not to manipulate reality nor its interpretation. While the photograph provides us with a pre-established designed answer, cinema enables us to reflect on the questions. Later, the reflection makes the audiovisual thinking advance through a photomontage. As said in *Camara-eye*, "letting Vietnam invade us," reality contaminates fiction, and the image of the Vietnamese civilian is inserted in a film frame in which Suzanne appears at her work (Figure 2). It is the presence of Jane Fonda in both materials –photographic and cinematic–, performing the same social function, which allows the dialectics proposed by the film.

Figure 2. *Letter to Jane* (Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin, 1972)

The second part is organised around the semiotic analysis of the photograph. The first section –*elements of elements*– collects the textual elements that, together with the image, make up the message conveyed by the publication of the photograph. Thus, the first dialectics between photograph and text is enunciated. The latter describes the realisation of the former and its content. The caption omits the presence of other elements external to the photographer –Joseph Kraft– and the actress, which is a first manipulation that is pointed out by the detail of the Vietnamese civilian and the complete image of which he is a part. The sound image referred to in the photo caption, and the visual image of Fonda show the displacement of meaning that occurs between the one and the other: "In fact, the text should not describe the photograph as 'Jane Fonda questioning,' but as 'Jane Fonda listening.'" The confrontation between photograph and text provides a forceful conclusion: the capitalist manipulation of the message from the Vietnamese people to the free world. The second section –*less elementary elements*– is restricted to the semiotic analysis of the photographic image in order to show how its manipulation depends on the cultural reality to which it is addressed: "So, on the one hand, the frame shows the star in a militant activity, and on the other, it focuses on the militant as a star, which is not the same thing. Or rather, which might be the same thing in Vietnam, but not in Europe or in the U.S." Later, a new photo from the report portrays Fonda with two Vietnamese actresses. This image is confronted with the photomontage previously shown, in which the face of the Vietnamese civilian is inserted next to Suzanne in the fiction film. In this way, the duplicity between the militant actress in Hanoi and the militant actress representing Suzanne Dewitt in the fiction film is also confronted with Vietnamese reality in both spaces: the reality of the civilian and the performance of the actresses. Godard and Gorin try to show how the message that the Vietnamese people want to convey is manipulated by U.S. capitalism. The photographic missive is thus intervened and rewritten, which in turn destroys the work that the actress does in other areas, such as the cinematic one in *Tout va bien.*

The filmmakers finally address the actress' performance in the photograph: "The facial expression of the militant in this photograph is, in fact, that of a tragic actress. A tragic actress with a particular social and technical background. Formed and deformed by the Hollywood school of Stanislavskian show-biz." Fonda's expression in the photograph is compared to stills from fictional films she acted in and also with her father's

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performances of her father, Henry Fonda. Hence, cinematic fiction and photographic non-fiction become indiscernible. This lack of differentiation produces the new dialectics that is generated from the black image: films stills from silent cinema stars are opposed to the image of death in Vietnam, as if the former see the latter. Then, Vertov's photograph introduces the importance of montage: "film = editing of I see." The impact produced by this confrontation is a clear example of the montage ideology that its creators profess and of the cinematic thinking process of modern cinema expressed by Deleuze: "Montage is in thought 'the intellectual process' itself, or that which, under the shock, thinks the shock […] The cinematographic image must have a shock effect on thought, and force thought to think itself as much as thinking the whole. This is the very definition of the sublime" (Deleuze, 1989: 158). The opposition moves to the dialectics between silent cinema actors and Hollywood actors: "each star of the silent screen has his own individual expression, and the wide popularity of silent movies was a real fact. On the contrary, as soon as films begin to talk as a New Deal, each actor begins to speak the same thing." The Cartesian "I think therefore I am" represents the homogenisation of Western thinking in all domains.

The third and last part of the letter includes the last two sections specified by the authors: *other elements of elements; putting together some elements*. Faced with the photograph already taken, and despite the manipulation that it has suffered, revolutionary political action is possible through its publication; a different way of making it known. This *other form* is the one attempted with *Tout va bien*, as opposed to the capitalist hegemonic form represented by the actress' photograph. Through Fonda's face, the authors return to the argument of the relationship between its expression and the Cartesian "I think therefore I am" used by Hollywood imperialism, and they finally state the conclusion about the failure of her social role as an actress: "One must realise that stars are not allowed to think. They are only social functions: they are thought and they make you think." The fourth section, *other elements of elements*, focuses on the analysis of the production and distribution conditions of the photograph, which are part of the revolutionary struggle: "The North Vietnamese are right in taking the risk of publishing this picture. Or rather, they have their reasons for doing so." For the first time since the beginning of the analysis, Jane Fonda is again addressed in the second person. Through this invocation, Godard and Gorin recover the individuality of the actress to show that it is her personally, as a militant public figure, that the North Vietnamese government asks for help and invites to Hanoi. The individual responsibility for the revolutionary struggle in all domains is thus pointed out: "As we look at the picture, here, then, we are freely

obliged to ask: Does this picture help us? And above all: Does it help us to help Vietnam? Vietnam forces us to ask this question." The fifth section, *putting together some elements*, ends the letter with a compilation of the political conclusions reached by the filmmakers after reading the photographic image. The visual image takes up the key oppositions that have built the letter. The first opposition collects the reading-reflection duality concerning the photograph and its confrontation with the spectator's reflective void, the black image. The decay between the revolutionary consciousness of the addresser of the photograph and that of its recipients causes the mutation between the message sent and the one received, through the social function of the militant actress: "In other words, she does not consider militant activity as an actress, even though the North Vietnamese invited her precisely as a militant actress." The second opposition, founder of the letter, is the one established between the photograph and *Tout va bien*, representing the two opposite ways of constructing an audiovisual language that helps the revolution. The third opposition, the one defined by the confrontation between the representations of imperialism and those of revolution, is generated through the image of Nixon and that of a Vietnamese combatant, followed by the dialectic Nixon-Fonda's image. It shows the imperialist manipulation of the Vietnamese revolutionary message through, again, the social role of a militant actress. In the written text published in *Tel Quel*, which extends beyond the film sound text, Godard and Gorin conclude: "That is reality, two sounds, two images, the old and the new, and their combinations. Because the imperialist capital says that two merge into one (and only shows a photo of you) and the social and scientific revolution says that one is divided into two (and shows how the new fights against the old inside you)." The political conception of Godard and Gorin's cinematic work is to understand the relationship between cinematic construction and reality not as a reflection of each other but as spaces for putting an ideology into practice. The purpose of *Letter to Jane* is none other than to unmask the imperialist manipulation of a revolutionary message, by creating a cinematic critical thinking that generates a political practice.

The evolution perceived between *Camera-eye* and *Letter to Jane* is due to the experience of militant cinema that separates them; two works that, from before and after the revolutionary experience, share their theme: the social function of the intellectuals in the revolutionary struggle. Godardian essay film draws on the experience of militant cinema since the latter develops and experiments with the elements that define the former: reflection; montage as a tool for the confrontation of images and sounds, which wishes to banish its immanentist perception; and the spectator as an active part of a dialogistic

practice. However, the Dziga Vertov Group films avoid personal subjective reflection, the individual thinking process, in favour of the praxis of a cinematic dialectical materialism that develops its theses without the subjective component. Thus, the essay film emerges from the irruption of subjectivity in the revolutionary cinematic experience, turning reflection into self-reflection and ideological practice into digression, into a thinking process. It is the reflection on how to make the cinematic practice a political action that generates the need to create a form that thinks. The essay film thus achieves its autonomy by leaving the territory of militant cinema from which it emerges (Monterrubio Ibáñez, 2016).

Letter to Jane, as the first complete materialisation of Godard's essay films, shows two *mistakes*, using Godard's expression, which will be corrected in the following essay film, thanks to the collaboration with Anne-Marie Miéville in the new stage of the filmmaker. First, Godard et Gorin's reflection lacks gender perspective, ignoring the essential implications of the fact that the photograph shows a woman: "A woman's face that does not reflect other women" and the meanings of Fonda's figure in the United States: "her meanings are highly contested, functioning in many different capacities: traitor, radical feminist, sex object, political activist, a symbol of the feminist awakening through the women's liberation movement" (Mauldin 2007: 75). The authors thus replicate patriarchal practices. They turn this omission into a personal reaction of the protagonist "as a woman" that lacks political dimension. They venture the White House will argue that the actress has been manipulated: "saying that the actress as, more or less unconsciously, blade into the enemy hands and that she is just reciting a text that she has learnt by heart," when in fact Nixon's reaction was actually quite different, and Fonda was accused of treason. That is, they deny the actress-militant her political empowerment beyond her militant commitment. Miéville's collaboration will be necessary, as I will analyse in *Ici et ailleurs,* so that the participation of feminine and feminist subjectivity inserts the gender dimension in the essayistic reflection. It will be materialised more concretely regarding the journalistic field in *Comment ça va* (1978). Second, the filmmakers do not address the analysis of their own failure in *Tout va bien*, they do not do any self-criticism. The criticism of Fonda consists of two arguments: the impossibility of differentiating between her identity as a militant and the role of actress-militant that the Vietnamese government asks her to perform; and the impossibility of offering a performance outside the imperialist coordinates of Hollywood cinema. However, the filmmakers do not address their possible mistakes as directors of *Tout va bien*: What is

the social function of the filmmakers in the film? Who helps revolution? *Ici et ailleurs* will also correct this error, as I will discuss below. As I have explained, In *Letter to Jane* Godard and Gorin make the most of the possibilities of the missive as an enunciative device of the essay film to the detriment of the diptych, since the analysis of the fiction film is not addressed, but rather the fiction film is used to reveal the duplicity and contradictions of the social function of the militant actress.

4. *Ici et ailleurs*: Rethinking militant cinema

After the militant experience and the epilogue analysed together with Gorin, *Ici et ailleurs* marks the beginning of the collaboration with Anne-Marie Miéville and of the video practice: "The first film of this association, *Ici et ailleurs* (1974), marks the beginning of a period of five years of innovative experiments in audiovisual communication (1974-1979) from their common base, the company Sonimage" (Faroult, 2006: 190). As already happened with *Letter to Jane*, the essay film emerges as the need to rethink a previous failed project, which in this case was never released. In 1970 Godard and Gorin travelled twice to the Middle East (Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria), in February and July, to shoot a film about the Palestinian liberation struggle, financed by the Arab League and entitled *Jusqu'à la victoire*. Just weeks after the second trip, most of the people filmed died in the Black September massacre. Faced with this traumatic event, the film, which according to Gorin's statements, knew several edited versions, finally did not get released, and four years later it was taken up by Godard and Miéville to create an essay film that, since its genesis, materialises the audiovisual interstice from which the thinking process will emerge. *Ici et ailleurs* defines different *décalages* in addition to the spatial –France and Palestine– and the temporal –1970 and 1974. Interstices between the past documentary image and the present essay film; between actors and spectators, between the ongoing revolution and its defeat, between the capitalism visual image and the revolutionary sound image. Deleuze himself pointed out the relevance of the film in relation to the use of the interstice:

> *Ici et ailleurs* marks a first peak in this reflection […] in Godard's method, it is not a question of association. Given one image, another image has to be chosen which will induce an interstice between the two. This is not an operation of association, but of differentiation […] It is the method of BETWEEN, "between two images" […] Between two actions, between two affections, between two perceptions, between two visual

images, between two sound images, between the sound and the visual: make the indiscernible, that is the frontier, visible (Deleuze, 1989: 179-180).

In the first place, it is essential to analyse the innovation that involves the presence of two subjectivities, through which a totally new interstice is generated. While the two epistolary subjectivities from *Letter to Jane* were located in the same place, enunciating a shared reflection, the enunciative device generated by Godard and Miéville is much more sophisticated and of enormous interest for the possibilities of inscribing subjectivities and developing intersubjectivity. However, it has not been analysed in depth and described as simple dialogue. I argue that the film is not built in any case on the exchange of considerations of both filmmakers. Their analysis leads to conclusions of higher complexity and interest.

The film begins with Godard's enunciation, which Miéville repeats: "In 1970, this film was called Victory. In 1974, this film is called *Here and Elsewhere*, and elsewhere, and." Both subjectivities agree on this starting point, a sort of reference point for scientific analysis, from which the work develops. And both voices already establish their differentiation in relation to their later development. Godard's, accompanied by an electronic intertitle –the first of the new video possibilities–: "my, your, his/her image" and a material "and," while Miéville's presents the space-time parataxis. That is to say, Godard is situated in the space of the imminent reflection, while Miéville does so in a sort of objective reference system, of a scientific method with which to check on Godard's subjectivity and thinking process. This objectivity then makes her the translator of two characters filmed in Palestine –a man and a woman– while interspersing the five intertitles on which the previous practice of militant cinema would have been built. Thus, Miéville introduces the gender dimension absent in *Letter to Jane*, not as part of Godard's reflection, but as an examination of it, to point out its patriarchal and macho aspects. Therefore, it is essential to point out the differentiation between the electronic intertitles belonging to Godard's subjective reflection and the five printed and translated intertitles that also make up the objective reference system by Miéville: "The people's will / Armed struggle / Political work / The extended war / Until victory".

The filmmaker begins his reflection with the first *video collage* of the Godardian essay film: a photograph of Golda Meir and a drawing of the Palestinian revolution, which are hybridised thanks to the possibilities of the video, until the former disappears to reveal the latter. This controversial *collage* exemplifies the shock produced by the Deleuzian

differentiation defining the essay film: "It is a question of attributing, to a given image, a new image, to create a between-two that transports the thinking to the heart of the image. In this empty space, the image can be radically called into question" (Blumlinger, 2004; 65). Then, the Godardian intertitle appears for the first time, which could define all his diptychs practice: "Rethinking about it." It will reappear up to nine times, thus materialising the recurrence of the experienced trauma. The use of this electronic intertitle will take forward the reflection throughout the film. While Godard explains the subjective experience of the trip made in 1970, Miéville continues to translate the protagonists' words. Only in the conclusion will we understand the importance of this sort of scientific method procedure. Miéville's voice disappears (minute 5) and will not reappear until the conclusion (except for a small comment at minute 17), to demonstrate her presence as an objective witness to Godard's reflection, which she will *test* in the conclusion. Godard's voice, however, continues the subjective expression by taking up the five sentences shown in the intertitles and including them in his first-person account; in the reflection that has already begun, as a summation that explains the revolutionary thesis: "All the sounds, all the images, in that order. Saying: this is what was new in the Middle East. Five images and five sounds that hadn't been heard or seen on Arab soil." On this result stated by Godard: "until victory," the previous video collage appears again, now with an inscribed and inverted text, both horizontally and vertically: "If I die, / don't be / sad, / pick up my gun." Godard materialises a symbolic sentence-image of the traumatic experience that causes reflection; the problematisation of the inscription, its unintelligibility, as a realisation of the trauma that will only be revealed at the end of the film.

In opposition to the portrait of the French family sitting on the couch in the living room that we observed along with Miéville's voice, the mother appears accompanied by Godard's words in an unfocused foreground that becomes focused as she approaches the camera. The same procedure is repeated with the father. Again, facing the objective reference point conveyed by Miéville, Godard begins his subjective perception about the return to France with the filmed material: "In France, you soon don't know what to make of the film. The contradictions soon explode, taking you with them […] the contradictions soon break out, affecting you. I begin to see it affected me […] when this […] became that." In this way, the interstice between *this* –images of the Palestinian people in struggle– and *that* –images of Black September corpses– is pointed out (Figure 3). Godard

repeats this structure twice, inscribing the inverted electronic text again, materialisation of the trauma that gives rise to contradiction:

> A silence / that / becomes / deadly / because it's / prevented / from / being / alive
> A flood / of images / and / of sounds / that / hide / silence

Figure 3. *Ici et ailleurs* (Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville, 1976)

The filmmaker uses the text in its maximum possibilities: "It also implies the ability to treat written texts as images, an image, and the screen as a page. It implies removing writing itself from its own readability in order to turn it into the object of a 'seeable/readable,' which its plasticity in vivo guarantees in the time of inscription and unfolding" (Bellour, 1992: 222). Both texts, difficult to read at this moment, appear later alone on the black image. The reflection of the essay film, therefore, is confirmed as the subjective process necessary to overcome the trauma, to make the incomprehensible understandable.

The filmmaker then introduces a new element of the Godardian essay film that is taking shape. While in *Camera-eye* and *Letter to Jane* the audiovisual thinking was born exclusively from the parataxis between images and their photomontage, Godard now develops what I will call *the mise-en-scene of the thinking process*. In the first place, his hand on a calculator materialises the reflection on the evolution of the revolutionary struggle in the space of representation, by embodying it in a sum of revolutions through their dates, in which mistakes could have been made: "1789 + 1885 + 1968 = 5642 - 1936 = 3706 + 1917." Godard enunciates the interstices already addressed as addictions, first, between the image of a Palestinian revolutionary woman and the newspaper headlines; and as subtraction later, between the image of the French children in front of television and newspaper clippings. Both parataxes are modified by the interstice inserted between them: "and," "or"; between the possibilities of the Palestinian struggle as a sum, utopian materialisation, and the denial of capitalism as a choice and condemnatory subtraction. Perhaps the simplicity of the dialectics is the cause of the traumatic mistake: "Too easy and too simple to simply divide the world in two." Godard performs a second mise-en-scene of the thinking process. On this occasion, his hand writes a series of zeros on a blackboard that represent how the poverty of some supposes the wealth of others, offering a new sentence-image that we could define as a synthesis of the functioning of capitalism:

"That's how capital works. Something like that." It is necessary to point out here the importance of his hands, once again to think with the hands, as a metaphor for the materiality of the thinking process. The hands that manipulated the camera in *Camera-eye* are now the protagonists of this mise-en-scene.

Godard offers then a new advance of his reflection. Capitalism translates into the inability to see, showing the image of a charred corpse followed by the intertitle: "Learn to see not to read," and the image of mother and daughter looking through both cinema and photo cameras. It offers a new synthesis image of the necessary transformation between the image of the two watching television passively and their representation as creators of images, regaining the ability to be their own historians, as stated in *Tout va bien.* The thinking process continues as well as its mise-en-scene. The summation of revolutions now becomes the summation of the images of revolutions: image of 1917 + image of 1936 = image of 1968. Godard manipulates the video collage of an image of Lenin and another of the Front Populaire, to which one of Hitler is finally imposed. He makes again the summation that results in the image of the Palestinian revolution already shown, of its defeat, with the image of the corpse. To the compositions of the three previous images, the one of Golda Meir is added, showing Godard's position in the face of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. He exposes the confrontation between the Palestinian combatant and the French family, transferring the opposition capitalism-revolution to the realm of images: "Poor revolutionary fool. Millionaire in images of revolution. Poor revolutionary fool. Millionaire in images." It is one more step in the thinking process that will lead him to audiovisually enunciate the ethical-ideological conflict that provokes reflection and thus trying to solve it.

The mise-en-scene of the thinking process reaches the maximum relevance when Godard is able to stage the functioning of the chain of images of capitalism (American or Soviet); a reflection present in all the Dziga Vertov Group works that now reaches its peak. The five sentences of the initial intertitles are materialised in the five images previously referred to by the filmmaker, and which are now carried by five characters: the married couple, a man, a woman, and a young man. The chain of images is first presented from the spectator's point of view, and then its materialisation is staged. The five images carried by the characters pass in front of the camera in succession, without the possibility of stopping, as brilliantly shown by Godard, making each character draw the attention of the previous one with a tap on the shoulder, asking for way. Next, the characters-images pass for the second time in front of the camera, now accompanied by

their direct sound, showing the autonomy of both elements. A third movement shows the characters enunciating their respective sentence both in front of and behind the image. The previous direct sound is now replaced by the voices of the characters. In front of the camera, they add first the word "space"; behind it, they add "time," generating the sentence-image synthesis of the cinematic transformation: "a feeling of that space, that is time. And the film, which is a chain of images, gives a good account, through the images, of my double identity, space, and time. Each chained to the other like two production-line workers, which each is both the original and the copy of the other." As Català indicates, it is thus possible to make "the external space for showing the interior of the images with the true interior of them." In other words, it is not reflection that leads to images, but rather "images that distil thoughts." This decomposition gives rise to "conceptualisations from which rhetorical forms emerge that allow a type of reflection different from the one that supported the origin of the entire process" (Català, 2014: 523, 524, 531). Once the functioning of the chain of image materialised, and therefore assimilated, it is possible to ask the questions about it: "First question: How do you organise a chain?"; "Second question: But how do you find your own image in the order or disorder of others, with the agreement or disagreement of others? And how do you go about making your own image? Your brand image, in other words, an image that brands: An image that leaves traces." Next, the functioning of the chain of images that we have just witnessed, in its three variants, has its evolution through three slide devices where the hand, again, materialises the mise-en-scene of the thinking, changing the three images that are opposed. The direct sound appears and disappears as the slide in question lights up and goes out: "It's likely that a chain consists in arranging memories. Chaining them in a certain order. So that each can find its place in the chain. In other words, each finds his own image." Intellectual and ideological emancipation is thus synthesised in the ability of each individual to create, with his/her hands, his/her own images.

The opposition between the present French *ici* and the past Palestinian *ailleurs* continues by generating four scenes around the French family Godard now identifies with. The filmmaker acknowledges the mistake made in the past, and exposed in *Letter to Jane,* about the question-and-answer system of dialectical materialism that should reveal the contraction in order to overcome it: "It's not the answers that are wrong, it's the questions. Maybe we should abandon this system of questions and answers and find something else. Yes, we should find something else." The film gradually defines itself as a final reflection on the militant cinema to which Godard says goodbye. In this way, the

reflection continues to reach its core: the filmmaker's individual responsibility regarding the image created and the mistake made. That is, the theme from *Letter to Jane* reaches the first-person enunciation. Godard generates a new mise-en-scene of the thinking process, a symbolic sentence-image, giving a new meaning to the sentence "turn up the sound": "When you turn up the sound, how does it happen? Sometimes like this [man at bar, flipper]. And some like that [woman at home, radio] or like that [man in traffic jam, radio]." Then a new procedure takes place. While we had previously witnessed the mise-en-scene of the thinking process, now the latter is produced by analysing the former. While in the first case the mise-en-scene is the materialisation of reflection, in the second it becomes its starting point. Godard takes different scenes about the alienation of capitalism to analyse its functioning: "Two noises that move in relation to one another […] Always a movement at a point in time, where one sound takes power over the other. […] How did that sound take power? It took power because, at a given time, it was represented by an image." Capitalist power –sound– is imposed by creating an image that represents it and which in turn is represented by another sound. The thinking process then occurs when analysing different mise-en-scene taken from reality: silencing one sound by means of another, through the instrumentalisation of an image. Besides, this procedure occurs both in the international political space (Salem Bart, Henry Kissinger, and Richard Nixon) and in the most private and everyday spaces. Godard advances, in an impersonal way, the mechanism that led him to the mistake that provoked the essay film and that only Miéville will reveal in the conclusion. Therefore, the organic nature of the thinking process is revealed, on this occasion, through its bond with trauma. It cannot be produced in a univocal and direct way but in an oscillating manner, moving closer and further from the painful fact that causes it: "There is no essay that does not include the wandering of thinking [...] what we call digression and which is the first and last condition of thinking" (Ménil, 2004: 101). This same nature is what differentiates the subjective thinking process of the essay film from the ideological practice of militant cinema, which precisely eliminates this component.

While the materialisation of the thinking process as the creation of its own chain of images had previously realised through the three slide projectors that Godard's hand manipulated, now that device is replaced by four television monitors that broadcast different images. Some images already shown during the reflection are now mixed with others representative of capitalism. In this way, the manual control of the filmmaker disappears; that is, we become manipulated victims of a chain of images over which we

no longer have control, we can no longer manipulate them manually: "Little by little we are replaced by uninterrupted chains of images, slaving one another. Each image in its place, as are we, each in his/her place, in the chain of events over which we have lost all control." While the television images of capitalism are already produced in the continuity of the chain they belong to, and with their corresponding volume, the images of the film, those of the revolution of the *ailleurs*, flicker mutely on a monitor, materialising the difference in power between the two systems.

The different interstices created between the *ici* and the *ailleurs* now converge in a new sentence-image that contains all the previous ones, expressed in an intertitle: "Here (image) et elsewhere (sound)," the power of the image of the *ici* against the silenced sound of the *ailleurs*. Godard finally comes to the description of militant action in the cinematic field: the retransmission of the revolutionary cry that he talked about in *Camera-eye* and developed in *Letter to Jane* concerning the dissemination and manipulation of the revolution images. However, this time the analysis addresses his own practice: "We did what many do, record the images with the sound too loud. With any image. Vietnam. Always the same sound, always too loud […] The sound so loud, it ends up drowning the voice it wanted to draw out of the image." It is Godard's and Miéville's hands, alternately, that raise and lower the volume of the sound image two times each one. The appearance of Méville's hand materialises the intersubjectivity that follows, confirming the device proposed by the film. Thanks to her presence, a reference point outside the filmmaker's subjectivity, Godard's thinking process can cope with trauma. If Godard announces the abstract and impersonal account of what happened, it will be her who can refer to the concrete facts. Godard's thinking process, materialised through his hands, is now shared with another subjectivity, with other hands. Thus, reflection can develop through intersubjectivity, between the subjective vision of the lived experience and the objective pondering, between the unpronounceable intimate trauma and the external subjectivity that can relate it. The analysis becomes self-criticism to conclude the reflection when finally detecting the mistake made: the sound of that retransmission of the revolutionary cry was so loud that it drowned out the voice that wanted to be amplified. Hence, the mistake and the defeat of the cinematic practice are assumed. While *Camera-eye* concluded with the purpose of giving cinematic form to the revolutionary cry, *Ici et ailleurs* concludes with the assumption of defeat in that attempt.

Godard's reflection, the subjective audiovisual thinking process that he has carried out, concludes here. Then Miéville's voice reappears to confront Godard's subjective

reflection to the objectivity of her analysis as its witness: Godard drowned out the Palestinian voice while trying to amplify it. We observe the confrontation between the filmmaker's subjective description and Miéville's objective analysis. Godard describes the images shown; Miéville reveals its manipulation afterwards. The semiotic analysis of *Letter to Jane* is thus reproduced, but it is now Godard's practice that is analysed and criticised by Miéville. It is now a female subjectivity that questions male actions, reversing *Letter to Jane* structure. Up to eight images are subjected to this double system in which Miéville points out the manipulation present in all of them and clearly reveals the gender dimension of her criticism: in front of the theatrical performance of a girl; the learned speech of a woman; and the manipulation of a young woman whom Godard makes to play the role of a pregnant woman, proud to give a child to the revolution. Miéville's analysis reveals the unshown footage of the filmmaker's manipulation: "It's a short step from secrets of this kind to fascism." Godard is accused of the manipulative practices denounced in *Letter to Jane* and therefore recognising this same sexist practice in front of the actress. It is revealing to hear Godard making the same kind of indications about the position of the young woman's face that he criticised in Fonda's photograph. After each description-analysis, an image of the French family sitting in front of the television is opposed, materialising the film purpose: to communicate the reflection carried out to the French society.

To conclude, the image that undoubtedly caused the essay film is taken up, that of the Fedayeen's small group, preceded by its linguistic expression of the intertitle: "Rethinking about it: Here and elsewhere." Godard reformulates the question about the images filmed by himself: "so, what are they saying?" The revelation then comes with the objective action of Miéville's translation, thanks to which the spectator knows their fear of being discovered by the Israelis since they always cross the river in the same place. Godard and Miéville push this revealing dialogue to the limit, generating a direct and unappealable accusation about the filmmaker's action. It is thanks to the presence of another subjectivity, to the materialisation of intersubjectivity, that the filmmaker can finally address the specific episode that caused the trauma:

> Godard: What's tragic, in fact, is that here, they are talking about their own death. But nobody said that.
> Mieville: No, because it was up to you to say it. And the tragic thing is you didn't. They are simple revolutionaries; they talk about simple things. Incredibly simple.

Miéville continues the translation and Godard finally formulates the mistake made:

Godard: It's true that we never listened in silence to silence. We wanted to crow victory right away, instead of them.
Miéville: We wanted to make the revolution for them because, at that time, we didn't want to make it where we are. Rather where we are not.

In this way, Miéville reveals how Godard betrayed the purpose expressed in *Camera-eye*, guilty of the accusations made to Jane Fonda. Unfortunately, "retransmit the revolutionary cry" has become "crow victory," therefore appropriating revolutionary struggle. Finally, Godard is quiet and listens, and the film concludes with the voices of the Fedayeen group men, affirming that they are willing to carry out a suicide mission and die for the cause of their people. At last, the sound is turned up to be able to listen to the protagonists who, pretending to give them voice, had been silenced. Recognising the mistake, the damage, the essay film ends with Miéville's conclusion, keeping the confrontation between the images of the French *ici* and the Palestinian *ailleurs*, reiterating the intertitle: "In 1970 this film was called Victory. In 1975 it is called Here and Elsewhere […] We're incapable of seeing or listening to these very simple images. How come? We have, like everyone, said something else about them. Something else than what they were saying. That we cannot see or hear, no doubt. Or, that sound is too loud and covers reality." Miéville thus inscribes the film in a one-year production period and generates the objective conclusions extracted from Godard's subjective thinking process. Thanks to the external and objective examination, the truth that caused the trauma can be revealed to generate then the objectivity that should guide future practice. Furthermore, it is essential to understand the importance of being a female and feminist subjectivity which does it, revealing and acknowledging the mistakes made concerning the gender dimension in *Letter to Jane*: "Learn to see here, on order to hear elsewhere. Learn to hear yourself speak to see what others do. Others are the 'elsewhere' to our 'here.'"

Ici et ailleurs adds a performative nature to the audiovisual thinking process: "Godard's cinema is a painful meditation on the theme of restitution, or better, of reparation. Reparation would mean returning images and sounds to those from whom they were taken. It also commits them to produce their own images and sounds. And all the better if that production obliges the filmmaker to change his own way of working"

(Daney, 1976: 38). Like *Camera-eye*, *Ici et ailleurs* also appears in an episode of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, on the 4B. The image of the young revolutionary woman is retaken while we hear: "bring together things that don't seem willing to be." Hence, Godard himself confirms the relevance of the film and recognises the female role. As Faroult points out, "making political films politically" would become "thinking politics cinematically" (Faroult, 2018: 365). This motto transformation expresses precisely the difference between militant cinema and essay film: subjectivity makes it possible to transform the making of ideology into the thinking of reflection. Godard-Mieville's committed cinema is bonded to the subjectivity that enables individual responsibility in the face of mistakes, as shown in *Ici et ailleurs* concerning the previous diptychs. In addition, and not less important, this transformation takes place thanks to the participation of another subjectivity, a female subjectivity, which implies a new gender perspective in relation to previous practices: "*Ici et ailleurs* frees this dually voiced idiom from the drawbacks of an ideology first approach" (Warner, 2018: 87). It is possible to rethink the militant practice from a new perspective that McCabe describes as "classic feminist work. If its dominant politics is feminist, the theory which informs it is psychoanalytic" (MacCabe, 2003: 245-246).

5. *Scénario du film Save qui peut (la vie)*: Thinking vs fabulating

With *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)* Godard begins a new practice consisting of making diptych pieces prior to the film in project to reflect on its purposes and aspirations. These a priori pieces emerge as a need to develop the script in an audiovisual way and become a documentation element presented to obtain financing (Witt, 2006: 303). Therefore, this practice will differ entirely from the three previous diptychs, since it will not be a matter of rethinking the work already done but of fabulating the film to be done. From this point of view, Godard's reflective exercise lacks then the materiality of the *elsewhere*. By not counting on the materiality of the finished work, the thinking process finds difficulties to be produced audiovisually and becomes a sort of audiovisual illustration of a mostly linguistic reflection. The diptych is no longer constructed in relation to the materiality of a mistake wanted to be corrected but regarding the fabulation of audiovisual possibilities. Thus, we observe how, on many occasions, the image illustrates the thinking process –follows it–, while in the previous essay films, the images create and develop the thinking process. Therefore, this piece becomes the perfect example to understand the limits or vanishing points of the audiovisual thinking process.

Michael Witt also relates Godard's purpose to complete this itinerary with a piece following the fiction *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*. At different conferences after the film, he presents a montage called *Sauve la vie (qui peut)*, in which he edits different fragments of the film along with scenes from other films by different directors; unfortunately, it is not preserved (Witt, 2013: 30-31). It will be around *Passion* when the diptych becomes triptych with both previous and subsequent pieces to the fiction film.

Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie) begins with a powerful sentence-image, synthesis of the writing conflict Godard intends to address. As defined in *Ici et ailleurs,* he offers a new mise-en-scene of the thinking process. It is not the linguistic writing that emerges from the typewriter, but an image, a portrait of Isabelle Huppert, one of the film protagonists (Figure 4). While we listen to Godard's voice, he writes "Sauve" next to the actress' face, a text which in turn is duplicated on the screen. In this way, the opposition between linguistic and audiovisual writing is double: between the text and the image on the typewriter; between both texts on the typewriter and on the screen. This same operation is performed with the images of the other two protagonists (Nathalie Baye and Jacques Dutronc) to complete the film title "Sauve qui peut". Godard states this opposition between horizontal-literary and vertical-audiovisual writings, offering a key example of the audiovisual thinking process:

> I was working on the typewriter, and then there was something that surprised me […] I worked horizontally, as we work in Western writing […] I realised that it was the emergence of the image under the text […] I continued to write, and I was intrigued by this vertical surge of the image, like a rise to the surface […] I said to myself: this is how I should be able to write: vertically or horizontally, but not always horizontally first […] Write upright, so to speak, with the words following the image, which dive into it with both feet.

Figure 4. *Scénario du film Savie qui peut (la vie)* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1979).

Thus, the audiovisual thinking process does not arise from the project of the film itself, but from the reflection on cinematic writing: As Català indicates: "it offers us a written image and an imagined text" (2014: 535). However, this first thinking image doesn't find audiovisual continuity, since Godard's reflection goes on in an oral way, in which the image becomes a kind of illustration of the words. This is the case when Godard

enunciates the idea of the opposite directions of the characters, which is *illustrated* by two panning movements in opposite directions. Next, Godard addresses an exciting dissertation on crossfades and superimpositions, slow-motion, and panning movements, which, again, is not *materialised audiovisually* but *illustrated*. I argue here that the difference between both natures is caused precisely by the difference of the images used. Since they do not belong to a previous work, they do not contain their own meaning to add to the one now proposed by Godard. Thus, the differentiation between the meaning of the image and the one proposed by the filmmaker does not occur, and we can only read in it what the filmmaker orally explains concerning the different rhetorical elements. Godard's words about the purpose of the piece point out this same consideration: "I am rather trying to show you how I would organise them [...] which system will set the shapes [...] so to show you the relationships of images [...] if there is something to see and how I see." If we select the most relevant parts of Godard's reflection, this notion of accompanying the image as an illustration, but not as part of the thinking process, is confirmed. It is not produced audiovisually –except for the initial image– as analysed in the previous works.

Godard expresses essential ideas about crossfades and superimpositions that, however, are not materialised through the image. The sentence remains a sentence; it does not become a sentence-image: "A crossfade as a moment of the succession of events that we are going to make. A crossfade as an idea for a script." The crossfade between the close-up images of the three actors does not add any content to Godard's thinking process; it only illustrates it. The images do not contain a prior meaning of their own that can add meaning to that "idea of the script." The same happens when enunciating another idea of enormous importance in the future Godardian essay film, giving a definition of the Deleuzian time-image: "We make superimpositions or crossfades to express time, and I think it should be imprinted instead. Time cannot be expressed; it can be imprinted." This idea will materialise as a thinking process in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, for example, when the element used is the quotation; images from other films with relevant temporal content. However, Godard inserts a series of crossfades and curtain transitions on rehearsal images of Baye that, again, lack temporary content that can be imprinted. It is necessary to point out that the explanation about these four elements cannot either be related to the film. *Saut qui peut (la vie)* only includes a crossfade at the beginning of the film, and it will not use the panning movement here exposed but will resort to change the shot to relate the secondary actions he talks about. From what is exposed in the piece, only the work

on slow-motion remains in the fiction film. That is to say, the diptych does not refer to the fiction film either in the case of crossfades, superimpositions, or panning movements. On the slow-motion images, which are used in the film and in a masterly way, Godard points out: "Often it is said that events are moving too fast. Impossible to see the beginning of illness or happiness. So slow down to see. Seeing, not necessarily seeing this or that but already seeing if there is something to see". At this moment, the image of a female soccer player slows down, showing another consequence of this *illustration procedure*: the image used replaces the images of the future film and, in this way, the images of *Saut qui peut (la vie)* that would generate a sentence-image when put in relation to Godard's words, are replaced by other empty images concerning the fiction film. Thus, it is not possible to think the *elsewhere* of the latter. The *illustration-image* does not possess the capacity to produce thinking, as demonstrated by its comparison with the complex slow-motion image system that Godard creates in the fiction film concerning the three main characters.

Godard will create two more a priori pieces in diptych of fictional works*: Passion, le travail et l'amour. Introduction à un scénario* (1981) and *Petites notes à propos du le film Je vous salue, Marie* (1983). Both pieces present the same impossibility of generating an audiovisual thinking process, of becoming an essay film, because of the materiality absence of the elsewhere –the fictional work– on which they would reflect. While *Scénario du film Saut qui peut (la vie)* begins with an undoubted sentence-image that is not possible to develop, the two mentioned works no longer arise from the premise of a reflection. Both pieces offer different examples of the work with the actors, in which the filmmaker's voice disappears to be replaced in the second case by small annotations or descriptions in the actors' voices. Therefore, it is necessary to differentiate these works, which are often classified and analysed as a homogeneous set, to show that the practice of generating a diptych a priori, before the cinematic creation, is revealed as contrary to the essayistic practice itself, since its premise implies the disappearance of the materiality of the thinking process to turn the latter into fabulation. The three pieces created prior to the fiction films do not reach the status of the essay film as a process of audiovisual thinking, and quite the contrary, its practice rapidly weakens. While *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)* starts from a first sentence-image that cannot be developed, *Passion, le travail et l'amour* and *Petites notes a propos du film Je vous salue, Marie* show the impossibility of a priori audiovisual thinking process, as confirmed by the fact that this practice does not have continuity in the Godardian essay film. The filmmaker's

hands do not have then a materiality to work on: the *elsewhere* necessary to produce parataxic and interstitial thinking does not exist yet; the sentence-image that undoes the representative relationships cannot be generated, because the image does not possess a prior content. Rethinking becomes fabulating. Therefore, I conclude that the diptych structure generates an essay film, an audiovisual thinking process, when it rethinks cinema by addressing a previous film through its materiality. This structure causes not only the emergence of the Godardian essay film but also its evolution: from rethinking his own works to rethinking other's works; the cinema history in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*.

6. *Scénario du film Passion*: Rethinking fiction cinema

With *Scénario du film Passion* Godard generates his last essay film in diptych, generated precisely on the oscillation between the before and the after of the film creation. Thus, once again, the filmmaker "corrects the mistake" of the a priori pieces, by generating the work as a script that, however, is created after the fiction film. This purpose determines the piece structure since it is generated from two almost opposite camera positions, which materialise the two times addressed in the previous works; the before and the after of the creation. Godard stands in the editing room, facing the white screen. The camera is positioned in front of him (first and third parts) when Godard approaches the finished fiction film. However, the camera is placed behind him, showing the screen (second and fourth parts) when the filmmaker reflects on the preparation of the film. In this way, Godard solves that impossibility of the a priori pieces by approaching the fabulation of fiction, but from its images. The reflection exposed in *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)* on superimposition, which did not reach the form of an audiovisual thinking there, materialises here in all its power. The piece begins with the emblematic image of the essayist's self-portrait, during the credit titles, already located in the editing room as the place of his activity, as also occurs in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (1982) that same year. The essayist stands in front of the images and generates his thinking process from them: "There is no better self-portrait of Godard than in this device […] He thinks, in image and in sound, aloud. He monologues and he monofilmes. It's a Mabuse upside down […] *Deus in machina*" (Dubois, 1988: 158)**.** The crossfade and the superimposition then relate that space-time of the essayist with the film made: "Godard gave the conflict between word and image its densest expression at the beginning of *Scenario du film Passion*, doubtless" (Bellours, 1992: 221). In addition, we see the essayist creating this process in real time since Godard generates the crossfades and superimpositions on the editing table

while the camera is filming him: "We see the artist seeing himself as an image, seeing and showing this image as he renders it. And we see him seeing –from a position within the image– what we concurrently see from the 'outside,' on what we might term the master screen, the screen that includes the others" (Warner, 2018: 159). While in *Camera-eye* he manipulated the camera, in *Letter to Jane* he moved the photographs in front of it, and in *Ici et ailleurs* he made the mise-en-scene of the thinking process through his hands, now Godard's hands manipulate the editing table while filming: "the thought at work" (Dubois, 2011: 236). Hence, he reaches the full materialisation of that *thinking with the hands* and its materialist meaning:

> And it is all done spontaneously, immediately in images and sounds, giving the extraordinary impression of witnessing live the very movements of thought by and in images. […] I see at the same time as I do. In video (and, according to him, nowhere else, especially not in the written word), seeing is thinking and thinking is seeing, both in one, and completely simultaneously (Dubois, 1992: 178).

The contradiction shown in *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)* between literary and audiovisual writing through the typewriter is now overcome thanks to the direct writing of the montage table. With this first superimposition, Godard offers a magnificent materialisation of that *imprint the time* he expressed before, becoming now audiovisual thinking process (Figure 5). As Català explains: "superimpositions stop, freeze temporality in a visual balance […] in filmic superimpositions, time feeds the image, makes us aware of the border moment in which the visual conjunction occurs […] It confronts us, in short, with the poetic force of metaphor, taken to the extreme that it can be carried in the image" (2014: 537). Once this sentence-image about the essayist's space-time and practice is shown, the essay film is structured in four parts. As already indicated, the first and third ones show Godard looking into the camera to generate a space-time of the finished work. The second and the fourth capture him from behind and show the white screen, the space-time of the fabulation prior to the film creation. The continuity between both camera positions insists, therefore, on the present essayist's temporality of his audiovisual thinking process development: "a consubstantial merger with his work in progress" (Warner, 2018: 160). Godard speaks to the camera for the first time to expose the same aim as in *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)*: "see the script," "I didn't want to write the script. I wanted to see it," but now from the after of its

realisation, when the thinking process can turn to the materiality of the film already made. The first introductory fragment in front of the camera is produced in a single shot, introducing the reflection that will be developed next: "It is necessary to create the possibility of a world […] the camera will make this possible probable or this probable possible rather […] then create this probable, see the invisible […] if the invisible were visible, what we could see. See a script."

Figure 5. *Scénario du film Passion* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1982)

The second part gives way to the image of Godard with his back turned, showing the white screen in front of him; a space for the reverie prior to the film made. Godard identifies that still empty screen with the blank page on which he makes the gesture of writing: "You find yourself in front of the invisible," "it's funny to have a blank and a memory hole, you find everything deep down in your memory." The writing, however, composed of nonsense uppercase characters, appears inscribed in the film image and not on the white screen, opposing both spaces again, as it was already the case in the initial image of *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)*: "but you don't want to write […] you want to see, you want to receive" [re-ce-voir / re-see]. In this way, he generates the identification between *reseeing* the image and *rethinking* them. The identification between *page* and *plage* (beach) gives rise to the metaphor of the *vague* (wave) as an idea: "you invent a wave," and with it arises the first superimposition of an image from the fiction film, of the character of Hannah. Godard manipulates the image we see simultaneously to show us the spectrum that goes from the superimposition to the crossfade, and its reversibility, until reaching the flickering effect. Hence, the speed and gradation of the superimposition/crossfade materialise the difference between the *nascent idea-wave* (slight superimposition, beginning of the spectrum) and its *realisation-storm* (image of the film, end of the spectrum). It is precisely this realisation of thinking that was not feasible in the a priori pieces, since here the imagined image possesses materiality. The slight superimposition materialises the creation process of the image, not filmed yet, solving the question of materiality, giving it to the image not yet realised. The gradation of the superimposition represents the proximity to the image creation.

The superimposition between the image of the filmmaker and the image created is, therefore, a dialectical sentence-image on creation: "It's a work of seeing, of seeing the passage from the invisible to the visible". Then a second superimposition emerges,

this time of Isabelle's image and its purpose in the script: "find a movement." The third superimposition appears with a moving image on video, that of a film crew meeting, to whom the filmmaker must transmit the idea of the image to be created. Thus, through the spectrum that goes from the superimposition to the crossfade, Godard relates his own image in the space-time of reflection with materials of different natures that describe the work prior to shooting: still images of the film, video images of the film crew and pictorial images. The interstice between them takes on its maximum expression when Godard transforms the superimposition/crossfade into flickering, showing at the same time the proximity and the abyss between the creation process and its final realisation, showing the indiscernibility between the parataxic and the interstitial thinking, between the dialectical and the symbolic sentence-image. The thinking process advances, as does the film creation, and the materials merge to produce that process. While, until this moment, the superimposition started from the filmmaker's image, Godard now generates it between the pictorial image and the fictional one materialising the author's disappearance in favour of the fiction appearance. This second stage of the thinking process is again underlined by the flickering effect. The character of Isabelle is situated between the representation of love from Titian's *Bacchus and Adriana* and that the representation of work from Goya's *The third of May 1808*. The process of the film realisation continues, and the still image takes on movement, thanks to the music, with the appearance of the third character, Jerzy. The superimposition continues between Godard and the next step of the film production: the shooting, in which the relationship between the pictorial image and the two sides of the film is repeated: the representation of love from El Greco's *The Immaculate Conception* and the representation of work from Delacroix's *Entry of the Crusaders in Constantinople.*

Next, Godard inserts the image of Jerzy listening to *L'amour n'as pas d'âge* by Léo Ferré; the same that initiates the prior piece *Passion, le travail et l'amour…* The highest materialisation of the thinking process is then reached. While in the previous piece, only a short segment, starting it, was shown, here it is inserted into the core of the thinking process. The superimposition between Godard and Jerzy points out the identification between the two: "exile or foreigner like me," and allows Godard to interact again with the fictional character, whose projection embraces, as kissed Isabelle before. The shot, which in the prior piece remained emptied of audiovisual thinking, now acquires maximum density. Through superimposition and crossfade, the filmmaker links his creative act to the materialisation of the idea, the bond between love and work, through

the pictorial images from *El Greco* and *Delacroix* and the words and music from Ferré. Godard says: "The words are the words and the images are the images. Forbid words, forbid images. Both linked, as love could be linked to work. This is pretty much the main theme of the film; work and love." As Albertine Fox analyses, music is the key element of the emotional experience of the filmmaker's reflection: "Godard spoke of 'composing an image' and 'composing a movement,' which is here a communal and musical movement that causes the film to shudder. We are made to traverse and go through an experience that helps us make sense of the making, unmaking and remaking a new of multiple and fragmentary meanings" (Fox, 2018: 197).

Godard takes up the reflection on the white screen: "seeing a script is a work", to address the relationship between reality and the fiction to be created. The fictional image of Isabelle in the factory cuts to a documentary image of the latter while maintaining the superimposition on the filmmaker's image. Thus, Godard inserts himself into the interstice between reality and fiction, to express, once again, the love-work bond through the Titian painting: "The gesture of a working woman, couldn't this gesture some connections […] with the gesture of love […] love, work and something between the two […] and love, and work, and the work of love, and the love of work, and the hatred of work, the hatred of cinema, the love of cinema." Godard thus offers a dialectical sentence-image of how fiction tries to reveal reality: "the passage from invisible to visible," as he has previously stated.

While the first part with Godard speaking to the camera consisted of a single shot, the third develops the temporality of the concluded film, opposed to the previous temporality of its creation. Godard's image (medium shot and close-up) is now combined with shots from the film but edited by hard cut, without crossfades, while he reflects on the attempt of the film to show movement, the transition between the spaces of work and love. After three hard cuts between the filmmaker and the film images, Godard's fourth visual image maintains the sound image of the film, offering the sound version of the visual superimposition shown in the previous part. Hence, the simultaneity between the finished film and Godard's reflection stands out, moving the essayist to the spectator's position. The filmmaker takes up the crossfade and the superimposition between his image and the film, but without the white screen, that is, outside the space-time of the previous fabulation. The reflection on the finished work is generated with the moving image of the film, no longer still images, no longer other materials, only Godard and the film created. And then the white screen reappears, but without the figure of the filmmaker.

In this way, the blank screen of the fabulation prior to the work is transformed into the projection screen for the spectator. For the first time, the fictional image is projected exclusively on that screen, materialising the projection to the public (min 35.50). Therefore, Godard reverses the positions:

- Second part: image of Godard and the white screen + superimposition
- Third part: image of Godard + film image projected on the screen

While Godard had already established two different positions of the camera to show two different temporalities of reflection, before and after creation, he now gives the screen two different meanings in both space-time dimensions; the blank screen of the filmmaker's creation; and the projected screen of the finished creation, in front of which the filmmaker becomes a spectator. Besides, he adds a double projection: the film image both on the blank screen and on the screen that the spectators see, a sentence-image of the image duplicity he reflects on: "There is a kind of double image there […] there is the sound, and there is the image. The two go together […] you play with yourself all the time […] the whole film is made of double images: the passion, the factory; home, work; love, work." Godard's final shot in this segment takes up the medium shot to show us how it generates the fade to black that we see simultaneously.

The fourth and last part, second segment in front of the blank screen, takes up the temporality prior to the film creation: "See a script, see the movements and gestures that are looking for each other"; continuing the way back started in the previous fragment:

- First and second segments: from reality to fiction; from cinema to factory
- Third and four segments: from fiction to reality; from the factory to cinema

Godard superimposes on his image the images of a rehearsal with the actors, which he comments simultaneously, as he did in the previous fragment, but returning again to the temporality prior to the film; that of the narrative and aesthetic search. It continues with another shot of the filming set and the crane movement. He introduces images of the film, reaching the full materiality of the fabulated, in which Goya's painting achieves its fictional representation. It is then when the reality-fiction itinerary reverses its direction, and the image already made provokes the reflection on its bond with reality: "This infinity will end, and it will end when the metaphor meets the real [...] at the intersection of the real and its metaphor, of documentary and fiction. It was elsewhere, and fiction brought you back to documentary." Godard thus formulates the reflection provoked by the realisation of the diptych. The elsewhere of a fiction already materialised provokes the reflection on its bond with reality. The white screen he observes becomes a

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blank image of the film to shift its meaning from the blank page on which fiction is written to the absence of image as a thinking escape, establishing the inverse rhetorical element to that formulated through the black image in *Letter to Jane*. While the black image created the space for reflection there, the white image refers to its complement here; to the need to escape from this same process. After the last superimposition through which Godard inserts himself back into the fictional image to embrace the character, the piece concludes with his close-up, no longer looking at the screen, formulating the most intimate expression: "and here is the adventure, and here is the fiction, and here is the real and here is the documentary, and here is the movement, and here is the cinema, and here is the image, and here is the sound, and here is the cinema, here is the cinema, here is the cinema... here is the work." Then he inserts a last image of an airplane taking off with the sunlight shining through the clouds, which we must undoubtedly associate with the one shown at the beginning of *Passion*. The plane that glides in the fictional sky has managed to take off thanks to the reflection the essay film testifies.

It is essential to point out that, as in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, the superimposition and the crossfade do not appear in the fiction *Passion*. Therefore, this rhetorical feature is defined as an element of the Godardian essay film, but not of the fictional construction, which shows the different nature of both spaces. While *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* focuses on slow motion, *Passion* does so on the desynchronisation between image and sound. Superimposition and crossfade are *essayistic reflective elements* that must find their aesthetic translation in the fictional creation but that are not transferred to it. "Imprinting time" must find its own forms of materialisation in fiction.

7. Conclusions

The analysis carried out allows us to conclude how Godard's films constructed through the device of the diptych form a series of enormous importance. The Godardian essay film is born, evolves, and consolidates from this device. The reflection on audiovisual creation progresses through the works based on the method of scientific experimentation: to observe the mistakes revealed by the film in order to correct them in the next piece. Thus, the audiovisual thinking process that rethinks cinematic creation evolves, progressively facing the conflicts that this very filmic form imposes. *Camera-eye* exposes the premise of the essay film, the subjective reflection of the essayist, to apply it to the social function of the filmmaker in his cinematic practice. In this way, fiction cinema is rethought as the appropriate space to retransmit the revolutionary cry through metaphor.

However, the experience of militant cinema is produced in the opposite direction in both senses: fiction and subjectivity are abandoned. Hence, *Letter to Jane* is a new step in the evolution of the essay film, which can now reflect on the mistakes of created fiction and on its relationship with reality. *Camera-eye*'s theoretical exposition becomes a practical exercise to expose the causes of failure in the performance of the social function of intellectuals in the revolution. *Ici et ailleurs* then uses the experience of trauma to address the previous issue in the first person, correcting the mistakes previously made: restoring the voice to the silenced combatants and introducing the gender perspective previously ignored. The development of the essayistic diptych concerning the political practice of the filmmaker ends here, assuming the mistakes made when "making political cinema politically" in order to try to "think cinema politically."

This first stage shows a clear evolution in the Godardian audiovisual thinking process. *Camera-eye* exposes the essential parataxis of the essay film and also the need to explore its interstices. *Letter to Jane* materialises the essentiality of the interstice through the black image as a space from which reflection, the audiovisual thinking process, must emerge. Black image and photomontage advance in this interstitial evolution, as does subjectivity, through the epistolary device, to also find its dialogical nature. *Ici et ailleurs* shows and demonstrates how video technology is an indispensable condition to develop the audiovisual thinking process. The photomontage becomes video collage, which announces the future superimposition. The text inscribed on the screen reaches the status of image and the mise-en-scene of the thinking process emerges as a key procedure of the Godardian essay film, which also generates the inverse process, producing reflection from the analysis of the mise-en-scene. Finally, while *Letter to Jane* developed the expression of subjectivity and the dialogical essence of the essay film, *Ici et ailleurs* enables the experience of intersubjectivity. The opposition between the subjective thinking process and its confrontation with an external reference point allows, in this case, not only to face past trauma but also to introduce the gender perspective ignored before.

Godard then addresses a different starting point for the device of the diptych; he produces it from the a priori of the film to be done in order to reflect on cinematic writing. *Scénario de Sauve qui peut (la vie)* shows the limits of this proposal. The filmmaker's thinking process, deeply associated with physical manipulation, the analysed *thinking with the hands*, does not find the necessary materiality to be generated. The non-materiality of *elsewhere*, the film to be made, causes that *rethinking* is not possible. Thus,

reflection becomes fabulation, and the audiovisual thinking process turns into an oral reflection *audiovisually illustrated*. Once again, Godard understands the mistake that the images reveal and he manages to overcome the non-materiality of the film to be done in *Scénario du film Passion* materialising the two temporalities, before and after the completion of the film. In this way, he creates a device that can generate the audiovisual thinking process through the elements exposed theoretically in *Scénario du film Sauve qui peut (la vie)*. The crossfade and the superimposition become the highest expression of interstitial thinking to reflect on cinematic creation. In addition, Godard also reaches the highest representation of the figure of the essayist and his thinking in act; a self-portrait that is able to reflect on itself through two camera positions and their two corresponding temporalities

This series of diptych works reveals a hypertextual audiovisual thinking process that aims to rethink cinematic practice, also defining the essay film, placing it in an *after the images* inherent to video technology: "Video ergo cogito ergo sum […] in which images are the raw material of the reflection and in which the video literally inscribes and reflects on cinema" (Dubois, 2011: 237). The Godardian audiovisual thinking process also presents an essential materiality component that is revealed in the rhetorical elements analysed. Black image, photomontage, video collage, crossfade, superimposition, and mise-en-scene of the thinking process manage to materialise all the possibilities of the audiovisual interstice from which the thinking process emerges: "The logical operations of a process of reflection become aesthetic forms" (Brenez, 2019: 35). These rhetorical elements, typical of the Godardian essay film, are not used in the corresponding fiction films, hence revealing their reflective nature in the filmmaker's conception. The audiovisual thinking process also evolves from the dialectical to the symbolic sentence-image, showing its organic nature through the oscillation, the back and forth between the rational and the emotional, between the trauma, the emotional impact, and the need for its reflection. Rethinking his own cinema through the device of the diptych is the starting point of the Godardian essay film, essential to rethink cinema as a whole later through the device of the quotation in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, and thus reaching the finish line for *a form that thinks*.

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