SOUL OF THE DOCUMENTARY

FRAMING, EXPRESSION, ETHICS

Ilona Hongisto

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***

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Prologue

Capturing a world of becoming

What distinguishes the documentary from other cinematic modalities is its involvement with a world that continues beyond the film's frame. Documentaries depict individual lives, political events, and social hierarchies that keep acting and transforming in myriad connections even after films come to an end. In documentary cinema, "the end" is merely a threshold to the ever-varying processes in which we and the world around us take shape.

Yet, despite the moving compositions of the real, prevailing understandings of documentary cinema tend to posit the world depicted in documentary films as relatively stable and thus rationally verifiable. Although we readily claim that social discrimination takes place at the pinnacle of corporealities, institutions, and historical movements and that ecological disasters occur in relation to political economies and social behavior, we are less inclined to take these processual relationalities as the starting point of our analyses. Rather, there is a tendency to freeze process in order to make it available for further investigation.

This book, however, posits the real depicted in documentary films as dynamic in its own right and adjusts the idea of documentary cinema accordingly. The approach coincides with what has come to be called *new materialism* in critical theory. New materialism emphasizes the "lively powers of material formations"[1] that coexist with discursive configurations. Here, matter is not dull substance for vibrant interpretations but "an exhibiting agency"[2] that co-composes what documentary films will turn out to be.

The liveliness of the real and the exhibiting agency of matter come with a particular ontological proposition that informs the argumentation. They position actual forms in relation to a mode of reality implicated in emergence. Actual material formations intertwine with always-differentiating processes. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari name this mode of reality the virtual. It is an alternative consistency to actual determinate forms, yet as real.[3] The actual and the virtual form the two coexisting facets of a vibrant reality. Deleuze assigns a particular role to the passage from the virtual to the actual; actualization signals the creative process of differentiation and the actuals that result from the process – bodies and things – host the pull of difference in their being.[4] They are expressions of their own formation.[5]

In this conception of the real, visible bodies and things are as immediately virtual as they are actual.[6] What this means for documentary cinema

is a heightened awareness of the incorporeal and invisible processes in which bodies and things actualize. Another name for these processes is becoming. A world of becoming implies that beings come with vicissitudes that exceed them.

It is my assertion that more often than we have cared to admit, documentary films engage in a productive dialogue with the world in its becoming. However, the concepts we have to explain what documentaries do tend to downplay this side of the practice. It has been much more prevalent to coin the work of documentary cinema to enhancing perceptions of the material world by producing representations of reality.[7] *Soul of the Documentary* takes a different path and outlines how documentaries capture and express individual bodies and actual forms in their becoming.

The book thus locates the defining momentum of documentary cinema to the real as process. Instead of abiding to the gap that separates matter from signification, *Soul of the Documentary* invests in their entanglement, and looks into the particular strategies with which documentaries participate in reality as process. Indeed, following Deleuze and Guattari, the present project insists that as a system of expression, documentary cinema is not distinct from reality but on a par with it.[8] The new materialist proposition that runs through this book presumes that documentaries not only operate on a plane of signification, but also partake in the material processes that co-compose the real.

Finally, these arguments come with the assertion that documentary cinema captivates viewers not so much because of the claims it makes, but because it constantly reminds us that the real is not limited to what is directly perceivable in images. Framing institutes a threshold to a world of becoming rich in the transformative potential of individual bodies and actual forms. This reorients the ethical stakes of documentary cinema from producing accurate and authentic representations to creatively contributing to the transformability of actual beings in the real.[9] This is an ethics that does not entail promises of a better future, but that works to sustain the pull of difference in the face of often atrocious actualities. In this book, framing is the performative practice with which documentary cinema participates in and contributes to the real as process.

Aesthetics of the frame

A man dressed in white moves violently in an outdoor space. The camera captures the movement with a frame of his upper body. In the image, his

arms and head sway agitatedly in slow motion. A group of drummers sit in a row behind him. The camera starts moving toward the man. His eyes turn in his head as a group of women harness his frantic movement with their hands. Are they pinning him down for the camera? The man keeps twisting and turning despite the arms that embrace his body. The camera moves closer, tilting down the man's spastic body and up again to a frame of his face. It looks like the hands holding the man were in fact moving with him, as if they were all part of the same choreography. The camera moves to a close-up. Eyes wide open, the man smiles quaintly.

The sequence is from Maya Deren's documentary footage of Haitian Vodoun rituals that was assembled into the documentary film *Divine Horsemen – The Living Gods of Haiti* (1977) almost twenty years after her sudden death in 1961. Deren, who is better known as an experimental filmmaker, shot the footage used in the film during her visits to Haiti from 1947–1951. The time spent in Haiti proved to be a turning point in her career. Deren writes of her observations and experiences, claiming that documenting the Haitian rituals challenged her artistic practice: "I began as an artist, as one who would manipulate the elements of a reality into a work of art in the image of my creative integrity; I end by recording, as humbly as I can, the logics of a reality which had forced me to recognize its integrity, and to abandon my manipulations."[10]

Deren's statement draws attention to the dissonance between artistic practices and documenting the real. In her experimental work, Deren arranges elements of the real according to an idea she holds in her mind. In documenting the Haitian rituals, she faces a reality she cannot compose in the image of her creative integrity. She no longer has absolute control over what she films but must document the strange, vibrant and, to a large extent, inexplicable integrity of a reality that unfolds before the camera.

Although Deren insists upon humble recording, the audiovisual characteristics of her footage do not advocate a stark division between documenting and creative practice. The frame that moves up and down the man's spastic body, draws nearer the group of people and then withdraws again, suggests a creative approach that is fundamentally different from the formal manipulations that Deren speaks against in the documentary context. Here, creativity does not concern the mise-en-scène or the editing of the footage, but pertains to framing, to the manner in which the documentary approaches and participates in the unfolding ritual.[11]

These remarks are not intended to question Deren's humility in the act of recording the Haitian rituals, but to foreground the inherent creative dimension in encountering a world of becoming. In this way, although Deren

discounts creative manipulations from documentary practice, her Haiti footage provides this book with both a theoretical and a methodological starting point. First, *Soul of the Documentary* sets out to conceptualize documentary cinema as *an aesthetics of the frame*; that is, as an aesthetics that foregrounds documentary participation in the real. Second, this conceptualization is formed with a selection of documentary films in which the entanglement of creative work and documenting the real is particularly striking. The conceptual work effectuated in the book is conditioned on and indebted to the audiovisual specificity of the selected documentary films.

The aesthetics of the frame, then, transposes some of the key tenets of documentary discourse. Namely, it reorients considerations of creativity and aesthetic choices from John Grierson's far-reaching legacy of the documentary as *an aesthetic of the document*.[12] In his 'First Principles of the Documentary', written in the early 1930s, Grierson claims a distinction between the mechanical recording of "natural materials" and "the creative treatment of actuality."[13] For Grierson, however, the distinction is not absolute, but rather a prerequisite for the documentary in general. Mechanically produced traces of the world – photographic images – secure a bond to the world of natural materials in the face of creative treatment. In Grierson's vision of the documentary, aesthetic work takes place *ex post facto*, after an unquestionable link to a pre-existing world has been established.

The creative treatment of actuality comes to light in a poignant manner in *Industrial Britain* (UK 1931), a documentary produced by Grierson and directed by Robert Flaherty for the Empire Marketing Board. The film depicts Britain's industrial developments in the early twentieth century by focusing on individual workers such as potters and glassblowers. Flaherty's shots foreground the craftsmanship of the workers and the atmosphere of industrial life. The highly composed fragments are accompanied by an assertive voiceover that positions the abstract camera angles and poetic lighting into the imperial project of modernization. Thus, the documentary shapes the social in the image of the British Empire with aesthetic devices.[14] For Brian Winston, Grierson and Flaherty's aestheticizing turns the social dimension of the British industry "pretty and personal" and results in running away from social meaning.[15]

What is of particular importance here is that Grierson articulates creative treatment as separate from the world of natural materials. This gap has been reiterated later in Bill Nichols's seminal claim that "our access to historical reality may only be by means of representations."[16] Although Grierson's explicit instrumentalism is not directly comparable to Nichols's postulation of documentary film as a modality of representation, the tension between a

pre-existing world and documentary accounts of that world persists.[17] The aesthetics of the frame seeks to close the gap by emphasizing the exhibiting agency of "natural materials."

The majority of work on documentary cinema follows Nichols's lead and elaborates on the discursive stakes of documentary representations in such diverse fields as cultural memory, politics of resistance, and testimonial cultures – to name just a few. What brings these fields together in the documentary context is an investment in the photographic image and its ability to render the world knowable within the documentary. The premise of knowability opens up to the construction of shared memories, anti-normative identities, and positions of witnessing. However, although the documentary is widely considered a "constructing discourse," its own constructedness also puts the premise of knowability in doubt. Nichols notes that the documentary has never been accepted as a full equal among other discursive practices – such as science and politics – that regard their relationship to the real as direct and immediate.[18]

The aesthetics of the frame draws inspiration from studies that locate their unique drive in the promise of knowability and its simultaneous impossibility. For example, Elizabeth Cowie notes that the gap in representation introduces the unrepresentable as the real that cannot be fully apprehended, but that is nevertheless desired in recordings of reality.[19] Although this book does not share Cowie's Lacanian disposition, the emphasis put on excess – what remains beyond the visible and the audible – is of particular interest for the present purposes. Stella Bruzzi, for her part, introduces the notion of performance to account for the dynamic interaction between documentary content and representation. She argues that by admitting the impossibility of thorough or full representations, documentary cinema could claim a major territory in the dialectical relationship of the reality being filmed and filmmaking. For her, this negotiation gives rise to a performative documentary truth.[20] The aesthetics of the frame is equally invested in the dynamic interaction between realities captured on camera and the procedures of framing. Ultimately, however, the performative interaction suggested here departs from the representational paradigm.

This study has been equally inspired by projects that elaborate on the contingency of the photographic image in the context of documentary experience. Here, investments in objectivity have been replaced by an interest in the malleability of the image and its import on the experience of temporality in documentary works. In her take on the audiovisual experience of history, Jaimie Baron foregrounds the temporal disparity generated between a *then* and a *now* within documentary films. According to Baron,

the recognition of this incongruence is crucial for the production of an "archive effect" in documentary cinema.[21] In Malin Wahlberg's discussion of documentary time, poetic enactments of the image as trace amount to experiences of archive memory that connect documentary films to the social and political stakes in the construction of cultural memory.[22] The present project moves even further away from the index and conditions the work of documentary cinema on the frame. This moves the stakes of the discussion from historical evidence to engagements in the moving material relationalities of actual bodies and events.[23]

The main difference between representational considerations of documentary film and the aesthetics of the frame comes down to conceptions of reality. The paradigm of representation maintains reality as matter upon which a form of signification is positioned. It is not expressive in itself, but knowable through modalities of representation and signification. The aesthetics of the frame, on the other hand, bypasses the gap in representation by insisting on the emergent consistency of matter and the ways in which the frame taps into reality as occurrent. Again, Deren's *Divine Horsemen* clarifies the distinction. The distributed version of *Divine Horsemen*, like many prior and later works that deal with non-Western cultures and customs, abides by a disposition that makes sense out of the world that opens in front of the camera. The footage is arranged into an expository mode of representation in which a solemn voiceover explains the ritual and the related deities to the viewer. However, framing enables an alternative conceptualization. It is as if the frame was one of the performers, of the same reality as their movements.[24] Moreover, the frame is not content with documenting the specific movements of the performers' bodies; it seems equally interested in the perpetual unfolding of gestures and their connections. Put differently, it taps into the corporeal movements not as choreography to be explained, but as a set of gestures that unfurls in relation to dimensions that exceed the performers' bodies. With the changes in camera angle and distance, framing evokes the complexity of Vodoun and suggests that forces that are not visible as such animate the performers' bodies in the ritual.

In this sense, framing is at odds with the authoritarian voiceover and the edits that aim at explaining Vodoun in *Divine Horsemen*. While capturing the specific choreography of the performers, framing intensifies the depicted gestures and thus summons the invisible dimensions of Vodoun into the footage. The choices in framing depict performing bodies opening up to processes that exceed them. The actual moving bodies are captured in a manner that expresses their becoming in the ritual. Hence, the Vodoun

ritual is no mere "dance-form" to be given meaning to, but a vibrant assemblage of moving bodies, cultural traditions, chalk lines, drumming, dirt ground, and animals that has its own expressive agency.[25]

The aesthetics of the frame, then, proposes a novel ontology for the documentary. In distinction to the Griersonian tradition and its legacy in the documentary's representational paradigm, the aesthetics of the frame calls attention to two levels of expression: the exhibiting agency of the real and documentary renditions of it. What is more, these levels are seen as immanent to one another in the event of filmmaking. The entanglement allows reorienting the work of the documentary from explicating what already is to facilitating the vibrant becoming of the real in its myriad manifestations.

The closest interlocutor to this proposition can be found in Laura U. Marks's enfolding-unfolding aesthetics for cinema. In a move that makes conventions and clichés newly interesting for cinema scholars, Marks argues that genres and narrative conventions are filters that regulate how images unfold from the world. The filters govern how images unfold into visibility and enfold back into the world after having passed through information grids.[26] In work leading to enfolding-unfolding aesthetics, Marks discusses documentary images and their connection to the virtual. Drawing from Deleuze's image typology and C.S. Peirce's semiotics, Marks shows how documentary images open up to an unseeable and unsayable real.[27]

The aesthetics of the frame connects with the idea of the real consisting of an actual and a virtual dimension. Following Deleuze and Guattari's postulation, Elizabeth Grosz claims that the artistic frame expresses virtual forces as sensations.[28] The frame delimits a territory in which actual forms intensify. The demarcating power of the frame, its emphasis on the limit, accords the actual forms in the image with an intensity that exceeds them.[29] More precisely, the frame summons the virtual forces hosted in actual forms and expresses them as sensations that break through the bounds of the frame. The sensations that build up in artistic frames are extra-beings to the actual forms delimited by the frames.[30] Often, it is difficult to say where the artistic frame ends and sensations begin, but it is crucial that the expressed sensations do not resemble the forms and methods that express them: painterly sensations are not "painterly" per se, nor are the sensations that intensify in documentary forms "documentary."

Framing in documentary cinema, then, performs a double movement that both captures the real and expresses it. Capturing actual forms in a documentary frame expresses the virtual forces of the real as sensations. These sensations move and have effects beyond the documentary frame

– and are thus also ethically saturated. The created extra-beings host the differentiating pull of the virtual and are thus like "gifts" loaded with both potential and responsibilities. Paraphrasing Guattari, the responsibility of the creative instance extends to the created sensation and the acceptance of the gift by the viewer.[31]

In the aesthetics of the frame, the two levels of expression come together in the double bond that captures the real and liberates it as sensation.[32] The act of framing regulates the movement from captured forms to intensive sensations, and functions as an interface to realities that are yet unseeable and unsayable. Working toward realities to come, operations of the frame are also experimentations in the real.

Soul; or, what can documentaries do?

The conceptualization of documentary cinema as an experimentation in the real comes with the consequent questions; what can documentaries do? What are their capacities to operate in the real? Leaning on a Spinozist understanding of capacities, I argue that there are no predetermined ideas or rules as to what documentary films can or cannot do.[33] The three documentary operations mapped in this book – imagination, fabulation, and affection – are determinations of what specific documentaries do, not preconceived notions of what they should do. This distances the present argument from the Griersonian postulation of the documentary as "a hammer" designed to shape the social sphere.[34] Instead, I claim that as documentary films enact deeds characteristic to them – as they reframe archival documents, as they observe or as they witness – they articulate what they can do. What a documentary film does creates the limits of what it can or cannot do. For example, in *Divine Horsemen*, the ethnographic paradigm with which Deren's footage was arranged *ex post facto* clings on to the preconceived idea of making sense out of the ritual. The participatory framing of the footage, however, articulates a capacity *to perform* with the composite layers of the real.

The title of this book points to a further definition of how capacities are understood here. In common parlance, the soul is often taken to refer to an immaterial and permanent essence that determines the contours of individual life. Even if the body vanishes, the soul persists. This argument can be traced to Plato's disposition of the soul as a disembodied psyche that determines the body's different functions. *Soul of the Documentary*, however, takes its cue from Aristotle's *De anima – On the Soul*, in which he

argues that the soul is inseparable from the body. Aristotle posits that the soul is the capacity of the body to engage in activities that are characteristic to it. The inseparable soul is liable for the animate behavior of the body. His conceptualization of the soul is akin to the Greek word *anemoi*, referring to wind or breath as the capacity of life.[35] What is here drawn from Aristotle's *anima* is the definition of soul as a capacity immanent to the body. Aristotle's take on the soul urges us to consider *anima* in an immanent relation to *animation*.

Moreover, instead of promising *the soul* of the documentary, the book sticks to an indeterminate form of soul. This focuses the stakes on capacities that do not define documentary cinema for good, but emerge in relation to specific ways of doing. In his last published essay, Deleuze proposes a similar move. He approaches the immanent relationship of capacities and bodies with the distinction of "a life" and "the life."[36] Immanence names the coexistence of the two plateaus – impersonal capacities and individual bodies.[37] Following this line of thought, documentary capacities are a life that coexists with the life of documentary practices. Thus, *Soul of the Documentary* maps capacities that do not determine *the life* of the documentary, but instead offer a nuanced take on a perpetually emergent practice: *the documentary is in the way it is capable of doing*.

Imagination, fabulation, and affection are inferred from the immanence of documentary practices (reframing documents, observing, witnessing) and capacities (to imagine, to fabulate, to affect). To speak of capacities as the documentary's soul, then, is to admit that they cannot be narrowed down to particular practices; they exceed both the limits of practices and the limits of the genre. In this sense, capacities are akin to an indefinite archive of potentials that documentary techniques can tap into. Moreover, much like the documentary frame brings out the fact that the depicted world continues even though the film ends, capacities also persist. The capacity a documentary articulates with its particular techniques is what keeps working even after the film's time comes to an end. Although the ethnographic scope of Deren's project is from an earlier moment, the film nevertheless persists because of its powerful articulation of performing with the vibrant textures of the real. The documentary keeps acting because the capacity it articulates travels beyond the film's "actual body," its represented duration and historical context.[38]

The emphasis placed on the emergent qualities of documentary cinema extends to the analyses conducted in this book. The aim is to pay serious attention to the audiovisual choices of the selected documentary films and to deduce their capacities of operating in the real from these choices. This is

not to disclaim the declared ambitions of particular historical movements or to return to the auteur as the prevailing source of meaning, but to respect the inherent creative dimension of documentary filmmaking. Hence, the analyses take form immanently to the documentary practices.

The discussed documentary films represent multiple geographical and historical axes. The ensemble is heterogeneous in style, but most of the works have a connection to the major European upheavals of the twentieth century. All but one of the films were made in the early 1990s or later and the assemblage includes both canonical and lesser known documentaries.

The documentary films discussed in *Imagination: Relational documents* deal with the aftermath of World War Two and life in Soviet Russia. Kanerva Cederström's *Two Uncles* (Finland 1991) and Chris Marker's *The Last Bolshevik* (France 1993) deploy dispositions of remembering to imagine the lives of those who are no longer present. *Two Uncles* focuses on the filmmaker's uncle who disappeared in the war, and *The Last Bolshevik* concentrates on the late Soviet filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin. In both cases, imagination takes shape as the documentaries divert emphasis from the indexical qualities of their documents to the incipient relations in them. Remembering, then, does not amount to reconstituting lives long gone, but to imagining the possible lives of the two men with archival documents in documentary cinema.

Fabulation: Documentary visions centers around the entanglement of creative storytelling and documentary observation. The documentary classic *Grey Gardens* (Albert & David Maysles, USA 1975) and the less widely distributed *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* (Pirjo Honkasalo, Finland 1993) observe situations in which the actions of the filmed subjects have been deemed inappropriate or abnormal by their respective communities. The documentaries, however, observe their subjects in ways that overcome these categories and consequently begin fabulating visions of alternative ways of being in this world. As the documentaries fabulate, they create resistance to the observed circumstances.

Affection: Documenting the potential discusses documentary films that are explicitly entangled with political events. Jayce Salloum's *everything and nothing* (Canada 2001) deals with the Lebanese resistance movement, and Chantal Akerman's *From the East* (Belgium 1993) and Kanerva Cederström's *Trans-Siberia* (Finland 1999) with the changing power relations in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Soviet Union. All three films bear witness to the respective political situations in ways that work on the viewer affectively. Instead of foregrounding the discursive dimension of political commitment, the documentaries capture the transformative potential in the events

they discuss and pass it on to the viewer. As a documentary experience conditioned on potential, affection attunes the viewer to political change on the level of becoming.

Imagination, fabulation, and affection offer distinct yet connected answers to the persisting question of what can the documentary do. Imagination posits that the documentary can compose the possible lives of those who are no longer here, fabulation suggests that the documentary can create resistance to actual circumstances and envision new ways of being in the world, and affection proposes that the documentary advances political commitment by attuning the viewer to qualitative change. What brings all three facets together is the worldview embedded in the aesthetics of the frame: the documentary brings more life into the real by framing actuality in its becoming.

Reorientations in epistemology and politics

One of the consequences of the aesthetics of the frame is the repudiation of the indexical image at the heart of the documentary. This has an effect on both documentary epistemology and politics. Firstly, the aesthetics of the frame implies that content is not pre-formed for the documentary to convey but it intensifies, takes form and is expressed on the audiovisual plane of the documentary.[39] This challenges the evidentiary work of the documentary conditioned on indexical images charged with a double existence that retains a physical connection to the external world and works as evidence in the discursive chain of the documentary.[40] Secondly, whereas the frame grants access to a world of becoming, indexical images foreground a physical connection to the world as a given: "Instead of *a* world, we are offered access to *the* world."[41]

The aesthetic proposition put forward in this book insists on framing as the drawing of boundaries. Framing encloses archival documents, actual bodies, and political events within a territory in a manner that makes them expressive of qualities that are not visible as such. In the frame, bodies intensify and open up to immeasurable dimensions.[42] Framed bodies become expressive of indeterminate qualities – "a life" in Deleuze's vocabulary – and as they do, they also break through the frame as sensations of excessive intensity. According to Elizabeth Grosz, "[f]raming is the raw condition under which sensations are created, metabolized, released into the world, made to live a life of their own, to infect and transform other sensations."[43]

The frame, in other words, changes documentary film's relation to its outside. Whereas the outside has traditionally been positioned as "the world" documentaries seek to access and which nevertheless evades thorough explanations, the frame posits the outside as immanent to documentary cinema. The outside is rich in the world's indeterminate becoming that is expressed as intensive sensations via the frame. The frame captures the indeterminate liveliness of actual bodies and releases their liveliness back into the world as sensations.[44]

Consequently, the epistemological work of documentary cinema changes. At this turning point, Michel Foucault's conception of knowledge and its relation to historical research proves helpful. In Foucault, spaces such as the prison institution and the discourses typical to a given moment in time come with mechanisms that historical research must crack open. Deleuze paraphrases Foucault's project as follows: "It must extract from words and language the statements corresponding to each stratum and its thresholds, but equally extract from things and sight the visibilities and 'self-evidences' unique to each stratum."[45] The mechanism of visibilities and statements is immanent to each historical formation and it is the historian's job to express this mechanism. The task of the historian is to express the distribution of what is seeable and sayable at a given time. This bears an effect on the role of the document. In Foucault, the document is not a trace of a past era but a monument that is expressive of its own distribution.[46] The Foucauldian document is not used to reconstitute monuments of the past; it is a monument that expresses the mechanism of its own arrangement.[47]

As research addresses the discourses and sights of a given time and cracks them open, it expresses the mechanism that controls what can be seen and said at that time. Following Foucault, this directs the epistemological stakes towards expressing the limits of knowledge (what can be seen and said). This notion of knowledge is remarkably cinematic because it is constituted of the visibilities (images) and statements (sounds) of a given moment.[48]

Deleuze uses this very disposition to describe the operations of the cinema of the time-image after World War Two.[49] In his view, the cinema that followed Auschwitz and Hiroshima is constituted on a crucial disjunction – the unimaginably vast destruction and the fact that it took place. For Deleuze, the time after the war is characterized by the impossibility of understanding and communicating what took place, an impossibility that comes with the fact that the events *did* take place. The cinema of the time-image – because it takes this very disjunction as its point of departure – accords the possibility of *finally seeing* what has been lost in action and reaction.[50] What cannot be understood as a chain of events that led to the

holocaust can be cracked open in the incommensurable relations between images and sounds in the cinema of the time-image. From a Foucauldian perspective, the cinema of the time-image bears witness to the mechanism of what is seeable and sayable after the war in a particularly effective way because it emphasizes the limits of seeing and saying in its audiovisuality.[51] Put differently, the epistemology of the time-image refutes the communication of what was seen and said and replaces it with an analysis of the limits of the sayable and the seeable.[52]

Not surprisingly, then, epistemology leads to politics. The epistemological work of considering the limits and conditions of knowledge coincides with the political act of revealing these limits. As cinema becomes expressive of the mechanism that conditions seeing and saying, there is a chance of finally seeing. Deleuze makes an important addition to Foucault's outline in insisting that finally seeing is not limited to the revelation of the mechanism in place, but it extends to envisioning what is still unseeable and unsayable in the present.[53]

The constitution of a vision of the yet unseeable and unsayable coincides with Maurizio Lazzarato's insistence on the creation of "possible worlds" in the political event.[54] According to Lazzarato, political events take place via incorporeal inclinations [impersonal capacities] in order to produce metamorphoses in corporeal modes of existence.[55] The political event as he sees it is not a solution to a problem but a "shock" to the established ways of having a body. The point is that the political event does not work on the body directly but expresses a possible world that works on incorporeal inclinations. It modulates the modes with which bodies affect each other and are themselves affected. Lazzarato's political event is first incorporeal, then corporeal.[56]

The aesthetics of the frame posits framing as a practice where actual forms delineated by the frame become expressive of dimensions that exceed them. Hence, the frame continuously tends to its own limit – not in an effort to contain and explain, but in order to reveal the limits of what is seeable and sayable at a given moment in time. Framing intertwines with Foucault's disposition of knowledge as it works on the dimensions of actual forms that exceed the seen and the said in the image. This has political implications for documentary cinema because, following Lazzarato, the expression of a world of becoming beyond actual forms is simultaneously a vision of "a possible world." The epistemological connects with the political in the aim of changing the conditions of the mechanism that controls visibilities and statements at a given moment in time. When a documentary film "finally sees" it envisions a reality to come.

Imagination: Relational documents

Documents can be very talkative.[1]
Arlette Farge

The use of archival footage in documentary films brings forth questions of referentiality, temporality, and materiality. Most obviously, archival documents such as personal photographs or institutionally commissioned films offer documentaries a referential connection to a past moment. This evidentiary quality of documents is then foregrounded, appropriated, or re-appropriated in the representation of a past event in a documentary work. Perhaps most interestingly, documents in documentary films do not necessarily offer a cohesive view of the past, but institute cuts, intervals, and changing perspectives to the documentary composition. This raises a number of questions that steer the present discussion toward an articulation of documentary imagination. Namely, how are the historical dimensions of the appropriated documents played out in documentary films? Is the past they refer to dynamic, or sealed in irrevocable immobility? How is the material specificity of the documents – including the time of their making and viewing – negotiated in documentary films?

The two documentaries discussed in the following chapters – Kanerva Cederström's *Two Uncles* (1991) and Chris Marker's *The Last Bolshevik* (1993) – were made at a time that, on the one hand, witnessed an increase in the use of archival documents and, on the other, saw the documentary reconsider its relationship to fiction. Writing on the cusp of the moment, Linda Williams observes that documentaries from this period engage with a "newer, more contingent, relative, postmodern truth,"[2] instead of pursuing a single, unitary truth. Concurrent to the discourse of simulacras in critical theory and the ubiquity of electronic image manipulation, the documentary's referential relationship to history came under scrutiny and encouraged filmmakers to weigh the ideologies and circumstances of different, competing truths in their stylistic choices. This resulted in explicit documentary interventions in established truths about the past – a feature Williams finds particularly remarkable in the "new documentary." Her prime example is Errol Morris's celebrated *The Thin Blue Line* (USA 1988) and the ways in which the documentary approaches the trauma of an inaccessible past and

intervenes in the course of historical events. *The Thin Blue Line* is driven by a desire to inaugurate a "new truth" that will ultimately set a convicted man free, but it is simultaneously very conscious of the manipulations involved in attempts to fulfill that desire. The film dramatizes a myriad of truth claims in striking film-noirish re-enactments of the inaccessible murder and thus foregrounds the different views on what took place on the night a police officer was gunned down in Dallas.

According to Morris, the function of the dramatic style of the film is "to take you into the mystery and drama of what people are saying and thinking. It's expressionistic rather than realistic. It works in service of ideas rather than facts."[3] Morris's documentary drama intervenes in the events by weighing what people think they saw, what they believed might have happened. This, according to Williams, inaugurates a documentary modality that deploys conflicting reverberations of the past in order to reveal the seduction of lies in the present.[4]

Two Uncles and *The Last Bolshevik* are equally invested in convoluted layers of history and contingent truths. The first addresses the disappearance of the filmmaker's uncle in World War Two and the second considers the life of the forgotten Soviet filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin. Both documentaries rely on the strong authorial presence of the filmmakers and border on fiction in their style. What distinguishes the two films from Morris's canonical piece is the central position of archival documents and their use. Whereas the re-enactments of the murder in *The Thin Blue Line* make up for the impossibility of representing the murder itself, *Two Uncles* and *The Last Bolshevik* are less interested in compensating for the impossibility of representation with dramatic strategies. Rather than approaching the past as unattainable, they frame it as immanent to the archival documents themselves. Instead of activating resonances across a fundamental gap, the documentaries make the documents speak a past that is immanent to them. This is not the referential past of a life lived, but a lively intensity that accrues the archival with an indeterminate sense of time unfolding.[5]

Two Uncles and *The Last Bolshevik* work with photographs, illustrations, film stills, feature film fragments, and period footage. Ultimately, though, both documentaries bend investments in the evidentiary qualities of these documents into explorations in embedded layers of time. This takes place within dispositions of remembering. Both documentaries approach their documents with first person narrators who embody a particular curiosity towards the images. They wonder and remember *with* the documents, and allow themselves to be taken beyond what is readily available in them. Put differently, the dispositions of remembering frame the archival documents

in ways that enable the two films to imagine in the present. Here, remembering is less about tracing the true outlines of the two individuals and more about engaging with past images in order to find surprising beginnings.

These beginnings turn into cinematic life stories; ventures in the possible twists and turns in the lives of the two men. Most importantly, instead of working to reveal the mysterious lives hidden behind the archival documents, the documentaries invest in finding ways for the two men to live on in cinema. This sets the two documentaries apart from, for example, the recent *Finding Vivian Maier* (John Maloof & Charlie Siskel, USA 2013) – a documentary that reconstitutes the life of a reclusive nanny through the photographs she took during her lifetime. In *Finding Vivian Maier*, the surprise discovery of her negatives at an auction leads to an expository narrative of the solitary person behind the photographs, whereas in *Two Uncles* and *The Last Bolshevik* the archival documents lead to stories where the lives of the two men acquire imaginary qualities.[6]

Tapping into the underpinning layers of the documents, the two documentaries replace the poetics of reconstitution with a focus on the incipient relationality of archival documents. By working with what is surprising and emergent in the documents, the films intervene in history by fashioning a cinematic lifeline for those who were not known and who are no longer here to be known. The *more-than-referential* is the force and content of these imaginations. In this realm, according to the narrator of *The Last Bolshevik,* "miracles are only one breath away from normality."

1. Frames of the photograph

A male voice reads a letter on the soundtrack: "May 10, 1938. Dear sister, here come some questions you should answer in Swedish and German. 1: name, 2: profession, 3: nationality […]" Simultaneously, a man approaches the camera in the aisle of a train. He is framed in a frontal silhouette, the shadowy black of his figure merging with enveloping beams of light. As he walks directly toward the camera, the silhouette grows darker. The man stops and turns to look into a compartment, and again the camera frames him from the front, this time in closer proximity. The man, however, is bound to the darkness of the silhouette's texture, the outlines of his uniform playing with the enveloping light. The camera then turns to the interior of the compartment, slowly sweeping from left to right, and finally stopping at a table on which a Russian tea glass, a passport, and a notebook are laid out. Under the notebook is a partly covered photograph that the camera subtly singles out. On the soundtrack, the male voice keeps reading the list of questions and briefly contends: "I am on the trains this summer and I often have to question foreigners."

In the photograph (Figure 1), a young man dressed in an army uniform looks directly at the camera. In the following scene, a man holds the official-looking photograph in his hand, letting the camera linger over its details. Touching the edges of the image, the man states in sonorous tones that the black cross of death does not appear in the image; he sees only a clear light. Soon after the assertion, an elderly woman is seen flipping through a photo album. The contents of the album are not revealed, but the woman's gestures of turning the pages and pasting photos onto them associate to the hands holding the photograph in the preceding scene.

Passing through the hands of many, the photograph is held and looked at from various perspectives throughout the film. From the prologue to the epilogue, Kanerva Cederström's documentary film *Two Uncles* (*Kaksi enoa*, Finland 1991) invites the spectator to look at the photograph and to follow the gazes of others.[1] The shadowy figure in the aisle of the train as well as the letter read on the soundtrack initiate the spectator to the photograph's centrality in the film.

Two Uncles is an account of the disappearance of Paavo Seetrivuo, the filmmaker's uncle, in World War Two. He disappeared in the battle of Hästö, an island in the Gulf of Finland on the Hanko front on 18 July 1941 and has not been heard from since. Even though he was pronounced dead in 1961, his figure is still covered in a veil of mystery. Above all, the enigma emanates

Figure 1: Uncle Paavo in his uniform. Frame enlargement courtesy of the filmmaker.

from the fact that his body was never found.[2] The uncertainty caused by the disappearance created a situation in which the family imagined him leading a life somewhere else, unharmed but unable to return.

The photograph of Paavo that surfaces several times over the course of the film is a clue to the mystery surrounding his disappearance. The photograph leads into the equivocations about the disappearance and the various possibilities of survival envisioned by different people. The documentary follows the sequence of events that has kept Paavo's life a possibility for the family and documents the external fields of Paavo's photograph, the visions of his survival.

Deictic rules of suspense

The introduction of the photograph in *Two Uncles* is reminiscent of detective stories and mystery novels. The photograph is provided as a clue, as a sign for which the referent remains to be revealed. Starting from the mysterious setting on the train and the partly covered photograph on the table, the film gradually builds a mesh of accounts around the photograph and thus proposes possible referents to saturate the sign. The photograph is given as a starting point for the sequence of events that follow.[3]

Put differently, *Two Uncles* opens in a deictic manner. It encourages looking at the photograph and following the connections Paavo's image leads to without sealing the meaning of the image. Mary Ann Doane describes the deictic function in terms of pointing a finger – an act that could be expressed verbally as "look at this!" It only asserts a presence by pointing "there!" The deictic index is a sign that acquires a referent "in relation to a specific and unique situation of discourse, the here and now of speech."[4]

The photograph is introduced as a deictic sign that gets formulated in the particular relations it falls into within the film.

Doane gives Fritz Lang's *M* (1931) as an example of deictic storytelling in cinema. Lang's film is structured around the murder of Elsie Beckmann and gradually develops with deictic indices to make its case. For example, the whistled Peer Gynt Suite is heard multiple times during the film. At first, the tune is without a referent, or the referent is uncertain, but toward the end, a blind man notes that he had heard the same tune on the day Elsie Beckmann was murdered. The tune becomes the killer's referent only gradually.[5]

Another example of deictic storytelling can be found in the cinema of Alfred Hitchcock, Madeleine's hairdo in *Vertigo* (1958) being perhaps the most obvious example. Hitchcock builds the intrigue of his films with signs that acquire meaning over the course of events. He fashions his films on the promise of meaning. For example, *Strangers on a Train* (1951) opens with a scene of two men getting out of taxis at the train station; only their shoes are framed in the image as they step out of their cars one after the other and walk toward a train. The camera stays at ground level, and the men's faces are not shown before their feet accidentally touch in the train's lounge car. The beginning creates a suspense that feeds the flow of the following events. The Hitchcockian "rules of suspense" often include a deictic opening that sets the tone the rest of the film plays on.[6]

Over the first minutes of its runtime, *Two Uncles* introduces the photograph within the logic of deictic suspense. The film asserts an imperative to look at the image and suggests relations in which the photograph might acquire a referent. Following the structural dynamics of a detective story, *Two Uncles* proposes weighing the discursive relations in which the photograph gets articulated. The discursive relations follow a chronology that gives them an order of emphasis. The events right after the disappearance are told from the mother's perspective, then moving on to Paavo's sisters and finally to his nieces. The order is by no means straightforward, but it provides a sense of the changes that have taken place over time. The perspectives overlap and merge, creating a scale of proximity and distance, in which the film proceeds from those who were closest to him to more distant relatives and acquaintances.

From the start, Paavo's case is formulated in an almost exhausting variety of discursive relations; several letters from various individuals are read aloud on the soundtrack, where they collide with multiple interviews. In each letter and interview, the bearings of the case get a slightly different formulation. The multitude of perspectives challenges any clear

definitions of the disappearance and its details. The mesh instigated with the photograph proposes an intriguing topography of possibilities and their undulations. The missing uncle permeates the family, changing form on the way.[7]

Paavo's mother, who was adamant about her son's survival, is assigned the first prominent perspective in the flux of letters and interviews. When the film was made, she had already passed away, so her unyielding belief has been re-enacted for the camera. In a particularly striking scene, an elderly woman takes Paavo's photograph to an office as if she were asking for details about her son's whereabouts. Shot with rich black-and-white textures, light beams creating shadowy figures reminiscent of the very first images of the film, the scene gives form to the certainty the mother invested in her son's survival. On the soundtrack, a male voice describes the emotional intensity involved in the mother's visits to the army headquarters with Paavo's young wife after the disappearance.

The indexical certainty of the photograph

The mother's perspective brings another side of indexicality into play in the film. The suspense structure intertwines with the photograph as trace that provides an injection of certainty to the film. Whereas the discourses around the photograph consist of fragments of information, beliefs, suppositions and their variations, the young slender man in his official uniform is the one thing that is certain. To paraphrase Roland Barthes, the photograph would not exist if Paavo had not once been in front of the lens.[8] Barthes' argument is close to C.S. Peirce's claim that "an index is a sign which would, at once, lose the character which makes it a sign if its object were removed [...]."[9] For Barthes, the reality of the photograph is the reality of the young man's pose that once took place in front of the camera's lens. For Peirce, the indexical photograph shares a causal physical connection with its object that is articulated in the moment of taking the photograph.[10] For Barthes and for Peirce, the importance is in the existential relationship of an object and a sign. In the case of Paavo's photograph, there is a certainty that such a pose has existed.

With the mother's perspective, *Two Uncles* starts to build on the dual function of the index: the uncertainty of the suspense structure and the existential certainty of the photograph as trace. In the above-mentioned scene, the photograph takes the place of the uncle, so strong is the investment in its reality. The certainty the mother assigns to the photograph resonates

closely with André Bazin's time-honored analysis of a photograph's relation to its object:

> The photographic image is the object itself, the object freed from the conditions of space and time that govern it. No matter how fuzzy, distorted or discolored, no matter how lacking in documentary value the image may be, it shares, by virtue of the very process of its becoming, the being of the model of which it is the reproduction; it is the model.[11]

The scene foregrounds the certainty invested in the image, a certainty that emerges both in the way the old woman holds the photograph and passes it to the official in the re-enactment as well as in how the situation is described on the soundtrack.[12] The mother's investment is connected to the reality of the photograph that has taken the place of Paavo. The film documents the mother's subjective investment in the image, her obsessive insistence in its reality.

The subjective investment coincides with Philip Rosen's reading of Bazin's ontology of the image. He argues that any reading of Bazin's ontology should begin with the subject and particularly the subject's phenomenological intentionality toward the image.[13] Although Bazin's ontology foregrounds an objective pre-given real, Rosen notes that the real is accessible and objective only through subjective processes. Within the suspense structure of the documentary, the reality of the photograph is weighed precisely in terms of the various degrees of subjective investment in its reality.

Both Bazin and Barthes argue that the relationship of the photograph to its model gives rise to a particular innocence. Barthes in particular foregrounds that the intensive experience of reality encountered in some photographs is "without culture," in the sense that it is stripped of all codes that tie the image to systems of signification.[14] The decoded bind of the pose and the image allows the photograph to be experienced in a unique manner that often escapes words. Approaching the issue from the ontological perspective of the photographic medium, André Bazin continues:

> Only the impassive lens, stripping its object of all those ways of seeing it, those piled-up preconceptions, that spiritual dust and grime with which my eyes have covered it, is able to present it in all its virginal purity to my attention and consequently to my love.[15]

The emphasis Barthes and Bazin place on wiping the object of its cultural weight in the photograph is connected to an ideal of purity. Especially in

Bazin, it is as if the photograph provided a pathway to an essence that was otherwise out of reach. Similarly, the accounts of the astrologer and the mother envelop the person in the photograph with an aura of clear light. In their scope, the official appearance of the photograph is wiped out and a pure essence is brought forth.

The time of the disappearance

In *Two Uncles*, the reality of the photograph – its spiritual essence – is connected to the setting of wartime disappearances. The "clear light" is not simply a question of a directly recorded pose, but fundamentally linked to the specific time of its taking. The suspense storyline emerges from the temporal specificity of the disappearance. In his outline of neo-realism, Bazin argues that stripping the object of preconditions is linked to a spiritual attachment to the period in question. In the context of Italian neo-realist film, he foregrounds that the films operate in relation to the specific spiritual circumstances of Italian Liberation in the 1940s. Hence, for example, Roberto Rossellini's *Paisà* (1946) has a documentary feel to it – not because of its directly recorded fragments on the streets of Florence, but because the fragments are organized according to a particular spiritual attitude typical to the period.[16]

The dual logic in Bazin's thinking is that while Italian neo-realist film-makers shot extensively on location, documenting its architecture, material conditions and social texture, their films are also marked by a particular sensibility – the spirit of the Liberation. In this sense, the documentary feel Bazin gives neo-realism arises from the combination of footage that is the reality of the location and a temporal experience of the location. In a way, *Two Uncles* displays a similar logic. It relies on photographs and the particular feel of uncertainty involved in wartime disappearances. From this perspective, the key to the documentary value of the re-enacted scenes is not in the spatial referencing of the disappearance but in the way the film takes into account the particular time of the disappearance.[17] From this perspective, the imagined scenes hardly diminish the documentary value of the film, quite the opposite: the imagined scenes staged for the camera acknowledge the suspense and uncertainty caused by wartime disappearances.

In *Two Uncles*, one of the strongest moments is precisely the scene in which an elderly woman walks into an office and hands the photograph to an official. The light beams and walls of shadow foreground the mother's

solitary investment in the photograph's reality and the rather desolate circumstances of wartime disappearances. She walks into a big room where there is only one desk and a man sitting behind it. She places the photograph on the desk in front of the official who takes it in his hands. The face of the man is not revealed. The mother is alone with her belief.

Drawing from Bazin, documentary value is not reducible to preservation in concrete fragments of reality, but it emerges "after the fact" – in relation to the attitude that connects them. Documentary value is positioned between the reality of the photograph and the style of the film that acknowledges the reality the photograph was taken from.[18] In this sense, the documentary value of Italian neo-realism is not something that could be verified, it has to be felt. The relationship of *Two Uncles* to World War Two is comparable to Bazin's outline of documentary value in neo-realism. With the re-enacted and imagined scenes, *Two Uncles* aims at acknowledging the reality of the disappearance, the time of war.

Here, *Two Uncles* is in close proximity to Péter Forgács's celebrated archival documentary *The Maelstrom – A Family Chronicle* (Hungary 1997). In the film, Forgács tells the Peereboom family history before and during World War Two with home movies. Starting from a family celebration in 1934, the film ends with the family preparing for a trip to a "work camp" in 1942. The everyday footage of birthdays, city life, days on the beach, children playing, and adults dancing is juxtaposed with a gloomy jazz score that envelops the family documents. Subtitles are used to identify the family members in the home movies and occasionally the period sound of radio broadcasts ties family events to national events, such as sport championships and regal celebrations, and eventually the rise of the Nazis.

The Maelstrom acknowledges the time of the Holocaust by emphasizing the relationship between everyday family life and the concurrent inescapability of their faith. It thus provides a private perspective on the Holocaust and prompts thinking about the off-screen areas of official histories. Whereas Cederström evokes imagination in relation to the events after the war, Forgács focuses on the events leading to the extermination of the Dutch family. His film imagines family life and everyday activities in the shadow of the Nazis.[19]

Bazin's outline of documentary value has an intriguing connection to Doane's description of the specificity of cinematic time. She argues that one of the attractions of cinema is in how it endows singular instants with significance without relinquishing their singularity. For her, cinematic time is a combination of contingent instants and their abstracted duration.[20] The

singular instants are an issue of indexicality. In cinema, the instants take the form of photograms and are involved in a temporal tension specific to the medium. On the one hand, the indexical instants assert a presence – they designate a "here" or a "that" – but, on the other hand, they also make a past present. This dual function creates a tension that ties cinema to a doubled reality. According to Doane, an indexical instant designating a presence is part and parcel of an unfolding time. As the instant exists in relation to an unfolding time, it is also tied to a possibility of becoming something else; in this sense, the designating index is on the verge. The other side of indexicality appears as the instant is placed in an organizing framework, when it is used as an element in the recreation of a temporal event. In this case, the index is saturated with content. Doane argues that when a sign is given a referent, it becomes a trace imbued with a lure of historicity – the index as trace is used to rescue a historical instant in its screening.[21]

Rosen reads Bazin's ontology in a manner that is strikingly close to Doane's outline. He argues that the indicating work of the index asserts a gap between the referent and the mechanically produced images, a gap that is overcome in the subjective investment in the image. The mechanically produced images do not promise anything in themselves, but, as they are placed within an organizing frame "after the fact," they contribute to the subject's struggle vis-à-vis materiality in the state of change.[22] The abstract duration in Doane aligns with Rosen's subjective investment that promises to "mummify change" in the temporal flow of physical reality. The lure of historicity is thus a lure for the subject faced with uncontrollable change.

In Bazin's discussion, cinema resists the irreversible flow of time, first by stripping its object of codes and then by organizing it into a new composition. This new composition mummifies change in the sense that it creates a new environment for the objects, a new lifeline so to speak. He declares that "[n]ow, for the first time, the image of things is likewise the image of their duration, change mummified as it were."[23] For Bazin, the abstracted time of the new lifeline preserves the temporal object for the perceiving subject. The historicity of the image – the image as trace – is tied to an intentional subject.

Whereas Bazin is interested in mummifying the flow of time, Doane argues for cinema's capabilities of working with change.[24] Even though cinema works to organize the unpredictable flow of time and its indices into traces, it still holds on to the promise of contingency inherent in the designated instants. For Doane, the specificity of cinematic time is in the indexically inscribed instants that also mark what could have been otherwise.[25] The suspense storyline in *Two Uncles* depends on the very claim that

history could have unfolded otherwise: it entangles with Bazin's subjective investments and the tension Doane constitutes between contingency and abstract duration.

Ogonyok and the gleam of "maybe"

The possibility that history could have unfolded otherwise is introduced with an event that took place one day in February 1949, eight years after Paavo had gone missing. On that day, an issue of the Soviet *Ogonyok* magazine was delivered to the family home in Helsinki from Moscow. No sender was marked on the envelope and the family never found out why the issue was sent to them. It was the only issue of *Ogonyok* they ever received. On the cover is a reproduction of a painting of a slender young man holding a Soviet emblem above his head (Figure 2).

As the camera moves over the surface of the magazine, a female voice on the soundtrack explains that Paavo's mother was certain that the young man in the cover was her son. The account on the soundtrack is followed by a scene shot from the ground floor of an apartment building. The same elderly woman walks in front of the large windows of the building, carrying what seems to be a magazine similar to *Ogonyok*.[26] The woman glances through the windows and continues on her way. She seems assured and confident yet rather solitary in her appearance. The woman's movements are accompanied by the sound of feet walking down the stairs. The walking is punctuated by the sound of a mailbox opening and closing.

The scene emphasizes the mother's conviction that the *Ogonyok* cover is, like the photograph, a sign of certainty. The female voice narrating the mother's sentiments intertwines with an interview with Paavo's sisters, who were initially more skeptical about the possibility. Paavo's sisters form a balancing counter-perspective to the mother's persistence. They look at the cover with a rationale that argues the impossibility of it being an image of their brother. In the interview, one of the sisters clearly states her disbelief.

Despite the initial rationale of the interview, the sisters soon begin to equivocate on the possibility of Paavo's survival – after all, such stories were not unheard of. Soon, one of the sisters reveals that ever since 1954, every trip she made to Moscow or St. Petersburg was marked by looking around, observing people, with the thought that one of them could be the lost brother. In the short discussion heard on the soundtrack, the signifying powers of the magazine cover change from the very unlikely case of it

Figure 2: The February 1949 issue of *Ogonyok* delivered to the family home in Helsinki. Reproduction courtesy of the filmmaker.

being their brother to the high probability that the young man in the image could be him. The magazine cover makes the thought of Paavo's survival a renewed possibility for the family.

The *Ogonyok* cover forms a threshold in the flux of the various perspectives because it disrupts the indexical connection with an object and brings

the various takes on the disappearance under a general "maybe." Unlike the photograph, the cover no longer advocates the certainty that a pose once existed before the lens and therefore it changes the scope of the relations that form around it. Even though the painted cover continues to verify the indexical existence of her son for the mother, it lacks the physical connection a photograph possesses with its object. It disrupts the primacy of technology in the affirmation of documentary value.[27]

The filmmaker notes that the family would undergo "crazy fits" at regular intervals when the issue of *Ogonyok* had been misplaced and could not be found immediately.[28] The magazine, despite its uncertainty (or perhaps precisely because of the uncertainty), became a sort of a family icon. In a manner reminiscent of Bazin's statement, the magazine cover came to signify the missing young man, no matter how uncertain its documentary quality was.

The *Ogonyok* cover and its strange delivery change the tone of the film. For the remainder of its duration, the documentary veers away from investments in the photograph to the possibilities evoked by the painted cover. According to the filmmaker, after Paavo's mother was no longer there to keep the idea of Paavo's survival alive, the issue was laid to rest. However, yet another strange event put the uncle back in the family's frame. In 1988, an old friend of Paavo's was passing through Moscow and in a hotel lobby, an elderly man dressed in a uniform approached, addressed her in German, kissed her hand, and left. Back in Finland, the woman, Irja Kohonen, contacted Paavo's relatives and suggested that it was Paavo who had walked up to her in the hotel. The two had known each other in Rajajoki, Paavo's prewar post, where he had recited aphorisms to her in German. Also, it was a habit of his to include German verses in his letters.

The woman gives an account of the event on the soundtrack, accompanied by images of a hotel lobby. In the beautiful hall, the camera finds an old man sitting in a lounge chair. The mutual implication of the voice on the soundtrack and the visuals of the hotel suggest that this could be the man who disappeared several decades ago. Instigated by the woman's strange encounter, the missing uncle starts to take form independently of the photographic pose and the varying degrees of investment in the reality of the image. Thus, it adds to the orientation initiated by the *Ogonyok* cover.

The blind fields of narrative suspense

The suspense narrative is animated by the subjective investments in the photograph and the possibilities evoked by the uncertainty of the magazine

cover. With this narrative, *Two Uncles* documents the possibilities in the photograph's and the magazine cover's "blind fields." Barthes argues that a blind field is a life external to the photograph, a life that is brought about in the particular relationship formed with the image's spectator.[29] A photograph can entice the spectator into an adventure in the topos of the blind field; in a topos that is not coded in the image itself, although its limits are set by the image.[30] The blind field is dependent on a point in the image, a point that "pricks" the viewer to think of the photograph beyond its systematized position or cultural codes. Barthes names the pricking point punctum.[31]

Two Uncles follows the chronology of events that marks Paavo's disappearance and represents the case in a manner that puts the emphasis on the fact that history could, indeed, have unfolded otherwise. The detective story is a representative abstraction of the unclear events and varying sensibilities around the disappearance. From this perspective, the suspense storyline aligns with Doane's insistence on the contingency of an index. She argues that the cut in the abstracted chain of events echoes the verge of contingent moments on another level.[32] The cut restores the sense of contingency to the abstracted chain of events. It makes the narrative resonate with the sense that history could have unfolded otherwise and thus enables the documentary to capture the sensation that Paavo could indeed have survived.

The narrative logic of *Two Uncles* is, however, not quite enough to account for the work of imagination in the documentary. The suspense storyline intertwines with an audiovisual regime of another order. The encounter in the Moscow hotel in 1988 is not only the ultimate incident in the chronology of events but it also prompted the beginnings of *Two Uncles*. The film is based on an identically titled short story written in 1988 by the filmmaker's cousin, the Finnish author Leena Krohn.[33] The script of the film was co-authored by Cederström and Krohn, uniting the two authors in the events around their uncle's disappearance.

The authorial touch is foregrounded in the first-person narration that entwines with the photographs, re-enactments, interviews, and archival footage that constitute the film. The narrator's account is taken almost word for word from Krohn's short story, and a third woman lends her voice to the narration. The first-person narrator brings the two authors into the world of the film, but her voice does not turn the audiovisual material into screens of subjective memory. Instead, the narrator foregrounds remembering *with* the audiovisual material.[34] The distance between the missing uncle and the narrating voice turns the documentary's work from asserting Paavo's presence with his images to creating an idea of the uncle within the audiovisual

composition. Over the final scene, in which several generations of the family are gathered around a table to go through photographs, the female narrator states: "I remember him even though I never met him."[35]

Exceeding referentiality, imagining in relations

The change of emphasis toward the end puts the audiovisual composition of the film into a new frame. What appeared to be a detective story now emerges as a series of voices, bodies, places, and events where connections and relationships are less definite. Attention turns from represented duration in the series of scenes to the possible relations between voices and bodies, still images and film fragments. For example, the interviews that previously drew attention to the fluctuation of certainty and uncertainty within the family now appear detached from the base narrative. The interviewees are not clearly identified; one may only assume their identity from what they say and how the narrator's voice resonates with them. The voices and bodies are never synchronized, but the people seen in the images are often silent while their voices hover over the images, often seeping into the next scene.

Moreover, the documentary includes footage from the particular locations that marked the events around Paavo's disappearance – the cityscapes of Helsinki and Moscow as well as Paavo's post on the Russian border – but nothing pins the footage down to the specificity of the locations; rather, their specificity appears from how they are perceived within the film. Archival footage mixes with contemporary footage shot in black and white. The camera pans softly over the river that traverses the area where Paavo worked before the war; it frames unidentifiable corners and arcades in Moscow and encompasses wartime footage from the bombings of Helsinki. These images, which admittedly are of actual locations, do not function as signs of the specific locations in the regime of imagination constituted in *Two Uncles*.

In one scene, archival footage from wartime Helsinki is accompanied by the sound of film going through the projector's gauge. The sound of a projector underlines the act of perceiving the footage – as if the narrator were watching a film. Scenes of youngsters bathing and parachutists in the sky are followed by people cycling and a city street teeming with cars. The distinct provenances and temporal realms of the scenes suggest that the narrator may remember her uncle precisely by looking at and imagining with images of the past. Remembering the missing uncle is not about

preserving his presence in the face of death, but about imagining a life irrespective of his disappearance.

Imagining a life aligns with what Deleuze calls having an idea in film. An idea created in a film cannot be equated with having an idea in general: having an idea is immanent to the particular form of expression.[36] In this case, the idea of the uncle is indiscernible from the connections fashioned between audiovisual materials from different origins. *Two Uncles* creates an idea that is held together in the act of remembering suggested by the film's disposition.[37] From this perspective, the idea of the uncle created in the short story that inspired the making of the film deviates from the one created in the documentary. The short story places the emphasis on the *Ogonyok* cover, whereas the documentary begins and works with the photograph. The short story describes the details of the reproduced painting, from the color shades to the expression on the young man's face. In the documentary, the camera sweeps over the image, silently perceiving its details.

Having an idea in film involves weighing the connections and disjunctions between the speaking voices and the posing bodies, the images, and the letters read aloud. The relations suggested between distinct regimes of images and sounds formulate an idea of the uncle at a remove from the foundational setting of the disappearance. The disappearance and the consequent uncertainties offer the film its starting point, but the created idea is not tied to the investments that belong to the time of the disappearance. The documentary imagines the two uncles in its audiovisual disposition.

The crystal-image; imagining a life, a death

A photograph suspends the rhythm of the film – its narrative flow – and creates a time of reflection for the viewer. In *Two Uncles*, the camera that moves on the surfaces of the images occupies the role of the viewer. Returning to the scenes in which the photograph of Paavo (Figure 1) is held or in which the camera moves on the surface of the *Ogonyok* cover (Figure 2), it seems that the camera was precisely simulating a pensive look, one that was contemplating the relations that open up from the images.[38]

The pensive camera that appears in *Two Uncles* aligns with having an idea of the uncle in the documentary. Tied to the movement of the camera, the act of remembering suggests that the idea of the uncle is created in the relations between bodies and voices, images and sounds. The camera-consciousness within the film detaches the documentary from the absolute immobility of the photograph and the certainty of the pose that once existed

before the lens. Moreover, it diverges from the adventures in the blind fields of the photograph. The pensive camera does not look at the photograph – or any other image – in order to get to the contingency of the time of its making (the past moment of recording); its look foregrounds the photograph itself.[39]

This resonates with Geoffrey Batchen's claim that the frame plays a significant role in the memorial powers accorded to photography. The photograph refers to what has been, but the frame foregrounds the image in itself.[40] Thus, the photograph is not simply a sign of an external reality, but a powerful assertion in its own right. In *Two Uncles*, the frame enhances the photograph's memorial powers by foregrounding the teeming sensation of time immanent to the photograph. In a way, the frame replaces the stillness of the photograph with immanent mobility.[41]

Framing photographs connects *Two Uncles* to other documentary works that unfold realities immanent to photographs and archival footage. For example, the Portuguese filmmaker Susana de Sousa Dias explores images produced during the 48 years of Portuguese dictatorship (1926–1974) in her documentary film *Still Life* (Portugal 2006). The filmmaker uses photographs of political prisoners, archival material, news footage, and propaganda documentaries from the era that ended with the Carnation Revolution of 1974.

There is no guiding voiceover in the film, but a musical soundtrack envelops the archival images and enhances the sensation that there is more to the images than their actual visible form. Particularly striking is a recurring scene of what appears to be a national address directed at the people. The scene occurs three times in the film and, between the occurrences, a number of photographs of political prisoners become associated with it. In the scene, the dictator António de Oliveira Salazar stands on a balcony before an arsenal of microphones. In the first occurrence, Salazar's slowed down movements coincide with a composition of industrial noises on the soundtrack. The soundtrack takes hold of some of his drawn-out gestures and gives volume to the slowed down movements. The scene is reminiscent of numerous other filmed national addresses and gains in weight as the soundtrack punctuates and elongates the documented gestures of the dictator. In the second occurrence, the dictator's gestures are more imposing and the composition grows more decisive and ominous. The third and last occurrence of the scene at the end of the film is a prelude to the Carnation Revolution. Here, the musical score is brighter in tone, expectant in spirit. The dictator is allowed a quick bow to the nation, followed by a cut to footage of the old Salazar at the end of his era. The images of the Portuguese

dictatorship become expressive in their association with the music that envelops them.[42]

When the camera frames Paavo's photograph for the last time, the photograph becomes expressive of two coexistent layers of time. The suspense narrative has created a feeling that the photograph's referentiality is not straightforward or clear-cut, but the immanent power of the still image gets foregrounded only when the photograph is suspended from the detective story. When the photograph is stilled from the subjective adventures and investments and the abstracted duration of the story, it becomes charged with a powerful sensation of time passing.[43]

Stilled from the detective story, the photograph becomes expressive of two coexistent layers of time: the present captured in the image and a virtual duration that produces a sensation of time passing. The time that passes is complemented with a stilled present, and the present coexists with a time that passes. Deleuze calls the indiscernible coexistence of the two layers a crystal-image of time.[44] In his view, since the past and the present coexist, time must divide itself in two at each moment. Each present splits into two "dissymmetrical jets," one of which makes the present pass on and the other preserves all the past.[45] What we see in the crystal-image is time splitting into two directions. What we see in the stilled photograph in *Two Uncles* is a present that passes on and a past forever preserved.

Deleuze's conceptualization of time foregrounds non-chronological time – "Cronos, not Chronos," as he puts it – which is a fundamentally different conception of time from Doane's notion of abstract duration. For Deleuze, Cronos is not the interior in us and thus it cannot be mummified; rather, it is "the interiority in which we are, in which we move, live and change."[46] Documentary imagination must therefore be posited differently according to the two temporal regimes. Following Bazin, Barthes, and Doane, the documentary represents the specificity of the temporal circumstances a film emerges from. What is captured is an immobile slice of time with which the past can be represented; a past made present in its absence. With Deleuze's crystal-image, an actual present – although stilled – forms a circuit with a virtual past and thus the crystal-image can produce a sensation of time passing and splitting into two.[47] Here, the past is not forever absent – and thus in need of being represented – but virtually present.

In *Two Uncles*, the framed photograph emerges as a crystal that divides into two jets, one in which the uncle is an elegant elderly gentleman living in Moscow. The other uncle is a young, slender, fair-haired officer forever preserved in the past of the photograph. The two jets that give the documentary its name emerge as the camera frames the photograph for the last

time. The narrator gives a verbal form to the produced sensation: "After this story, I have two uncles."

The narrator goes on to describe the life of the older gentleman who walks along the boulevards of the bustling city with his soldierly posture and still holds a job. He has his daily routines that he executes with adamant precision. He is stylish and graceful, although outlined with a mysterious and silent fatality. The narrator's depiction connects with archival and contemporary footage from the streets of Moscow, its subways and facades. Statues, buildings, and hallways become a part of the gentleman's urban environment. It could be that this is the very uncle that the old neighbor of the family claims to have encountered in Moscow in 1988. The young man who once had the future ahead of him coexists with the elderly gentleman. The narrator notes that the uncle's "shape changes from the dead to the living in an eye-blink." He has "a maybe-life and a maybe-death" that are variations of the two jets of time expressed in the crystal-image. With the photographic crystal-image of time, the documentary imagines the two uncles; a life and a death.

2. A documentary fable

Chris Marker's *The Last Bolshevik* (*Le tombeau d'Alexandre*, France 1993) is a documentary film about the late Soviet filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin and his century.[1] Marker's film discusses an era through the portrait of one man, and it fashions Medvedkin's portrait with photographs, film stills, and film fragments that belong to the Soviet century. Archival documents from Medvedkin's epoch intertwine with six letters that Marker directs at Medvedkin on the soundtrack.

The Last Bolshevik aligns in style with Jean-Luc Godard's exploration of the twentieth century in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (France 1988–1998). Both explore the history of cinema through its images, and simultaneously formulate critical arguments about the conditions and effects of those images. Whereas Godard is ultimately interested in the concept of cinema, Marker's work is a political homage to his long-time colleague and friend. Both, however, are deeply intrigued by the dissonances of what is seen and said in the images of the twentieth century.

Indeed, the relationship between visual form, written text, and speech is crucial to Marker's documentary. *The Last Bolshevik* approaches still images and film clips from Medvedkin's lifetime with the aim of cracking open their formulaic meanings and interpretations. What remains are image-fragments suspended from their original contexts; documents that speak with a new voice in the frame of the documentary. This connects *The Last Bolshevik* to the notion of the fable. Jacques Rancière argues that film is a "thwarted fable"[2] established on the conflict between the visible and the discursive, a dissensus that grants film political agency. In speaking of Godard's *La Chinoise* (France 1967), Rancière states: "The task of art is to separate, to transform the continuum of image-meaning into a series of fragments, postcards, lessons."[3]

Marker's film intervenes in the continua of narrative meaning and historical descriptions, yet the image-fragments at the heart of *The Last Bolshevik* are not completely detached from these dimensions. It is rather that the gestures of suspension allow a multiplicity of expressions to emerge and entangle with the narrative and historical articulations. In Rancière's language, "imageness" comprises the interplay between mechanically recorded visibility and intentional discursive acts (such as artistic operations), and once the dissonance in this interplay intervenes in vectors of meaning, images can become pensive.[4] The image-fragments in *The Last Bolshevik* are pensive in Rancière's sense of the term because

they foreground the dissonant relationality between the seen and the said. Moreover, they formulate the documentary's political agency in explicit lessons with which the viewer is guided through the century of the Soviets and the cinema.[5]

Remembering Medvedkin, rewriting history

The starting point to *The Last Bolshevik* is that Alexander Ivanovich Medvedkin's career has barely been mentioned in histories of Russian film, with a notable exception in Jay Leyda's work. Nor have his films been seen widely. Medvedkin's feature films did not get extensive distribution and therefore they have become available in the West only gradually – and are still not well known. However, *The Last Bolshevik* does not repair the unfamiliarity by simply accounting for Medvedkin's films and deeds, but goes back to the images of his century and focuses on what can be seen in them. The documentary, in other words, does not content itself with writing the omitted chapter and representing information to be remembered about the Soviet filmmaker. Instead, it looks at images from the twentieth century and works with them to imagine the life of Alexander Medvedkin.

The Last Bolshevik makes particular use of images and scenes from Soviet cinema and the scenes are complemented with numerous interviews with Medvedkin's contemporaries, family, colleagues, later filmmakers and film enthusiasts. The interviewees give varying and sometimes conflicting accounts of what Medvedkin was like, what kinds of obstacles he faced during his career, and how he negotiated his filmmaking with his ideological commitment. The topics of the interviews vary from his love of animals to detailed descriptions of his horse theatre productions in the Red Cavalry and how the film-trains Medvedkin worked on were equipped. Some interviews do not deal with Medvedkin at all, but give accounts of his contemporaries, such as the Jewish author Isaac Babel or Dziga Vertov. Through Medvedkin, *The Last Bolshevik* creates a portrait of the whole generation; there is a continuous movement between the particular and the general in the documentary.

This movement coincides with Rancière's idea of the fable. Film fables are written with fragments from other fables in the irrevocable movement between narrative "lessons" and image-fragments. Fragments extracted from other fables are, in a sense, silenced in order to make them "speak again" in a new manner in other fables.[6] In this way, image-fragments may halt or suspend narrative logic "in favour of an indeterminate expressive

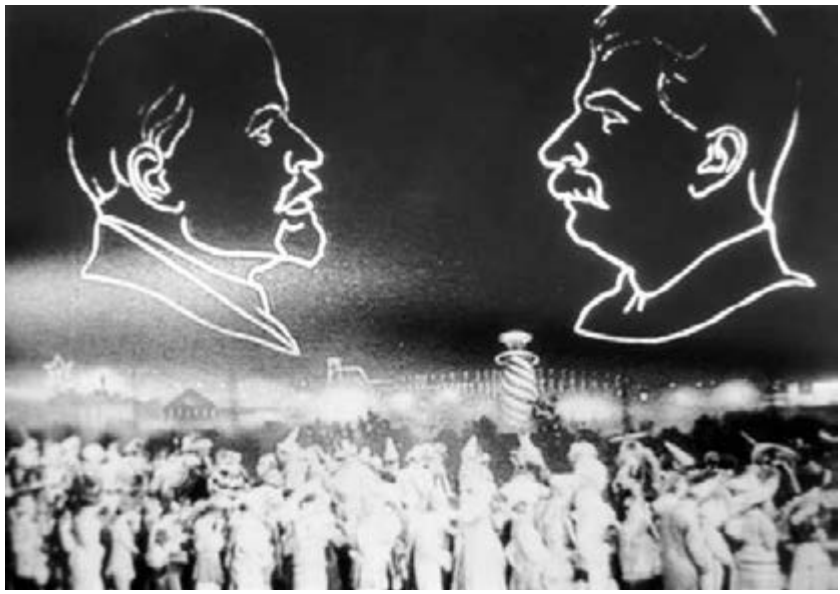

Figure 3: A scene from Medvedkin's *New Moscow* (USSR 1938) reframed in *The Last Bolshevik*. Frame enlargement courtesy of Icarus Films.

logic."[7] Film is a thwarted fable because it works in-between narration and expression.

In *The Last Bolshevik*, photographs of Medvedkin, scenes of his films, and film footage of him speak about an era instead of simply referring to one man. The blurring of referential relations is obviously a more general feature in Marker's œuvre – from such early political films as *Statues Also Die* (1953) and *Le Joli Mai* (1962) to the widely discussed works *La Jetée* (1962) and *Sunless* (1982) – and it often ties in with the question of memory, the theme through which Marker approaches cinema and the theme with which he has been written into film history.[8] In *The Last Bolshevik*, the centrality of memory is exemplified with an epigraph borrowed from the author George Steiner: "It is not the past that rules us, it is images of the past." Marker's approach to Medvedkin is tinted with the idea that we remember the twentieth century and, in this case, the Soviet century, through its images. As images of the past affect how we can remember in the present, they need to be "scrubbed" in order for new ways of thinking to arise.

The Last Bolshevik, then, uses scenes from early Soviet avant-garde, agitprop film-train material, musicals, environmental films, and feature films that promoted Stalin's personality cult and gives the viewer an idea of what it took to make these films and what they were meant to do in the

society. However, by reframing these extracts the documentary isolates them from both the historical fable of the role of cinema in the Soviet state and from the alternative fable on the role of the state in cinema, and makes them speak again – this time about Alexander Medvedkin. Whereas images of Medvedkin speak of an era, images of the Soviet era speak about an adamant Bolshevik constantly in trouble with Bolshevism.

According to Rancière, "the point, then, isn't to preserve Medvedkin's memory, but to create it."[9] *The Last Bolshevik* puts into practice the famous assertion from *Sunless*: "We do not remember, we rewrite memory much as history is rewritten." The repetition of iconic images from Medvedkin's century – such as the scene of the Odessa steps in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) – foregrounds the position these images have in our thoughts about the past. Their repetition and reframing enables rewriting memory, in the sense that history can be rewritten if we look at images of the past in their "silence." The documentary rewrites Alexander Medvedkin's memory by looking at images from his century. Simultaneously, it rewrites the story of a generation through the images of one man. Marker repeats in order to write again.[10]

Cinema and the Soviets

The documentary insists upon the fact that it could not have been made during Medvedkin's lifetime. "There were too many things to hush up then, now, there are too many to say," the narrator notes. Installing itself at a distance from its main character, *The Last Bolshevik* looks at the life of Alexander Medvedkin in the major upheavals of the Soviet century. Medvedkin was born in 1900 and died just before the Soviet era came to an end. The narrator ties Medvedkin to his century: "He was five and Lenin wrote *What is to be Done?*; seventeen – and he knew; twenty – the Civil War; thirty-six – the Moscow trials; forty-one – World War Two; fifty-three – Stalin's death; and when he himself dies in 1989 it is on the crest of Perestroika." The chronology establishes Medvedkin in relation to a specific period of history, but, as is typical of Marker's films more generally, the events of the period conjugate with one another in a more complex manner.

The narrator presents the list of events in relation to an interview Pascal Aubier did with Medvedkin in 1984. At first, the list of events is spoken over the Soviet filmmaker who sits in an armchair and talks. Then, the narrator changes his mode of address and takes hold of Medvedkin's monologue. He begins to translate his words instead of speaking over them and tells

the viewer that Medvedkin is reproaching him for not writing: "You lazy bastard, why don't you ever write – just a few lines, like this?" The last words of the translation – "like this?" – are synchronized with a freeze-frame of Medvedkin looking at the camera, holding up his hand and indicating the space between his thumb and forefinger. This is followed by an image in which a hand holds a pen and writes on a roll of paper. Simultaneously to the image, the narrator states that he will try to write even though Medvedkin is no longer there to listen. The camera zooms closer to Medvedkin's fingers, as if it wanted to access his life and his century through the space between his fingers.

The letter is a frequent trope in Marker's films and it has often been interpreted as evoking the epistolary form and particularly Michel de Montaigne's dialogic mode of conversing about social and philosophical issues with friends who are no longer there to listen.[11] *The Last Bolshevik* is structurally divided into six letters, but I would argue that the hand holding the pen and the idea of rewriting is more important in the documentary than the letterform as such.

The space between Medvedkin's fingers is the point of entry to the joint history of cinema and the Soviet system. It leads into a reframed scene from Yakov Protazanov's *Aelita: Queen of Mars* (USSR 1924). In the scene, Aelita looks at the pages of a book she has in her arms.[12] A cut to a scene from Medvedkin's *Happiness* (USSR 1934) ensues, suggesting that Aelita sees *Happiness* in her book. The solitary protagonist Khmyr dances on the page of the book. Another cut takes the viewer back to Aelita, who peeks a little closer and now sees a blurry scene of officials in white uniforms enjoying their time at a dance. Aelita sees two dance scenes – the first with a solitary peasant and the other with jubilant officials – that express the dualism of individual existence and the general line that marks both Medvedkin and his century.[13]

The Last Bolshevik also proposes a view of the relationship between the history of cinema and that of the Soviets in its structure. The documentary is divided into two parts: *The Kingdom of Shadows* and *The Shadows of a Kingdom*. The titles of the two parts bring forth the inherent paradox of the relationship: on the one hand, the cinema contributed to the constitution of the new Soviet state; on the other hand, it contributed to its ideological demise at the hands of Stalin.

The title of the first part – *The Kingdom of Shadows* – is borrowed from Maxim Gorky's account of the first cinema screening he saw in Moscow in 1896.[14] It covers Medvedkin's early years and his enthusiasm for the Soviet project. Medvedkin participated in the Civil War and speaks of his time in

the Red Cavalry with fondness. He planned and organized the *kino-poezd* system – a kino-train equipped with full production facilities – and traveled across the country to educate kolkhoz workers. *The Kingdom of Shadows* discusses cinema as one of the primary means in building the Soviet state. Cinema's capacity to show and tell – to make sense – are told in relation to Medvedkin's own excitement as well as that of his contemporaries.

Fragments of Medvedkin's satirical comedy *Happiness* run throughout *The Last Bolshevik* and they are interlaced with both Medvedkin's enthusiasm for cinema, changes in the Soviet society, and the transformations Medvedkin himself went through over his career. Fragments of *Happiness* are used to mirror the paradox of cinema and the Soviet system: In the kingdom of shadows, cinema is equipped with methods that enable the production of happiness in the Soviet state; in the shadows of a kingdom it produces appearances that simply maintain the status quo of the kingdom. In *The Shadows of a Kingdom*, cinema produces appearances that edify the Stalinist regime in power. What initially worked in the service of happiness turns into the lackey of a kingdom already in place.

In addition to the connection between the history of cinema and the history of Soviet communism, *The Last Bolshevik* suggests that the characters that act in the films from that era and the historical figures of the twentieth century are all connected through "an age of history."[15] The age of history is like a connective tissue that holds them together.[16] In this sense, the history of the Soviet era is a fable just like its cinema. In Rancière's view, characters and historical figures, historical fables and cinematic fables are of the same ontological tenor, of the same age, which makes them equal. The age of history abolishes discrimination between whose story is told and who gets to make history.[17] In the documentary context, this enables considering fragments of fiction as documents on a par with fragments recorded from reality. *The Last Bolshevik* proposes a non-hierarchical "flat ontology" between Medvedkin and cinematic characters, between cinematic fables and the history of the twentieth century. This allows the documentary to rewrite the memories of Alexander Medvedkin and his era in film.[18]

The documentary parallels Medvedkin with a number of historical figures. At the start of the film, a photograph of Medvedkin is placed next to a photograph of Prince Youssoupoff taken in 1900, the year of Medvedkin's birth. "Why not the day of your birth?", the narrator equivocates. "One day, you will direct films. One day, he will shoot Rasputin," the narrator continues, placing Medvedkin's birth amidst the power struggles in Czar Nicolas II's court. Then, Medvedkin's enthusiasm for the Russian Civil War is mirrored against Isaac Babel's criticism of the army and its anti-Semite

officials. Babel was a Ukrainian Jewish author who served in the Civil War – Medvedkin lived to be eighty-nine, but Babel was executed in Stalin's purges. Marker positions a photograph of Babel next to one of Medvedkin creating an angled double-composition in the frame. The narrator points out that "both [are] necessary to receive the tragedy in stereo."

The Last Bolshevik also introduces other figures that coincide with Medvedkin's life and career. Dziga Vertov is introduced as a talented communist who – like Medvedkin – did not manage to negotiate his art in relation to the will of the state. Sergei Eisenstein and Roman Karmen are introduced along with Vsevolod Meyerhold. Khmyr the hapless peasant from Medvedkin's *Happiness*, the singing workers from Ivan Pyryev's *Cossacks of the Kuban* (USSR 1949) as well as Mikhail Gelovani's impersonation of Stalin in several Mikhail Chiaureli films align with the historical figures as if they were of a common age. The historical figures and the cinematic characters are equal actors in Marker's documentary fable.

Unintentional documents

The flat ontology of image-fragments and the connective temporal tissue of the documentary fable usher in an altered idea of the document. *The Last Bolshevik* uses past images as documents but not necessarily as documents of their initial referential contexts. For example, the scenes from Pyryev's *Kuban* are offered as documents, but they express a completely different tenor from the one they were initially geared to pass on. Like Rancière's pensive images, Marker's cinematic articulation of the document foregrounds the exchange between mechanical recording and the intentional purposes in the recording.[19]

The Last Bolshevik emphasizes the double bind of its documents by exposing the typical ways of watching and using images of the past. For instance, period footage from the 1913 tricentennial parade of the Romanovs is undone by pointing out certain gestures from the scene. A man walking in a crowd of dignitaries, in front of a crowd of laymen, taps his head to someone off-screen. "What does it mean?", the narrator asks and answers right away that the man is signaling the laymen to take off their caps. He continues by saying that in our time, characterized by rewinding time to find culprits, we should remember the man who showed the people their rank in public: "I would like everyone to remember, before Stalin, before Lenin, this fat man that ordered the poor to bow to the rich." A transparent yellow rectangle singles the man out from the procession.

As the scenes of period footage and feature films are extracted from their original contexts and reframed, they become expressive of dimensions that are beyond the intentional purposes of the image. In Rancière's terms, they become expressive of the age that holds cinema and the Soviets together. Moving beyond structures of signification and related power struggles, unintentional documents bear witness to "life without reason."[20] Suspended between silence and speech, the unintentional and the intentional, the documents become monuments of the time that witnessed both "the kingdom of shadows" and "the shadows of a kingdom."[21]

Marker's use of documents – film fragments, photographs, and archival footage – is reminiscent of Andrei Ujica and Harun Farocki's *Videograms of a Revolution* (Germany 1992), a compilation of amateur and professional video footage that show the chronology of events that led to the uprising that threw Nicolae Ceausescu off his pedestal. Perhaps most interestingly, *Videograms of a Revolution* is simultaneously an unforeseen narrative of the events that lead to the uprising and a socio-political comment on the mediatized nature of the upsurge. In the documentary, the archival footage is not merely a record of the Bucharest uprisings in 1989; the video images appear as immanent to the revolution. The live television transmissions and the amateur video footage are expressed as internal to the Romanian uprising, as agents in its unfolding. Similarly to *The Last Bolshevik*, the narrated chronology of events is accompanied by another regime of the document in which image and history are inseparable.

In his recent *Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu* (Romania 2010), Ujica explores Ceausescu's biography up to the events discussed in *Videograms*.[22] The film covers Ceausescu's years as the head of state (1965–1989) and tells his story with mostly official images featuring Ceausescu in different state protocols. The film, however, takes steps beyond the official rituals in the images and moves toward what the filmmaker himself has called "historical fiction."[23]

The source of this fiction is the enigmatic reality immanent in the official footage that unfolds in an epic manner in the film. The epic feel is achieved with the unforeseen idea the film creates of the Romanian dictator: instead of repeating the consensual view of the dictator, a softer side begins to unfold. Ceausescu, the filmmaker claims, took a more humane form during the making of the film.[24] This is best exemplified with the choices made in editing the thousand hours of archival footage for the film. In addition to official events and Ceausescu's sovereignty in them, the film includes a number of "lesser moments" right before or after official protocols in which the dictator's gestures and expressions depart from those of a totalitarian dictator.

Rancière detects a similar ethos in Humphrey Jennings's *Listen to Britain* (UK 1942) – a documentary made to support England's war efforts. The film shows hardly any war-related images and instead presents soldiers singing a song in a train cabin, ballroom dancing, and participating in a village procession. The strength of Jennings's documentary is in the way it speaks about the war effort with scenes of the everyday. In *Listen to Britain*, the leisurely scenes of singing, dancing, playing, and parading imbue the war effort with everyday life beyond the war.[25] Jennings's documentary is a thwarted fable because it replaces images of war with quotidian moments.[26]

Ujica's moments on the edges of the official explore recent history in a manner that does not take the presumed idea of the dictator for granted, but rather looks for ways to unfold layers immanent in his images and thus to create a new idea of the dictator. In this way, *The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu* is comparable to the documentary fable that is *The Last Bolshevik*. Whereas the former adopts an epic style to constitute its historical fiction, the latter embraces poetic lessons and earnest comedy to account for the incompatible sides of Alexander Medvedkin's life.

Intimate interlocution

In *The Last Bolshevik*, the reframing of images of the past puts the emphasis on what can be seen in them and said about them. In addition to the interviewees, the first-person narrator occupies a position of looking at and talking in relation to the images. More clearly than in his other pieces, the narrator associates with Marker himself.[27] The voice of the narrator is that of an actor, but the documentary invests in Marker's personal connection with Medvedkin and plays on the familiar tone of a friend speaking to a friend. The letters that structure the film provide an intimate form of articulation in which the narrator converses with images from Medvedkin's century – as if he was talking with the late filmmaker. An interview with Medvedkin's colleague Yakov Tolchan sees the narrator avow to Medvedkin that "sometimes I would listen to you by listening to him."

The narrator's relationship to Medvedkin and the images of his century comes through in the narrator's convivial phrasing. When he explains how their mutual friend Roman Karmen restaged the meeting of Soviet troops up and around Stalingrad in 1943 because he had missed the real thing, the narrator ends with: "He was like that, Roman. You were all like that." When talking about Medvedkin's kino-train project and his visit to France in 1971, the narrator states, "Then, you told us everything" over a photograph

of Left Bank filmmakers standing in front of a train with Medvedkin. The familiar tone of "you telling us everything" – the cordiality is enhanced with the use of the second-person singular "*tu*" instead of "*vous*" in the French original – or "him being like that" creates a sense of a community of filmmakers to which the narrator belongs.[28]

The intimate tone of the narrator's voice provides a counterpoint to the overwhelming flow of footage in *The Last Bolshevik*. The film-fragments connect with still images and photographs at a speed that leaves the viewer perplexed about the things that just passed on the screen. For example, Roman Karmen is introduced in a scene that consists of his Stalingrad re-enactment over which Marker implements a viewfinder, followed by a close-up that singles out Karmen's fierce eyes in a photograph. Then, a series of photographs of what is supposedly Karmen's office follow at an intense pace. There is a photograph of a door that has a poster of a Spanish film on it, a photograph of a bookshelf with a poster of Karmen's 1976 film *Corvalan's Heart*, and a framed photograph of Marcello Mastroianni; there is a photograph of a wall with a framed photograph of Karmen and below it the street sign for the Berlin boulevard Unter den Linden; and finally another framing of the first photograph of Karmen this time from a distance – the same Unter den Linden sign hanging behind his head. The re-enactment takes a little over twenty seconds, whereas the photographs are covered in thirteen seconds – a tempo that puts the images so close to one another that it is impossible to detect their individual contours and content without "scrubbing" them.

The narrator's account, on the other hand, tangles with the photographs on occasional points: he mentions both Spain and Berlin, thus offering points of entry to the flow of images. The narrator takes the role of an interlocutor in relation to the images.[29] Instead of encompassing the flow of images, the voiceover approaches them from a distance. It is almost as if the narrator was watching and commenting on a film that rolled before his eyes. The position of the narrator has both temporal and spatial significance. First, it aligns with the early acknowledgment that *The Last Bolshevik* could not have been made during Medvedkin's lifetime. The narrator's temporal distance to the images contributes to the exploration of recent history enacted in the documentary. Second, the distance has to do with the way in which the images of the past are made to speak again.

The narrator's intimate interlocution with the images has an effect on the position accorded to the viewer of the film. As it feels like the narrator was watching a film, the viewing position aligns quite easily with the narrator. With the narrator, *The Last Bolshevik* places the viewer in the position of


Figures 4-5: Reframing images of the past in *The Last Bolshevik*. Frame enlargements courtesy of Icarus Films.

watching, commenting, and reframing images from the Soviet century.[30] The narrator's relationship to the images creates a space in which the removed position from the flow of images enables framing familiar images again. This evokes the potential enfolded in those images of the past that have come to signify the past itself. In a way, the narrator encourages the viewer to take the images rolling on the screen again from new angles.[31]

A space for rewriting fables

The space created with the voiceover opens up the possibility of framing and rewinding fragments of the past. Transparent colored rectangles or circles are repeatedly positioned over film fragments and photographs; film footage is frozen to particular moments, images superimposed and several fragments of footage placed into a single frame. The documentary mimics the view of a Steenbeck layout or an AVID interface, thus constituting a position of working with the images.[32] The direct scrutiny of the footage in both speech and in image-processing creates a space of interlocution within the film: "*The Last Bolshevik* is a screen for interrogating representations of the past, probing the compacted layers of truth and fiction that they contain and conceal, like the matryoshka dolls that pop up as ready-made metaphors of Soviet history."[33]

The space of interlocution has an interesting relation to the filmmaker's presence in the film. Intimate interlocution with the images suggests a physical presence in the making of fables with other fables. Much like the hand holding the pen in the beginning of the film, the space of interlocution indexes the filmmaker into the film. As the narrator sides with the filmmaker and the viewer's position sides with the narrator's, the interlocution and the implication of rewriting equally indexes the viewer into the documentary

fable. Put differently, the implication of rewriting construed into the audiovisual disposition of *The Last Bolshevik* indexes the viewer into the potential of rewriting and the political agency of documentary filmmaking.

The disposition of archival footage in the documentary suggests that the silenced fragments can speak again if they are viewed from new angles and if their relations are rewritten in film. Extracting fragments from fables is not, however, an issue of revealing their essence, a hidden aura, but an issue of potential.[34] The making of fables with other fables deframes images from their previous context, but this does not imply that the process would stop there. Rather, the visual frames and the connections established between images from the Soviet century suggest that the fragments may well be silenced yet again and used in making other fables.

The disposition of writing in *The Last Bolshevik* acts as a filter between existing images and the images that will be written. It is like a valve that regulates memories of the future. The image of a hand holding a pen, the letters that structure the whole of the film, and the references to audiovisual writing in editing, form a sieve that regulates the manner in which the unintentional layers of past images arise in the documentary. These qualities that are often used to describe Marker's works as essay films also point to the specific way in which he relates past images to future images within his documentary works.[35]

Within the setting of rewriting in *The Last Bolshevik*, Marker uses his first film on Medvedkin, *The Train Rolls On* (France 1971), as an archival fragment. He describes *The Train Rolls On* as a trailer for a film he would make later in the far future.[36] It was shot in France in 1971, at the Noisy-le-Sec train depot, when Medvedkin was visiting the country and organizing screenings for *Happiness*.[37] In the film, Medvedkin walks among the trains at the depot and explains how the kino-train system works. Catherine Lupton notes that the direct style of *The Train Rolls On* is indicative of the way Medvedkin and his crew used film as an instrument of explanation in kolkhozes that did not function properly.[38]

In *The Last Bolshevik*, fragments from *The Train Rolls On* are edited together with experimental footage made for the composer Arthur Honegger's piece *Pacific 231*. The experimental footage is interposed with footage of a man reading a sentence that accuses Honegger of capitalist ideology. The narrator claims that Honegger's prosecution foreshadows a time when anybody could be found guilty despite talent and ideological adamancy. This is followed by a cut back to Medvedkin at Noisy-le-Sec. His voice is no longer audible but he moves his arms to the rhythm of Honegger's composition. With the music taking over Medvedkin's gestures, it looks like he was

moving to the rhythm of the alleged capitalist composition. Medvedkin's orchestration of the kino-train is contradicted by the state conducting him. The gestures synchronized to the rhythm of *Pacific 231* place Medvedkin at the crossroads of him arranging the kino-train system and the state arranging him. The fragments of the composition, *The Train Rolls On* and the experimental footage speak of Medvedkin's continuous clashes with the state despite his adamant belief in communism. In this way, *The Last Bolshevik* enables considering the double bind of film-fragments as well as the potential of rewriting in the documentary.

Making fables with other fables is occasionally ruptured by the overt directions the narrator gives the viewer. At times, the narrator takes the viewer by the hand and points out what it is we should be looking at and how. The moments of instruction fall into the film's general ethos of showing how images of the past affect our thinking and acting in the present. For instance, the narrator is eager to underline that the general knowledge we have of the 1917 Soviet Revolution actually comes from reproductions of the actual revolution. In a scene that proceeds from the Museum of Moving Images (MOMI) in London to the pages of a French edition of Leon Trotsky's *Histoire de la révolution russe*, a guide at MOMI, Rhona Campbell, asserts that she is very interested in the 1917 Revolution. On the soundtrack, the interlocutor claims that it turns out that Rhona's knowledge comes from Eisenstein. Simultaneously, scenes from Eisenstein's *October* (1927) start rolling on the screen and Rhona asserts how more people were killed in the filming of the scene for *October* than in the actual storming of the Winter Palace. From Eisenstein's film there is a cut to yet another restaging of the same event – a 1920s street theatre performance from which an image has been lifted as a document of the event itself. The narrator asserts that a freeze-frame from a scene of extras running toward the Winter Palace has been reproduced by major publishing houses. A cut from the cover of Trotsky's book to the footage of the theatrical setting is accompanied by the interlocutor-instructor's comment: "You can even spot the exact moment it was done. Here!" The scene freezes in the exact same position as the image on the book cover. Conversing with images of the past turns into giving lessons about the century.

Forging fables, creating memory

According to Rancière, making fables with other fables sides the documentary with fiction. He goes back to the Latin roots of fiction, *fingere*,

and argues that the term does not originally mean "to feign," but rather "to forge."[39] Fiction is not an issue of faking, but of forging relations between image-fragments. The texture of *The Last Bolshevik* is composed of the varying signifying powers of the documents and their relations. Rancière notes that the documentary mode "seems almost to have been designed for the metamorphoses of signifying forms that make it possible to construct memory as the interlacing of uneven temporalities and of heterogeneous regimes of the image."[40]

Rancière argues that documentary film is actually capable of greater fictional invention than the so-called fiction film, because it is more free to work with the double resource of "the silent imprint that speaks and the montage that calculates the values of truth and the potential for producing meaning."[41] This is possible because the documentary is free from producing effects that ensure recognition in the social imaginary of the viewer. Hence, it is more equipped to weigh and experiment with the silent imprints. The difference between documentary and fiction – according to Rancière – is that the documentary may isolate the practice of forging from producing effects and instead use forging for the purposes of understanding a given reality.[42]

Initially, this juxtaposition seems a little naïve, as obviously not all documentaries are as intellectually driven, nor is all fiction tied to producing a screen with recognizable effects. However, the distinction is useful in the way it foregrounds the capacity to imagine, to forge with documents. In *The Last Bolshevik*, the emphasis on the relations that emerge from the image-fragments calls out the French title of Marker's film: *Le tombeau d'Alexandre*. Alexander's tomb is less a symbolic tomb of the individual Alexander Medvedkin than a cavalcade of relations held together by a common age. The name Alexander is a homonym that connects Medvedkin to a number of historical figures and mythical characters.[43]

In a scene shot after Medvedkin's death in Moscow, the camera finds an old man who is introduced as Ivan Kozlovzki – a singer whose performance in Modest Mussorgsky's opera *Boris Godunov* is edited together with contemporary footage shot in the church. The theme of the opera is the tragedy of the Russian people as eternally subject to hunger and deceit and it is based on the work of Alexander Pushkin. With the meandering relationship between the two Alexanders, Marker juxtaposes Medvedkin's enthusiasm for the Soviet state against the tragedy of the Revolution. Similarly, when Marker pays a visit to Medvedkin's tomb in Moscow he is sidetracked by the crowd lingering around the tomb of yet another Alexander: Czar Alexander III. The video footage from the church and the graveyard connect

Medvedkin to a series of Alexanders that testify to the different facets of the century. Rancière suggests that Marker plays with the ambiguity of a fourth Alexander in the title of his film: "Alexander's tomb" may refer to the unknown resting place of Alexander the Great.[44]

Finally, rewriting memory in *The Last Bolshevik* – forging Alexander Medvedkin's fable – is not reducible to the filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin. The documentary forges a fable that ties together the historical figures, fictional characters, historical narratives, and cinematic stories of the twentieth century. By reframing photographs, period footage, and feature film fragments from the century of the cinema and the Soviets, the documentary challenges the ways in which we have become accustomed to the century and its images. Here, deframing and reframing endows the documentary with the capacity to imagine. This imagination, to quote Rosi Braidotti, "is a sort of empowerment of all that was not programmed within the dominant memory."[45] Marker's documentary fable challenges us to look again and again.

Fabulation: Documentary visions

The world is neither true nor real but living.[1]
Gilles Deleuze

Fabulation is an act that involves invention. It involves composing and telling stories, such as fables. As a compositional modality, fabulation has been linked to such genres as magical realism and fantasy, but as an act of telling, fabulation belongs equally to the world of the documentary.[2] It occupies the space in between people who tell stories and the documentary camera that observes these fabulous acts. The relationship between the two creates documentary visions that undo the antagonistic dichotomy between the true and the false.

In a rare tip of the hat to documentary cinema, Gilles Deleuze defines fabulation as the "becoming of the real character when he himself starts to 'make fiction,' when he enters into 'the flagrant offence of making up legends' and so contributes to the invention of his people."[3] Speaking in the context of direct cinema and cinema vérité of the 1960s, Deleuze foregrounds the creative act of telling and its affirmative implications for the teller. What is lost in the translation, however, is the dependence of "making up legends" on being caught in the act. Indeed, what has been rendered "the flagrant offence of making up legends" in the English version reads as "*en flagrant délit de légender*" in the French original.[4] The expression "*en flagrant délit de*" has a direct legal connotation to "being caught in the act."

Being caught in the act of making fiction aligns fabulation with documentaries that capture their characters in the act of telling stories. Capturing, however, is not just a passive deed of recording but an active gesture inseparable from creative storytelling. Documentary observation participates in and co-composes fabulous telling as it unfolds in the generative relationality between the filmmaker, the camera, and the real characters. Documentary fabulation, then, proposes that investigations of the observational begin from the shared moment of filming.

Stella Bruzzi points to a similar emphasis in her outline of the performative documentary. Aiming to reorient the stakes of the observational, she suggests that the performative dialogue between the filmmaker, crew, and the shooting situation draws positive attention to the impossibilities of

authentic documentary representation. For her, the performative introduces a new honesty to documentary representation, one that acknowledges that non-fiction is always an enactment for the cameras.[5]

Bruzzi's postulation reworks Bill Nichols's earlier conceptualization of the performative, and particularly the epistemological uncertainties it brings to the documentary. Nichols offers the performative as the fifth documentary mode – following the expository, observational, interactive, and the reflexive – and argues that the performative brackets realist representation in favor of the experiential and the subjective: "By restoring a sense of the local, specific, and embodied as a vital locus for social subjectivity, performative documentary gives figuration to and evokes dimensions of the political unconscious that remain suspended between an immediate here and now and a utopian alternative."[6] Although Nichols admits to the potential advantages of the performative, its suspended politics remain problematic.

Bruzzi reprimands Nichols for being too wary of the epistemological uncertainties, but her own conceptualization of the performative remains rather too caught up in the distinction between the authentic and the inauthentic for the present purposes. For Bruzzi, performative documentary makes the viewer aware of the constructed and contingent nature of truth and authenticity, but the suspension of the authentic never becomes an affirmative force that could enable the filmed subjects to self-differentiate.[7]

In the immediacy of creative storytelling to documentary observation, on the other hand, the transpositions of the true and the false power the subjects' becomings. For example, in Raymond Depardon's *Délits flagrants* (France 1994), the fiction a young defendant tells her legal assistant becomes the truth she is to tell the judge deciding on her verdict. In the documentary, Depardon observes fourteen judicial interrogations in which the accused on remand give their accounts of the deeds they are accused of. With a fixed frame typical to Depardon's films more generally, the documentary captures the accounts in which the accused "make up legends" for the interrogators. They tell stories that are not exactly lies because, for the accused, they are the truth whereby they live. Muriel, a young woman of twenty-two, is accused of stealing a car but she claims that she cannot even drive. The legal assistant goes through the police report of her arrest and tries to clarify the details of the event in order to prepare her defense. As a result of their exchange, Muriel's fiction becomes the truth of what happened and forms the basis of what she is to say to the judge on her own behalf. Depardon's fascination with Muriel's storytelling continues in the 1999 documentary *Muriel Leferle*. This time, she is accused of stealing and drug

abuse, and interrogated by three different officials. A prosecutor, a lawyer, and a psychologist try different tactics to make her tell "the truth," but as she speaks it becomes increasingly evident that her truth is not compatible with the coda of the officials. Although there is no interaction between the film crew behind the static camera and the individuals in front, one is left wondering to what extent being framed by Depardon's camera animates Muriel's elaborate monologues.

Deleuze's brief account of fabulation in documentary cinema coincides with the juxtaposition of modern and classical cinema. In this division, modern cinema affiliates with the story (*récit*) and classical cinema sides with narration. The main difference between narration and story is in their postulations of the true and the false. Narration in classical cinema enforces a difference between the true and the false: it works in a way that makes sure dreams, hallucinations and contradictory visions are distinguished from the framework of ordinary reality, the true. The story, on the other hand, undermines the division. It belongs to the kind of direct time-image that works with "the powers of the false."[8]

When documentaries work with fabulous storytelling – including the false and multiple convoluted truths – their impetus changes from differentiating between the true and the false to capturing the passages in between, such as Muriel's transformation from the accused to an innocent woman in the scene from Depardon's film. In the process, according to Deleuze, the real character "becomes another, when he begins to tell stories without ever being fictional."[9] Here, the power of storytelling – no matter how fabulous the stories may be – is actualized in the self-differentiation of the character captured by the documentary camera. Through the powers of the false involved in the process of becoming, the storyteller may potentially create new ways of being in and attuning themselves to this world.[10]

Documentary fabulation, then, draws attention to acts of telling and the ways in which these acts are framed and observed in the documentary. The gravitation between fact and fiction in the acts of telling does not make the storytellers "fictional," because the acts of telling are inseparable from their actual conditions and time of enunciation, such as Muriel's preparation for her trial.[11] Indeed, Deleuze speaks of fabulation in contexts where the actual conditions of the filmed individuals are particularly difficult, for example because of colonization, racism, and homophobia. It is precisely in these contexts that documentary fabulation may enable inventing new techniques of being in the world, techniques that may facilitate life in difficult circumstances.[12] Hence, according to Daniel W. Smith, fabulation is "the obverse side of the dominant myths and fictions, an act of resistance

whose political impact is immediate and inescapable, and that creates a line of flight on which a minority discourse and a people can be constituted."[13]

Although Muriel's convoluted speeches do not promise her a brighter future – their effect is most likely the opposite – they are nevertheless her manner of dealing with the setting she finds herself in, her only line of flight in the judicial system. By observing her storytelling acts, Depardon's documentary in a way offers a platform for that line to develop – without judging its appropriateness. This, indeed, is the challenge fabulation poses to documentary observation: How to observe without predetermined ideas of the true and the false, right and wrong? How to observe in a way that enables the filmed subjects to live more fully, to resist their actual conditions?

These questions come loaded with aesthetic choices and ethical responsibilities that will be unpacked in chapters 3 and 4 with two observational documentaries: Albert and David Maysles' *Grey Gardens* (1975) and Pirjo Honkasalo's *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* (1993). Documentary fabulation in *Grey Gardens* draws from the intensive dialogue and flamboyant performances of a quirky mother-daughter duo, whereas Honkasalo's documentary observes a silent schizophrenic girl allegedly possessed by devils. In both films, official establishments – the city council and the Orthodox Church, respectively – have deemed the modes of existence of the filmed subjects unacceptable and imposed redeeming regulations on them. The documentaries were made when Edith and Edie Beale were struggling to keep their house, and when Tanyusha was undergoing treatment in a monastery in Northeastern Estonia.

3. Making up legends

Grey Gardens is now a classic. Opening to mixed reviews in 1975, the documentary has since been adapted to Broadway and dramatized into a television feature; it has inspired pop songs and received a sequel. The lives of Edith Bouvier Beale and her daughter Edie have spread through a variety of media to an array of audiences.[1] However, when *Grey Gardens* first came out, it was met with accusations of unethical filmmaking and inauthenticity. The directors David and Albert Maysles were blamed for framing the Beales in a manner that took advantage of the women and presented them in an inopportune light.[2]

The criticism directed toward *Grey Gardens* as well as other direct documentaries stems from the controversial rhetoric filmmakers used to define their observational practice.[3] The notorious claims of being more truthful and more objective resulted in a backlash that highlighted the complex ethical issues inherent in direct cinema. The rhetoric of authenticity laid the films bare for harsh criticism. In response, scholars have decontextualized *Grey Gardens* from the bounding discourse of authenticity, and repositioned the film within discussions of modernist structure and the participatory aspects of documentary filmmaking.

Taking a stance against the critics of *Grey Gardens*, Kenneth Robson foregrounds the narrative structure of the piece and its relationship to the two women's lives. He describes the lives of the Beales as "a series of discontinuous takes or rehearsals" that never add up to a full performance.[4] Accordingly, the film resists a linear structure that would present the viewer with a clear trajectory and closure. Paraphrasing Ellen Hovde, the editor of the film with Susan Froemke and Muffie Meyer, Robson speaks of the film as a crystal formation, a solid arrangement simultaneously reflecting multiple facets, interpretations and experiences of the women's lives.[5] The convoluted fragmentary scenes of *Grey Gardens* encourage him to compare the film to the modernist cadence of Virginia Woolf's novel *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925).

All the while supporting Robson's modernist impetus, Jonathan B. Vogels places the emphasis on the self-reflexivity of *Grey Gardens*. Albert Maysles' camerawork and the deliberate inclusion of the filmmakers themselves within the film's setting speak of an unforeseen participatory methodology. He names the Maysles as supporting characters in their own film, and points out the significant role the three editors had in the making of the film. In his view, *Grey Gardens* cultivates an openness

that contributes to a sensibility quite uncommon in the direct cinema movement: the editors and the Beales are equally the film's makers.[6]

Robson and Vogels bring forth some of the singular qualities of *Grey Gardens* by respectively foregrounding the film's formalist take on the ordered disorder of the women's lives and the participatory structure of the piece. They turn the focus to the film itself in order to consider how it stands on its own two feet, so to speak. In general, turning to the films themselves tells of an effort to refresh the direct cinema movement historically and to understand its theoretical outlines beyond the self-imposed rhetorical bounds.

However, even the most nuanced and elaborate analyses of *Grey Gardens* have not settled their relationship to the discursive premises they work to decontextualize the film from. Even Vogels uses such phraseology as "revealing their true characters,"[7] thus enhancing the initial presumption that there indeed is a character more true than the other to be revealed. The perspective of fabulation dissociates the present analysis from such claims and draws attention to the ways in which the Beales present themselves and how their presentations are framed in the documentary. Little Edie describes the complexity of the dynamics befittingly when she tells the brothers: "You don't see me as I see myself. But you're very good, what you see me as. I mean it's okay."

Creative asymmetry

Grey Gardens portrays the lives of Big Edie and Little Edie in a highly intimate manner. Retired from socialite New York City, the two women live their lives in a ramshackle East Hamptons mansion in isolation from the rest of the community. Overgrown vegetation walls off their house, and the odd visitor is outnumbered by the cats and raccoons that share the house with the women. The way the Beales live their lives raised questions about their competence to deal with filming and resulted in accusations of intrusion into their private space. The criticism that rests on the dual presupposition that people like the Beales are not capable of presenting themselves on film and that authenticity can only be achieved with an objective distance to the film's subjects misses the exceptional dramaturgy of the Beales presenting themselves and the Maysles' rendition of it. *Grey Gardens* consists of dramatic scenes of interaction in which both the Beales and the Maysles negotiate their respective roles and strategies.

In his study on the dramaturgy of everyday life, namely the social performances that constitute the everyday, Erving Goffman makes a distinction

Figure 6: Making up legends at the Grey Gardens mansion. Image courtesy of Maysles Films.

between an expression that is *given* and an expression that is *given off*. A given expression is a direct verbal account with which an individual seeks to project a particular image of him or herself. An expression that is given off is more indirect, often contextual or even unintentional in kind. The dramaturgy of everyday life is composed of the shifting, often asymmetric registers of direct and indirect expression and the roles people deploy in social situations.[8]

The communicative event that takes place at the Grey Gardens mansion is replete with direct verbal accounts and indirect insinuations. The Beales talk a lot but their verbal accounts are meandering and leave many allusions unclear. The Maysles observe the women's verbal acrobatics, but they also make insinuations of their own that co-compose the film's communicative texture. Comments made from behind the camera as well as facial expressions and gestures invisible to the film's viewer contribute to the film's observational dramaturgy. Both the Beales and the Maysles deploy shifting registers of expression.[9]

Despite the feeling of observing an ongoing series of rehearsals and an asymmetric collection of expressive registers, the drama at Grey Gardens holds together remarkably well. Paraphrasing Goffman, this is because there is a fundamental "working consensus"[10] between the communicating parties. This consensus does not presume that there is a character more true than the other to be revealed – rather, the true is replaced by an interest in

the passages between the shifting roles and expressive routines embraced at the mansion. This enables the Beales to incorporate a variety of expressive modalities they might otherwise have to hold off, and the Maysles to widen their observational practice to a cinematic encounter with dramatic sensibilities. This is the precondition for making up legends in *Grey Gardens*.

The rickety Grey Gardens mansion defines the setting of the Beales' lives. Big Edie spends most of her time in bed and moves to the other rooms only on occasion. The camera captures the other spaces with Little Edie: she feeds the raccoons in the attic, fetches things to show the Maysles, observes the surroundings with binoculars from the porch and goes swimming at the nearby beach. However, Little Edie cannot leave her mother's side for long, since practically every time she is being filmed somewhere around the house, Big Edie calls for her daughter to come back and take care of something for her. The women's bedroom functions as a communal region, whereas the rest of the house is Little Edie's stage to go about her own activities.[11]

At first, the camera takes a more discreet and distant attitude towards the milieu and its inhabitants, documenting the yard, the view, the neighborhood, and some of the communal spaces of the house. It documents Little Edie conversing with the gardener and waits outside the door while she fetches a checkbook from inside. After the general introduction to the mansion and its residents, the camera moves closer and focuses on the women's expressions and gestures more closely. From the very beginning, the women talk constantly – to each other, to the Maysles, to themselves. They talk to each other from the different spaces of the house and while they are in the same space, they talk of each other, contradicting and challenging one another and yet somehow managing to listen what the other one says. When the camera singles either one of them out visually, the other one often continues talking in the background, providing an additional dimension to the other's self-presentation.

At times, the focus on expressions and gestures – particularly the many close-ups of their faces – extracts the women from their verbal account. In direct cinema more generally, close-ups of the face are used to bring out the hidden or restrained reactions in on-going situations.[12] In Goffman's language, they are used to capture the indirect expressions of the characters. In the opening scene of their documentary *Salesman* (USA 1968), the Maysles use close-ups in response to an on-going verbal exchange. In the scene, the salesman Paul Brennan tries to convince a hesitant housewife to purchase a bible. Set in the woman's living room, the polite exchange of persuasion and declination is complemented with close-ups of the bible, the salesman,

and the woman's child. The close-ups foreground the frustration of the salesman to close the deal and the family's indifference to his proposal. Over the course of the documentary, frames of Brennan's face become more frequent as his frustration grows.

In an interview a few years prior to the making of *Grey Gardens*, Albert Maysles argues that in their filmmaking, the brothers are interested in "experiencing life and telling exactly that experience to the world."[13] Accordingly, the changes between the more open frames and the close-ups simulate the asymmetry in the experience of encountering the Beales. The impression of the Beales depends on their direct and often frenetic verbal communication as well as on their more indirect and discreet expressions that the camera reacts to with sudden close-ups. On several occasions, the camera zooms into the faces of the women in a spontaneous and edgy manner, steering the focus from the meandering conversation to the indirect expressions on the women's faces.

Laboratory of the soul

The close-ups of the women take the film beyond the setting of the mansion. They induce an inner drama to the documentary. Here, the expressive system of *Grey Gardens* comes close to the Hungarian film theorist Béla Balázs's outline of the close-up. Isolating the human face from distracting contexts, close-ups function as thresholds to the human soul. They pull the character out of the linguistic and spatiotemporal coordinates of the film and transpose the drama to a realm of emotions, moods, and thoughts. Paraphrasing Balázs, the close-ups induce an *inner aesthetics* to documentary observation.[14]

In Balázs, the movements of the soul accessed through the close-ups become the organizing principle of the themes and objects of a given film. They form a "visible spirit" that determines the arrangement of the film as a whole.[15] Here, cinema becomes a "laboratory of the soul"[16] that enables access to inner dimensions, organizes its cells, and expresses their complex compositions. This relates to the sociologist Georg Simmel's analysis of the sculptor Auguste Rodin. Simmel, who is not only Balázs's contemporary but also his teacher, claims that Rodin's art assumes a dimension of inner atoms that make his sculptures expressions of the soul.

Balázsian inner aesthetics presupposes that the camera takes on the role of an active observer and is not satisfied with being the passive recorder of an unfolding mise-en-scène.[17] Inner aesthetics resonates also with Walter

Benjamin's conception of cinematic close-ups as openings to an optical unconscious that teaches the viewer to perceive familiar things and objects in new ways.[18] In *Grey Gardens*, the close-ups invite the possibility of an inner aesthetics, but its function as the organizing principle of the whole documentary is not as straightforward as Balázs suggests.

The abrupt changes of frame and the resulting close-ups in *Grey Gardens* are paralleled with photographs, paintings and drawings of the women found on the mansion's walls and in family albums. A photograph from Little Edie's youth and a painting of the young Big Edie are edited together with the close-ups of the two women. The painting stands against the wall in the bedroom and the camera turns to it on several occasions. Following Balázs, these images of the past could be interpreted as a series of defining moments from the women's past that determine their expressions and gestures in the present.

However, contrary to Balázs's visible spirit, the past images are not a determinant laboratory of the Beales' soul. They do not function as an anthropomorphic switchboard for their lives in the documentary. Rather, the documentary expresses the past as a vestige for performances in the present. Here, the film follows Edie's lead and her claim that "it is difficult to keep the line between the past and the present," which is actualized in the series of takes the Maysles refer to as the unfolding experience of life.[19]

Although there is an essentialist tendency in Balázs to privilege the film image and especially the close-up as a physiognomic window to the human soul, there is also a noteworthy ambivalence in his take on the performing body. Erica Carter points out that in his analysis of Asta Nielsen, Balázs does not view the actress's body as an unmediated expression of the movements of the soul, but in terms of the production of meaning and affect.[20] Thus, an asymmetry between an inner landscape of thoughts and emotions and a projected expression or a bodily performance can be found even in Balázs.

Following a traditional Balázsian disposition, Edie's agitated behavior could be analyzed as an effect of the disappointment of having to take care of her mother and not having seized the opportunities of marriage and success she was presented with in her youth. Whereas Edith is much more affirmative about the way things turned out for her ["I had a terribly successful marriage," she posits], Edie constantly indicates how displeased she is with her life ["I can't take another day," "I have to get out of here," she insists]. Even though Edie scolds Edith in her presence – and vice versa – she praises Edith's talents in her absence. When the camera frames Edith out of the shot and focuses on Edie, the frustrated and even angry dialogue turns into an appraising monologue.

"I'm ready for my close-up"

Grey Gardens starts with a prologue that introduces the two women, the filmmakers, and the problems that have haunted the Beales in their residence. The camera shoots the main room downstairs; Edith sits on a chair on the second floor, just up the stairs, and Edie is somewhere in the house, participating in the scene off-screen. The camera goes on to film the crumbling walls and the hallway. The women exchange their views on how the cats got out and how they might be raided again since the raccoons are breaking down their new wall. From a series of shots of the neighborhood, the scene turns into an array of newspaper articles that set out the raid the women refer to. The mansion was in such a state of decay that the village of East Hampton ordered it to be cleaned or the women would be evicted.

After the series of newspaper clippings, the documentary in a way starts again. The Maysles present themselves as the gentleman callers and greet and compliment Edie who states that one of the cats got out. During their exchange, a photograph of the Maysles fills the screen. The photograph is followed by a cut outdoors where Edie returns the compliment to David by stating that he "looks absolutely wonderful" and "has light blue on." The scene then turns to Edie herself, who describes her own outfit in detail and asserts that she has to "think these things up." Then, Edie asks the Maysles if they want to photograph on the top porch and they start moving in the direction of the house.

The two beginnings set the overlapping tones of *Grey Gardens*. Whereas the raid is a threatening figure in the background, it does not determine the whole of the piece. The second opening directs attention to the procession of events in the house. In a way, the second opening invites the viewer into a series of unfolding scenes that are occasionally linked with a background that proposes possible outlines for the events unfurling in the frame. Edie's orientation for outfits is one of the features that sets the unfolding tone of the film. She changes costumes constantly, poses for the camera and asks how she looks. As a result of the editing, she seems to wear multiple outfits every day, finishing off her look with scarves. In addition to the camera framing her in tight and intimate frames, Edie herself works to be framed in close-ups. She comes very close to the camera, flirting with the Maysles behind it or alternatively putting on the face of a "staunch character," as she describes herself.

When Edie presents herself in a variety of costumes and roles she is, at times, like Gloria Swanson's character Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard* (Billy Wilder, USA 1950). Desmond has lost her silent film star glory with

the talkies but lives in a fantasy world where she is still a renowned star. At the end of the film, Desmond, who has been hiding away in her room, agrees to come downstairs, as she believes a film crew is waiting for her. She approaches her trusted director and his camera, proclaiming theatrically with a charged expression on her face: "Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up now."

The similarity between Edie and Norma Desmond is in how their performances exceed the everyday setting in which they operate. Norma Desmond is imbued in a Hollywood tragedy; her facial expression is adjusted to the mask of a bygone era and she believes her house is the setting of a silent film production. Edie's performances, on the other hand, are more affirmative in tone. In the series of performances she acts out for the camera, the mansion transforms into a theatre stage for her to act the roles she never had. Grey Gardens turns from a ramshackle mansion reflecting past difficulties into a stage of possibilities. Robson's brilliant remark that *Grey Gardens* seems to "make itself up as it goes along"[21] is thus removed from its modernist base and reformulated in relation to Edie's series of costumes. Moving from one character to the next, from one scene to the next, Edie makes herself up as she goes along. For Edie, to be normal is to be Norma.

Facilitating cohesion

The working consensus between the Beales and the Maysles produces a remarkable sociability in the world of the film. The relations, roles, and routines put on stage at the gritty mansion exceed notions of participatory filmmaking and foreground the collective character of the filmmaking process. It is not only the Maysles who participate in the everyday drama of the Beales, but the Beales equally enable the making of the film.

In the filmmaking process, the Beales and the Maysles become each other's facilitators. They intercede in each other's lives in productive ways and thus co-compose a sociable environment in which the Beales can make themselves up and the Maysles can bend the routines of observational filmmaking. Put differently, the remarkable sociability created in the filmmaking process enables the involved parties to invent new styles of being and techniques of doing.[22]

Deleuze briefly mentions the importance of facilitating in his discussion of storytelling in Pierre Perrault and Jean Rouch's cinemas. He insists that both filmmakers – in their respective processes – also "become another" as they embrace real characters as intercessors and replace predetermined

models of truth and fiction with their storytelling.[23] Perrault's *Pour la suite du monde* (Canada 1963) is set on the island of Ile-aux-Coudres, which is demarcated from both the Anglophone and the French-Canadian cultures of Quebec. The people of the island speak a distinct dialect that is hard to understand, even for native French speakers. In the film, Perrault encourages the islanders to take on fishing white beluga whales with the traditional method of erecting a weir barrier in the St. Lawrence River. By "pushing" the islanders into action, Perrault facilitates the re-actualization of a tradition that in the past gave the island community cohesion. The storytelling of the islanders intertwines with taking up the actual techniques of the tradition. In this sense, Perrault's storytelling is not about the tradition, but an act of telling in which the tradition is re-actualized.[24] This makes Perrault's work "cinema of the lived."

The women of *Grey Gardens* have developed their own way of speaking that fluctuates between hostile and affectionate, and meanders into songs and theatre plays. Instead of trying to adjust their manner of speaking to a predefined form, the filmmakers are interested in making them talk more and thus egg them on with questions and comments from behind the camera. In this way, they facilitate the women in taking up the things they are most passionate about in life: performing, singing, and dancing. Here, facilitating coincides with a turn Dave Saunders detects in American direct cinema of the 1960s and that he describes as "a revolution in the head." When direct cinema broke free from its dispassionate methods drawn from the broadcast environment, it began to work on "the revivification of [America's] national consciousness that could effect a renaissance of compassionate community politics."[25] The change from the television network environment to a more passionate methodology of filming appears as the mutually facilitating working consensus in *Grey Gardens*.

Pierre Perrault argues that the pushing into action and the invocation of speech in the act in the filmmaking process enables him to overcome his own colonized upbringing and the consequent internalization of a classical French mentality. By facilitating the speech acts of the islanders, his own powers of expression are reinstituted. He could only access Ile-aux-Coudres as an outsider, but with the willingness of the islanders they are able to fashion a "communal lore," where the islanders overcome the shambles of an abandoned tradition and where the filmmaker surmounts the hindrances of his background. Perrault needs the islanders to make "cinema of the lived" and the islanders need him as the instigator of their self-invention.[26]

Charlie Michael notes that Perrault's focus on speech in the act sets the Québécois filmmakers apart from their French contemporaries, the

"Roucheoles," and their more interventionist approach.[27] Although the Québécois cinema of speech acts – *le cinéma de la parole* – is undoubtedly different in spirit to some of the more reflective works of the Roucheoles, the two strands of documentary filmmaking share a common ground in how they facilitate the making up of legends.

Perrault's documentary and its speech acts are comparable, for example, to Jean Rouch's *Moi, un Noir* (France 1958) in which young Nigerian immigrants tell the story of their lives on the soundtrack to images recorded on the streets of Treichville, Abidjan, on the Ivory Coast. Rouch construes the relationship of speech and action differently from Perrault, but nevertheless has the immigrant youngsters take on roles that produce storytelling integrally woven into the actions on screen. Speaking in present tense over sequences of themselves, the young men invent themselves in a socio-historical situation that otherwise places harsh limits on their existence. In Rouch's documentary, the protagonists relate their lives to characters familiar from Western popular culture – such as Tarzan, Eddie Constantine, and Edward G. Robinson – and address their situation with these fictional characters. Consequently, *Moi, un Noir* envisions, for instance, a Treichville where the young men are not caged in their everyday struggles. The film ends with Edward G. Robinson assuring Little Jules that maybe the future will be better as they cross a bridge early in the morning after having visited a friend in jail.

Deleuze calls Perrault and Rouch's method a "story-telling function of the poor,"[28] because they both work to overcome the colonizing perspectives of language and filmmaking – including the hindrances brought about by their own backgrounds – in order to produce a cohesive vision that exceeds the social hierarchies and regulations that demarcate the people recorded on camera.[29] In a documentary film made about his work, Perrault names the effect of his storytelling method a "becoming luminous within one's own discourse."[30] Becoming-luminous in both documentaries intertwines with creating visions with which life can continue even in the most difficult of circumstances [*pour la suite du monde*]. From this perspective, the cinemas of both Perrault and Rouch can be described as ethnographies of the living present.

In *Grey Gardens*, the performances proceed in tune with the women doing what they are most passionate about in life. One of the most affective scenes is a moment attuned to Andre Kostelanetz's arrangement of *Tea for Two* from the musical comedy *No, no, Nanette*. In the scene, Big Edie sings to the arrangement, gets terribly excited and makes a real show of the song, all the while being in bed and wearing a huge red brim hat. She tries to get her daughter to do the soft shoe waltz that goes with the rhythm, but

Little Edie modestly refuses the offer, smiles and affirms how wonderful it all is. Toward the end of the song, in synch with a chord Big Edie claims is particularly beautiful, the scene cuts to a painting of Big Edie in her youth and zooms in. The drama of the singing is transposed to the drama of the zoom that frames the face of the reproduction in a close-up.

When Big Edie sings, she brings out the fact that she used to be a great singer, but her performance is not reduced to her past fame. Singing to one of her old recordings, Big Edie boldly foregrounds her voice and carries on the role of the great singer. Little Edie, on the other hand, often speaks about what she did not have a chance to do and brings up the absence of fame in her youth. In response, her bodily performances – that almost systematically end up with her approaching the camera and framing herself in a close-up – are remarkably flamboyant and showy.

Little Edie's self-invention relates quite candidly to the performances in Shirley Clarke's *Portrait of Jason* (USA 1967). Clarke's documentary was filmed over one night in a New York City apartment and it portrays the self-invention of Jason Holliday. Jason, a black, gay man in his forties, talks to the camera about his painful and pleasant childhood memories, his years of hustling, and his faraway dreams. Edited into chronological order, the documentary follows the changes that take place over the night as Jason gets more intoxicated from the liquor and joints he consumes while speaking. The particular twist in Clarke's film is in the way Jason relates his dreams to his accounts for the camera. Dreaming of a nightclub act he has been planning for years, Jason not only speaks about the roles he would want to play but also takes up performing them for the camera. He sings excerpts from the musical *Funny Girl* in a heartfelt manner and thus invents himself as a nightclub actor while performing. Although the odds of him landing a role on Broadway are slim, the documentary provides him a frame for performance, a frame he has awaited for many years.

In *Grey Gardens*, starting with the costumes, scarves, and implying expressions, Little Edie sings, marches, and dances herself into a legend. She takes on the roles she has always wanted and makes them her own for the camera. The past is no longer a distant domain of failures and bad memories, but it is re-actualized in the roles and routines of the performances. The past is the virtual image Little Edie has of herself, an image she actualizes in the presentations she performs for the camera.[31] Little Edie invents herself as the object of desire for Jerry the Marble Faun, the handyman who occasionally visits the women, and marches for peace to a Virginia Military Institute record – something that she never had a chance to do in her youth. As Little Edie invents herself for the camera she becomes the great dancer she was

on the verge of becoming when she was younger. ["I was discovered in New York," she tells her mother.]

A stage for making up legends

In the performances, the mansion turns into a stage on Broadway and the past and the present form a cohesive and continuous series. The before and the after appear as the two sides of the process in which the Beales become legends in their own right. In the working consensus of the Maysles and the Beales, *Grey Gardens* places its characters on the fine line between the past and the present, and facilitates their appearance as the great singer Big Edith Bouvier Beale and the great dancer Little Edie Beale. In the series of performances, the grey features of Grey Gardens are wiped away and replaced with the red of Big Edie's hat and the red and the blue of Little Edie's marching costumes. In true musical fashion, the colors, the singing, and the dancing take over the grim, everyday existence of the Grey Gardens mansion.

Storytelling in *Grey Gardens* bypasses categorical distinctions between the true and the false. Little Edie's roles are "made up," but they are nevertheless not "false." Documentary fabulation, then, is not conditioned on drawing a line between the true and the false, but powered by the admittance that the line is, indeed, difficult if not impossible to keep. In Ronald Bogue's terms, "[f]abulation challenges the received truths of the dominant social order, and in this regard it 'falsifies,' but it also produces its own truths through its inventions, and in this sense it manifests the creative powers of the false."[32] For Deleuze, making up legends comes to the fore in speech, but in *Grey Gardens* it is actualized also in singing, dancing, and marching. The women's seemingly aimless conversations, which flow from one person and event to the next, provide the documentary with a point of entry into the folds of the true and the false in the reality of the two women's lives.

The affirmative effect of the documentary's asymmetry is echoed in the women's comments on the film. After having seen it for the first time, Little Edie called it a classic. On her deathbed, Big Edie stated that "[t]here's nothing more to say, it's all in the film."[33] It might be that one of the reasons for the distribution of the Beales' story over a variety of media is precisely in how they, from the start, participated in making themselves into legends. In the final scene of the documentary, the camera observes Little Edie from upstairs as she keeps marching and singing in the hall. Oblivious to the camera, Little Edie keeps making up legends even though the shot comes to an end.

4. Acts of resistance

During her travels in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, the Finnish documentary filmmaker Pirjo Honkasalo came across a monastery located in the village of Vasknarva on the Narva River in Northeastern Estonia. After some time, Honkasalo returned to the village with the idea of making a film about Father Vassily, the Orthodox priest at the monastery. Upon her return, she encountered Tanyusha, a 12-year-old girl who had not left the premises of the church for six months.

The filmmaker describes the initial encounter in the introductory sequence of the ensuing film, *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* (*Tanjuska ja 7 perkelettä*, Finland 1993), an observational documentary about the young Byelorussian girl who one day had stopped talking, eating, and growing.[1] Before coming to the monastery, her parents had taken her to a mental hospital in Minsk where Tanyusha was diagnosed with schizophrenia. For some reason, the parents were not let in on the diagnosis and, as there were no signs of improvement in Tanyusha's condition, they took her out of the hospital and brought her to the monastery in Estonia, where Father Vassily was commissioned to cure her. He blames Tanyusha's abnormal behavior on the seven devils he sets out to exorcise.

The documentary observes Tanyusha's daily routines – getting up, getting dressed, going to church – and documents the testimonials her father and mother give of her condition. The mother has stayed at home in Minsk with Tanyusha's sister and the father is with her in Estonia. Throughout the extensive testimonials and the daily routines, Tanyusha is mostly silent. Sometimes she replies to her father's orders with a grunt or a word of dislike, but mostly she keeps to herself. Toward the end of the documentary Tanyusha becomes more talkative. Then, she speaks of herself in the third person.

The people around her consider the silence and the occasional phrase as symptomatic of her situation: "It's the devil speaking in her," the father says. Hence, the treatment at the monastery aims at ousting the devils and making her "voice herself." The documentary, however, observes Tanyusha in a way that resists the reparative approach of the priest and the family. The documentary observes Tanyusha's aberrant vocalizations and the voices that speak around her in a manner that questions the norms whereby she is deemed deviant.

Here, resistance is not a struggle with the authorities of the church and the family, but a "subversion of the categories we live by, an unfixing of

identities and inauguration of a process of metamorphosis."[2] By gently undoing the categorical differences between normal and abnormal voices, the documentary installs a resistant vision to the conditions where Tanyusha is located with the devils. With *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils*, documentary fabulation becomes an issue of creating resistance while observing control.

Voice, subjectivity, and cinema

In film studies, voice and subjectivity, and thus the relationships between voices and bodies in film have, to a large extent, been discussed within a psychoanalytic framework. Psychoanalysis offers interesting possibilities for the analysis of *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* – given Tanyusha's aberrant voice – but its insistence on the psychic structure that defines one's personality is problematic from the point of view of resistance. Hence, in this chapter, psychoanalytic takes on subjectivity and the voice provide a point of entry to the relationality of voices and bodies in the documentary. In the end, though, the discussion departs from psychoanalysis and focuses on an idea of subjectivity that is more open to transversal processes of becoming.

In her brief sketch of the voice in the history of psychoanalysis, Alice Lagaay notes a significant difference between Freud and Lacan's conceptions. In Freud, the voice emerges as a symptom of – and a gateway to – the unconscious. The voice in Freud is a positivist index that is "thought to reveal the hidden substance of subjectivity, the signified, or something like the 'truth' of the person to whom it belongs."[3] With Lacan, and especially in his later thinking, the voice turns from being a symptom of the unconscious (and its disorders) into an issue of structure. Whereas in Freud the voice consists of indices with which the unconscious can be accessed and understood, the voice in Lacan becomes an issue of the structure of subjectivity. It is, in a sense, silent.[4]

Psychoanalytic film theory has embraced Lacan's conception of the voice precisely from the perspective of the constitution of subjectivity. Particular emphasis has been placed on Lacan's outline of the voice – along with the gaze – as a partial object (*objet petit autre*) that functions between the self and the other. The voice as a partial object marks the relationship between an inside and an outside.[5] The partial objects come to play at the mirror stage, when an initial perception of self occurs. Kaja Silverman claims that the perception of self is brought about by an external image that induces the child with "a sense of otherness at the very moment identity is glimpsed."[6]

The recognition of a self is simultaneous with the apprehension of otherness, the loss of an object the child previously perceived as a part of itself.

The partial objects, however, are *objets petits autres* precisely because they enjoy only a little otherness and are not totally severed from the infant subject. The partial objects retain a sense of presence that the subject irrevocably negotiates. They are external to the subject, but nevertheless have a bind to the subject's body. The mother's voice is often evoked as an example of the self-other bind. For Silverman, the mother's voice is a sonorous envelope with which the boundaries of the self are negotiated.[7] Moreover, she argues that the division that takes place at the mirror stage is particularly bodily in nature – it retains the partial objects in connection with the orifices of the body.[8] Michel Chion, on the other hand, refers to the mother's voice – and thus to the female voice – as an umbilicus.[9]

Even though the division into and the apprehension of partial objects is by no means the only split in the genealogy of the subject outlined in psychoanalytic theories, the mirror stage marks the beginning of a desire that pierces through the life of a subject. In Silverman's terms, "[t]he object thus acquires from the very beginning the value of that without which the subject can never be whole or complete, and for which it consequently yearns."[10] The partial objects mark a fundamental lack in the subject's constitution and initiate a desire to overcome it. According to Silverman, the "cinema replays that drama of phenomenal loss and cultural recovery."[11]

In cinema, then, the voice is posited in the double bind of its dissociation from the enunciating body and the desire to overcome the dissociation. Michel Chion tackles the dissociation with the concept of the *acousmêtre* – an acousmatic being – with which he elaborates on the possible inclusion of the voice and the body in the cinema. In short, the *acousmêtre* refers to a voice of which the source is hidden or otherwise invisible. This inaugurates a dynamic typical to the cinema, where the possible revelation of the voice's source entertains a particular attraction.[12] In other words, the cinema functions as a perpetual display of the original union of the voice and the body, their dissociation, and the promise of their eventual reunion. Kaja Silverman shares Chion's Lacanian drive, but insists that the cinematic display of the structural outline of subjectivity is also fundamentally cultural. In her take, the sense of otherness imbued in subjectivity is of cultural making. From this perspective, Silverman adds an important level to Chion's sketch by showing how the cinema, in putting forth a display of the subject's fundamental drive for unity, also repeats culturally implicated gender positions.[13]

In more general terms, psychoanalytic theorizations offer two primary ways of approaching film. On the one hand, narration has been analyzed in terms of a disposition of subjectivity posited on lack (the absence of the mother's voice, for example) and a desire to fulfill that lack. On the other hand, cinema itself has been regarded as a display of the original fantasy of subjective unity, a fantasy that can be experienced again and again. The documentary holds no straightforward place in this continuum, but it does raise questions that concern the dynamic between voices and bodies in film.

Voice and the documentary

In the realm of the documentary, particular valence has been placed on the synchronism of a speaking voice and the image of a speaking body. Historically associated with the technological developments of the 1960s and theoretically positioned within the discourse of authenticity and self-presence, the documentary has tended to claim the particular unity of a speaking voice and a body as its core achievement. In the language of psychoanalysis, ever since the heyday of direct cinema and cinéma vérité, a number of documentary pieces have been built on the unity of the recorded voice and the cinematographed body that had previously been unattainable.

In an interview concerning the voice in the documentary, Michel Chion speaks of synchronism as an exemplary case of the documentary display of a unified subjectivity.[14] However, he insists that the synchronized voice-body exists only in relation to its dissociation. In line with his Lacanian approach, Chion claims that a direct address account does not provide access to the subjectivity of the talking person, but presents a display of a body that speaks; a display that simultaneously holds onto the separation of the speaking voice and the body, and the promise of synchronism to overcome the division.[15]

Here, Chion implicitly points to a further feature of the Lacanian disposition of the voice: when a subject enters into language – and becomes a subject – the partial objects are irrevocably carved out of the subject's flesh. The full impact of the carved out partial objects will only be felt with the entry into language. It foregrounds otherness in the constitution of subjectivity because the subject now has to use the medium of language to name itself and the world. With language, a voice with a little otherness turns into a voice with more otherness. Whereas the voice as a partial object lays the ground for the yearning of the unity of the voice and the body, the speaking voice – a speaking subject – has lost the immediate connection to itself and is thus always already disjointed.[16] In the context

Figure 7: Tanyusha and her sister at the monastery. Image courtesy of Baabeli Ky.

of the documentary, a Lacanian take on the speaking subject would declare the foregrounded synchronism a foundational fiction.

Following the Lacanian path, the speaking subject presents the documentary with a fundamental disjunction that synchronism has partly covered. Displayed in a synchronized setting of a body that speaks, many documentaries presuppose a subject present to itself and thus capable of communicating its experiences, intentions, and desires. On the other hand, however, there are cases in which the body that speaks is founded on a fundamental disjunction. In documentaries that deal with trauma, for example, the body that speaks is conditioned on its incapability to voice its experiences. A poignant example of the disjunction is Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (France 1985), in which dozens of voices, synchronized with their bodies, share their accounts of the holocaust. Lanzmann takes many of the interviewees to the actual sites of the events, but their speaking voices are forever disjointed from the bodily experiences they articulate. Lanzmann speaks of the interviewees as characters that have to extract themselves from their subjective experiences in order to talk about the holocaust in the present.[17]

In short, the documentary harbors a fascinating dynamic of the speaking voice that, on the one hand, implies presence and, on the other hand,

speaks of dissonance. Mladen Dolar coins a similar double bind between Jacques Derrida's deconstructive post-structuralism and Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis. He notes that for Derrida the speaking voice – as opposed to writing – implies self-presence, whereas the Lacanian disposition takes off from the illusion of self-presence: "The deconstructive turn tends to deprive the voice of its ineradicable ambiguity by reducing it to the ground of (self-)presence, while the Lacanian account tries to disentangle from its core the object as an interior obstacle to (self-)presence."[18]

Explanations and order-words

The double bind comes to the fore with particular valence in *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils*, in which the voice and the body of the schizophrenic girl are clearly disjointed. However, the documentary does not content itself with simply observing this dissociation. It begins to trace its relation to the other voices that speak around Tanyusha. In capturing and expressing the relationships between the different voices and bodies, the documentary offers a vision of Tanyusha beyond her failure to "speak normally." In this way, the documentary questions the primacy of a subject fully present to itself and the idea of the voice as a vehicle of subjectivity. Thus, it initiates resistance to the normative powers that control Tanyusha.

Practically the only thing Tanyusha says over the first hour of the documentary is "I don't want to" in response to her father who makes her get out of bed and ready for church. The quasi-silence is juxtaposed with the people who speak around her. Tanyusha's father and mother give direct address accounts about the girl's condition to the camera, as if marking the quasi-silence of her body. On the soundtrack, the filmmaker accounts for Tanyusha's former doctor's diagnosis. The parents' as well as the former doctor's accounts aim at giving Tanyusha's silent body an explanation – as if to fulfill her subjectivity with a prosthetic voice. Within the wall of voices erected around her, Tanyusha keeps to herself.

In addition to the explanatory voices erected around the girl, Tanyusha's daily routines are marked by orders that subject her body to the discourses of the family and the church. Her other-worldliness is met with such orders as "faster, faster," "put on your dress," "repent," and "bow to the icon." Mostly, Tanyusha is non-responsive to the orders, but when she does respond, her bodily reaction is a-rhythmical. She bows to the icon mechanically, either too early or too late. Often, her father ends up dressing her and bowing her head to the icon at church.

The orders inflicted on Tanyusha are dual: they are commands that direct her behavior but they also *establish an order* that positions the bodies involved within a larger field. They are order-words that come with corresponding existential imperatives.[19] With the commands, the ordered and the orderer alike are arranged within the social field. The order-words directed at Tanyusha foreground her unawareness of and ignorance of the cultural calls of subjecthood in the church and in the family. They position her and her silence within a larger field of cultural operations. In the language of psychoanalysis, Tanyusha is portrayed in an interrupted interpellation in which the cultural screens of the church and the family do not produce the desired identity effect. Her limp gestures and non-responsiveness speak of her inability to perform according to cultural expectations.[20]

Expressing incertitude

The envelope-like structure that presses on the girl's body initially creates a rather claustrophobic sentiment for the film. The sense of demarcation is accentuated by the fact that Tanyusha has not left the premises of the monastery for six months. As if to enhance the vocal envelope erected around Tanyusha, the documentary is shot almost entirely within the confines of the monastery's walls, foregrounding her overall isolation. In the closed-off space, the camera stays close to Tanyusha, often framing her in close-ups, but resisting participation. In one of the most tantalizing sequences, the camera follows persistently as the father combs Tanyusha's hair, the harsh sounds of the comb ruthlessly echoing the girl's limp non-responsiveness.

The sense of distance within the intimate setting is enhanced by the film's structure: the documentary proceeds from one event to the next without counterposing or explaining the depicted events. According to the filmmaker, the structure is the result of her own oscillation in how she perceived and experienced Tanyusha's situation.[21] There were so many things she did not know and could not find out that she decided to simply edit the film into the order it was shot in. The filming was done on three occasions, which amount to approximately a month at the monastery. At times, the situation became ethically so difficult that the filmmaker was seriously on the verge of stopping the production.

The sense of holding back, withholding emphasis while being extremely close to the silent girl, caused some controversy around the film when it first came out. Some critics felt that the documentary did not take a strong enough stance for the little girl.[22] Paraphrasing the criticism, the

documentary was too silent. The director's voiceover commentary accounts only for how she came to make the film and for Tanyusha's schizophrenia diagnosis. She does not speak on Tanyusha's behalf amidst the voices that speak around her. However, the documentary's ethical stakes are not in overtly criticizing the church and the family, in providing alternate explanations and interpretations, but in undoing the dominant categories that determine and define her being.

The documentary's ethical investment comes through in the aesthetic choices of framing, particularly in how Tanyusha's silence is foregrounded in the frames that single her out in the church or in their room in the monastery. The camera moves around the walls of the small room and offers a visual equivalent to the vocal envelope put up around Tanyusha. However, the captured yellow light reflected from the walls does not have an oppressive feel to it; the color is striking yet strangely soft. It is reminiscent of the heavenly, golden yellow tints of fourteenth-century frescoes and icons. In a scene where the silent girl sits on her father's lap, the documentary captures Tanyusha in a posture that relates to the angelic Jesus figures in Virgin Mary's lap in religious iconography. As the camera focuses on the girl, music starts playing and the father's voice is brushed to the background. The music and the texture of light carry the girl from the room momentarily, expressing her as temporarily autonomous from the surrounding determinations.

The almost iconic expression of Tanyusha's silence offers an intriguing connection to the character of the mute in the cinema. Chion argues that the character of the mute harks back to the origins of cinema and to the great secret of silent cinema inherent in the inaudible speech of its characters. Similarly to the characters of silent cinema, the mute harbors a secret – and thus possesses the final word, the possibility of revelation. As the mute is the location of the story's knowledge that cannot be transmitted, she can obtain excessive powers that take hold of the very story. The mute can become ubiquitous, either in an angelic or diabolic manner because it is not tied to a voice.[23]

Activating the off-screen

In one of the first scenes of the film, the camera focuses on Tanyusha's father who sits on a bed in their room and explains how they ended up in the monastery. Slowly, the camera veers to the edges of his posture, gazing at the girl lying on the bed behind his back. As the father explains Tanyusha's

medical history, he is framed in the off-screen space of the image where he continues to explain how Tanyusha's problems started when she was summer-vacationing at her grandmother's.

The scene gains in strength in retrospect when it aligns with one of the few scenes shot outside the monastery. The filmmaker travels to Byelorussia to meet Tanyusha's mother, who gives a different account of the girl's medical background. The mother explains in detail how Tanyusha had a panic attack at school one day and never recovered. The mother sits with her other daughter on a sofa in the family home. As she talks, the camera starts moving subtly; it slides to the side, first framing Tanyusha's sister and then examining a photograph of Tanyusha on a bench top. The movement of the camera is delicate, but its effect is all the more startling.

The off-screen positioning of the parents' voices contributes to the acts of resistance in the documentary's vocal relations. More precisely, the split in the direct address accounts ruptures the function they initially offered in relation to Tanyusha. Whereas Tanyusha is first enveloped in explanations that mark and foreground her silent and non-responsive body – her inability to respond to the cultural calls of subjecthood – the split in the accounts themselves makes the surrounding speaking voices less rigid in relation to Tanyusha. In moving the speaking voices to the off-screen and by foregrounding the disjunction in the parents' voices and bodies, the documentary questions the uncommonness of Tanyusha's behavior. It is not only that the parents give different explanations for the girl's medical history but also that their stories are left wandering in the off-screen space of the film.[24] In its expression, the documentary questions the self-presence of the parents by separating their voices from their bodies. This questioning, however, is not a deconstructive move in the sense that it would reveal the parents as somehow lacking. Rather, it creates a zone of indiscernibility between the girl and her parents, a zone where the lines between normal and abnormal are difficult if not impossible to keep.

In addition, the parents' direct address accounts, with their supposed unity and explanatory power, entangle with off-screen ambient sounds that place their voices into a wider scope. In the family home, the sounds of children playing and running in the yard and the hallway can be heard in the background of the mother's account. In the monastery, the sounds of a sermon form a counterpoint to the father's account. In both cases, the off-screen sounds relate the accounts to the contexts in which the parents operate: the family wants to keep Tanyusha's condition a secret from the neighbors and at the monastery, the family must abide by the laws of the location. By placing the microphones at a distance from the parents,

the documentary gently expresses the conditions of their statements and consequently begins to consider Tanyusha's subjectivity in relation to a more extensive field of discourses and institutions. Thus, the documentary moves away from subjectivity modeled on a fractured psyche toward an understanding of subjectivity in terms of the specific processes that constitute and regulate how a subject can be.

As the wider set of vocal relations enters into the documentary, also the order-words that gnaw at Tanyusha's limp body become entangled with institutional and discursive structures that extend beyond their immediate enactment. Tanyusha's father is placed in a long lineage of pater familias – his actions are, in a way, associated with his discursive positionality – and not judged on the basis of his rough approach with Tanyusha. Similarly, Father Vassily is positioned within the continuum of the Orthodox Church and its imperatives of hierarchy and order-keeping. Instead of pointing a finger at the individuals involved in Tanyusha's treatment, the documentary expresses its awareness of the cultural processes and religious beliefs that intertwine with their behavior.

As the parents' accounts become entangled in the off-screen noises and voices, the vocal texture of the documentary changes. The turning point is structurally comparable to Silverman's description of the inside and the outside of the sonorous envelope. In psychoanalysis, the sonorous envelope explains the position of the mother's voice in relation to the child. The infant is draped inside the sonorous envelope of the mother's voice, where the infant is still incapable of language and meaning. The inside of the envelope appears in juxtaposition with the outside of the sonorous envelope, the side of signification and meaning. Silverman shows convincingly how psychoanalysis has consequently transposed the newborn's incapacity for signification into a female condition. The mother's enveloping voice that demarcates a-signification in the history of the subject becomes a characteristic of the mother. Consequently, interiority associated with the mother and the female becomes indicative of discursive impotence, whereas exteriority appears as the domain of discursive potency.[25]

The voice as a cut

In Honkasalo's documentary, Tanyusha first appears in a vocal envelope – trapped in the a-signifying impotence of her condition. However, as the outside domain of discursive potency is expressed as disjointed and transformable in itself, the binding envelope of explanations appears

less rigid. As the explanations and order-words gain in dimension, the a-signifying condition becomes less caged as an "interior incapacity" of the psyche. The transformation echoes Félix Guattari's argument that one of the major problems with psychoanalytic thought is the reducing of social facts to psychological mechanisms. Guattari – who was a trained Lacanian psychoanalyst – distances himself from the disposition of a-signifying regimes within the psyche and posits subjectivity as a process in which the inside and the outside, a-signifying and signifying regimes are organized socially, culturally and technologically – and not predetermined in the structure of the psyche. For Guattari, subjectivity is not reducible to a division between a signifying outside and an a-signifying inside – and the fantasy of their unity.[26]

Guattari's deviant take on psychoanalysis merits Lacan for moving the object of desire into the non-specularisable fields of the voice and the gaze. Lacan removes the partial objects from the Freudian causal infrastructure where the partial objects are determinist in nature (indices of the unconscious). According to Guattari, the problem with Lacan is that he did not realize the consequences of his split with the Freudian model and thus did not effectuate the appropriation of the partial objects with structures and processes beyond the organization of the psyche.[27]

In short, Guattari criticizes the model of subjectivity presented in psychoanalysis for its dimensionless infrastructure. Whereas psychoanalysis (in general) models subjectivity with the psyche, subjectivity in the Guattarian sense encompasses a variety of cultural, institutional, psychic, historic, and technological processes. Guattari speaks of subjectivity as an "existential territory" where these heterogeneous elements coexist.[28] From the perspective of the voice, this entails an extension of Lacan's *objet petit a*. The partial object adjacent to the body and embedded in the structure of the psyche is replaced with a partial object that acts as a cut in the existential territory. The voice as a detached partial object is a point of extraction from where the dimensions of subjectivity can be drawn anew.[29] They are "shifters" in the constitution of subjectivity. Compared to the Lacanian take, in which the partial objects eventually align with language and produce a rather rigid structure of an inside and an outside, the Guattarian partial objects hover in-between the inside and the outside, constantly questioning the limits of a-signifying and signifying regimes by working from the middle.[30]

The composition of voices and bodies in *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* initially points to a structure that binds Tanyusha to her fractured psyche and incapacity to voice herself. However, the iconic frames of the girl and the activation of the off-screen space create a counterpoint to her closed-off,

Figure 8: Acts of resistance in *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils*. Image courtesy of Baabeli Ky.

a-signifying space within the monastery's walls.[31] They create a cut in the rigid walls wrapped around her and replace it with the enigmatic luminosity of her a-signifiant speech. This coincides with Lanzmann's insistence that the speech of the characters in *Shoah* must become charged with an extra dimension.[32] The textures of light and delicate movements of the frame induce Tanyusha's a-signifiant speech with an additional dimension. The scenes of her sitting on her father's lap or participating in a sermon suggest that there is always something that the film cannot reach and reveal. Instead of taking this as a problem or as an obstacle, or guarding it as an original condition, the documentary foregrounds the enigma by drawing attention to the approaches taken to her condition.[33]

Tanyusha's enigma culminates in the last twenty minutes of the documentary when she finally starts speaking. But when she does speak, she speaks in the third person, repeating the orders others have directed at her. "Get dressed," "hurry up," "smile, Tanyusha" – she tells herself. The mechanical repetition of the voices of others comes through with particular valence in the final scene, which happens right after Tanyusha's mother and sister have arrived at the monastery for a visit. After chocolate has been eaten and greetings exchanged, Tanyusha walks to the monastery's gate, addresses the camera directly and says:

You choose me, daddy?
Don't you know?
You choose me, daddy?
Don't you know, mama, you choose me?
No, mama, so you don't choose me.
Never mind how it is, you tell me.
Go home then [Tanyusha].

Tanyusha's assertive phrases close the scene in a kind of a psychoanalytic family-theatre between the father, the mother and the child. Like an actor exiting the stage, Tanyusha turns and disappears behind the monastery's walls and her words are left hovering around the screen. However, the symptomatic tenor of the drama does not bring the film to a close. After telling herself to go home, Tanyusha returns to the confines of the monastery and starts kicking the gate with her feet. The camera moves to film the monastery from the outside and captures the thumping sound from the other side of the wall. Simultaneously, music starts playing. The music is a returning refrain that guided the viewer into the monastery, accompanied Tanyusha's silence in the scene where she sits on her father's lap, and now takes the viewer away from the premises. The thumping sound of feet kicking against the wall is picked up in the music and the receding movement of the camera. The music grows in volume as the camera pans out from the monastery. The distinctive and repetitive crescendos in the arrangement of the vocals "hook" the pounding of the gate to the music and carry it beyond the monastery's walls.[34] The musical refrain detaches Tanyusha from the order-words and explanations and attaches her to the receding images of the monastery. By detaching her a-signifying voice from the inside and letting it hover on the outside, the documentary resists the actual conditions of Tanyusha's existence and expresses a documentary vision where she is no longer bound to the a-signifying inside of the monastery's sonorous envelope.

Minor politics

Starting out with a desire to find out what happened to Tanyusha, *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* moves from an explanatory vocal envelope placed around the girl to subtle acts of resistance. The transition in the vocal texture of the documentary reflects the filmmaker's own initial desire to find out and explain, and the subsequent realization of the impossibility of the

task. The impossibility of knowing and explaining turns into a fabulatory practice where the hierarchies with which Tanyusha is controlled become temporarily undone. By placing Tanyusha's voice both inside and outside the monastery, between a-signifying and signifying regimes and between silence and sound, the documentary expresses the voice as a cut, a shifter that questions the limits of these very categories.

The ethical stakes of the film, then, are not in liberating Tanyusha from the orders that control her, but in expressing the social, bodily, psychic, and spatial connectedness of Tanyusha's voice; how her aberrant speech, grunts, and self-inflicted orders take shape in a network of relations that extends well beyond the monastery's grounds.[35] In making the conditions of her vocal articulations felt, the documentary resists the actual conditions in which she lives. As an act of resistance, documentary fabulation works against the explanations and interpretations that categorize Tanyusha with the devils.

Raymond Depardon effectuates a similar move in *Urgences* (France 1987), a film that documents the situations and accounts of incoming patients in the psychiatric ward of Hôtel-Dieu in Paris. Depardon frames the patients in the closed-off space of the institution and captures the multiplicity of the crises that led to their hospitalization. In the captured stories, the fine line between madness and exhaustion takes center stage. A bus driver tells the psychiatrist about his breakdown at work. He explains the anxiety he feels while driving the bus in rush hour, an uneasiness that resulted in a breakdown during a shift. At the end of the discussion, the psychiatrist concludes that the man needs a vacation. Another patient comes to the hospital, weary and miserable, and tells the staff that she has swallowed a handful of pills. She is given an abdominal irrigation and she stays at the hospital to rest. The frame of observation in *Urgences* expresses the fluidity of the categories of normal and abnormal by focusing on the social conjunctures of their hospitalization as they unfold in the patients' accounts.

The observational choices in Honkasalo's documentary foreground the middle, the in-between space between silence and speech. In the middle, politics is no longer about the hierarchy between abnormality and normality, but about the inauguration of a process that undermines the opposition between the two poles.[36] This process, to paraphrase Daniel W. Smith, is precisely the line on which minor politics can be constituted.[37] In *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils*, the expression of the voice as a cut introduces a process of becoming as the passage between the two categories and makes them indiscernible from one another.[38]

Documentary fabulation as minor politics amounts to what the documentary can do in tense situations where taking sides, intervening, and explaining prove impossible. In *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils*, documentary fabulation has to do with creating resistance to what is observed. The created acts of resistance do not promise better actual conditions for Tanyusha, but the documentary nevertheless reaches well beyond the monastery's walls even after the pounding of the gate has subsided. When Tanyusha tells herself to go home, the documentary asks the viewer to capture and express the line of flight that resists locating the 12-year-old with the devils.

Affection: Documenting the potential

To amplify the experience of becoming is one affirmative way to belong to time today.[1]
William E. Connolly

Politics has concerned documentary filmmakers and theorists ever since Grierson's days and it continues to be one of the attributes with which the documentary genre is set apart from others. On the one hand, there is a strong general consensus that the documentary is politically committed and that it is even capable of changing the world; on the other hand, there is no fundamental agreement on how political dedication is transferred to audiences and how documentary film participates in larger socio-political transformations.

Common faith in the documentary's capabilities to inspire political action and to produce social change has, in recent years, crossed paths with the neoliberal program of impact measurement. Along with cultural initiatives, academic arguments, and social policies, the success of a documentary work can now be evaluated according to its measurable impact. With the changes in contemporary media environment, the documentary's measurable impact often intertwines with its lifespan in social media. In addition to the box office and international sales, impact is now assessed in the number of tweets, shares, and Facebook likes. Data mining provides the industry with statistics to evaluate the reach and patterns of user engagement, but it does not say anything about the qualitative influence of documentary films. Instead, social impact graphs turn easily into blueprints for how to make a successful documentary.[2]

In response to impact measurements, the following chapters focus on qualitative outreach. They elaborate on the experiential dimension of documentary works that are politically committed to the Lebanese situation and post-Soviet Eastern Europe. The analyses of Jayce Salloum's *everything and nothing* (2001), Chantal Akerman's *From the East* (1993), and Kanerva Cederström's *Trans-Siberia* (1999) postulate affection in relation to politics.

The experiential in the documentary is often linked to discursive argumentation. Audiovisual strategies that contribute to a qualitative experience are approached in relation to the claims the documentary

work in question puts forward and the debates it participates in. Here, the discursive terrain of iconographies, cultural practices and social policies outlines the experiential field of the documentary. The discursive frames the available experiences and enables their modification and transmission. A remarkable example of this can be found in Leshu Torchin's discussion about creating the witness in screen media. Her approach significantly complicates the straightforward model where "revelation contributes to recognition, recognition demands action, and representations throughout transform audiences into witnesses and publics."[3] Instead, she maps the textual, formal, and visual strategies with which genocides are installed into popular imaginary and thus posits how audiences are turned into witnessing publics in contemporary screen media. Moreover, she elaborates on how filmmakers and media activists appropriate their films in justice movements that work toward particular responses and goals. Here, the representations of genocide enter into and operate in a complex set of political imaginaries and social practices.

Torchin's witness relates to Jane Gaines's conceptualization of a politicized spectator. Drawing from Linda Williams's influential essay on body genres, Gaines notes that seeing a body convulsed in political action on the screen causes bodily reactions in the viewer. Documentary footage of political action can lead to a bodily swelling in a politicized spectator.[4] In her essay, Williams specifies that the ecstatic excess exhibited in porn, horror, and melodrama causes bodily responses in the viewer. She continues that the success of these body genres is measured in the extent the viewers' sensations mimic what is seen on the screen.[5]

The corporeal turn Gaines carries over from Williams is significant, as it postulates documentary experience in terms of inarticulate bodily sensations: visual representations of revolutions and riots – bodily actions – trigger "ecstatic excess" in the viewer. These bodily effects, following Williams, depend on an "agreement" on the part of the viewer to comply with the strategies of representation on the screen. A politicized experience may come about as the viewer negotiates the politics on the screen with the discursive framework of his or her own bodily existence. Here, experience depends on the discursive organization of film as a signifying system and the viewer's complacency within that system. In this way, the mimetic sensations are not simple reproductions of the sensations represented on the screen, but entangle with such cultural and historical power relations as gender, race, and class that play a part in the constitution of experience.[6]

In a later essay on melodrama, Williams clarifies her idea of "inarticulate sensations" by arguing that linguistically coded experience and moments

of sensation operate in different registers.[7] The distinction is crucial for the present discussion of qualitative experience and affection for it draws attention to sensations that are separate from, yet coexistent with, the narrative logic of film. However, although Williams distinguishes between melodrama's "big sensation scenes" and the narrative pathos of the genre, she nevertheless keeps the moments of sensation within the norm of the narrative.[8] Similarly, Bill Nichols notes that "to term something 'excess' is to concede its subordination to something else. Like the concept of marginalization, excess forfeits any claim to autonomy."[9] The moments of inarticulate sensation offer one way of defining affection in documentary experience, but in this model they remain a necessary footnote to narrative logic.

Contrary to the theorizations described above, phenomenological takes on film experience emphasize the subjective contribution of the viewer. When experience is conditioned on the discursive organization of narrative modes, the viewer is in a position of being affected by the film. As Williams notes, this is not a position of passively mimicking represented sensations, although experience is nevertheless conditioned on repeating what is seen on the screen. In phenomenological theorizations, the focus is on the subject's capacities to affect the structuration of meaning on the screen. Vivian Sobchack gives a potent form to this idea in claiming that "documentary is less a *thing* than an *experience*."[10] It is a subjective relation to a cinematic object. For Sobchack, experience is not conditioned on the discursive forms and relations that construe the narrative modes and the subjective positions of viewing, but on the levels of consciousness with which the viewer identifies with the cinematic object. The viewer co-constitutes the cinematic object and this relationality induces a "charge of the real" in the film experience.[11] Significantly, phenomenological takes on film experience do not reduce the subjective relation to vision, but foreground the tactile and haptic qualities of experience.[12]

The present discussion on affection is indebted to phenomenology in so far as it places the emphasis on the relationality between a filmic body and a viewing body. However, contrary to the investment in subjective levels of consciousness, I am interested in inarticulate sensations as pathways to a political documentary experience. Rather than considering these sensations as subservient to a political narrative, my focus is on excess as potential that is not reducible to narrative arrangements. To be precise, in the following chapters affection designates the encounter between a documentary work that depicts bodies at the throes of potential – in a state of becoming – and the ways in which the film in question facilitates the viewers' tapping into the bodies' passages from one experiential state to another. Whereas

fabulation coined the ways in which documentary observation captures and expresses filmed subjects in a state of becoming, affection names becoming as the political potential in a documentary experience.

The background to this line of argument is in Deleuze and Guattari's take on Spinoza's ethics, where the body's powers of acting are increased or decreased by way of affections.[13] Whereas affect (Spinoza's *affectus*) refers to the body's ability to change, affection (*affectio*) describes a situation where a body's capacity to affect and to be affected is enacted in relation to other bodies on a pre-individual level of intensities. In Spinoza, the ethical in affection has to do with the idea that "no one has yet determined what a body can do."[14] From this point of view, affection coincides also with Deleuze's insistence on individual life giving way to an impersonal singular life, freeing it from distinctions of objectivity and subjectivity in favor of a singularization in the event.[15]

The distinction between excess as subservient to narrative and excess as potential can be clarified with the notions of *potestas* and *potentia*. In the translator's notes to Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, Brian Massumi explains that *potestas* (*pouvoir*) is associated with dominance whereas *potentia* (*puissance*) is a force of life. The former is in close proximity to Foucault's notion of power and it designates actual instituted and reproducible relations, the "selective concretization of potential." The latter, on the other hand, refers to "a capacity for existence." *Potentia* pertains to the virtual while *potestas* is part of the actual.[16] In terms of *potestas*, excess asserts the dominance of the prevailing system by challenging it. Despite building awareness of what remains beyond the narrative's grasp, excess nevertheless positions the narrative as the only pathway to this outside. As *potentia*, however, excess is the force of life or a capacity for existence captured and expressed in the documentary's frames and offered to the viewer without narrative mediation.

Following this line of thought, "documenting the potential" refers precisely to the ways in which the three documentaries capture excess as potential and how potential becomes politically charged within the documentaries. Affection outlines the setting where the political charge is passed on to the viewer. In this context, it is important to bear in mind that although potential is not subservient to narrative means, individual lives or actual bodies, it is nevertheless not universal. Excess as potential is relative to actual ways of telling a story, living a life or having a body. The difference is that it presses on actual forms and undoes their contours, while the actual forms also push back and harness the tensile forces in action. Chapters 5 and 6 investigate how documentary films that bear

witness to actual political events in Lebanon, Eastern Europe, and Siberia nevertheless affect the viewer on a level that is not acquiescent to these historical instances.

5. Moments of affection

One of the most ubiquitous documentary forms one encounters in art galleries and museums today is the talking head. This seemingly blunt audiovisual composition is striking for at least two reasons. Firstly, one is often perplexed by the presumed objectivity in the uses of the form: the visual frame is frequently used as a simple mediator of the experiences verbalized by the person in front of the camera. The relationship between testimonial speech and the talking head frame has become a pervasive "moment of truth" recognizable across media, ranging from confessional videos posted online and television talk shows to video art. It is a relationship that alerts the viewer to bear witness to a significant testimonial moment.[1]

The proliferation of talking heads in media culture has, however, also generated artworks that weigh the conditions of the testimonial talking head in their expression. For example, the Turkish artist Kutlug Ataman displays a series of silent talking heads in an ascending spiral of second-hand televisions in a recent installation piece. Citizens from the remotest corners of Turkey stare mutely at the camera in the familiar testimonial frame. The power of *Column* (2009) is precisely that it shows the children, youngsters, adults, and the elderly as silent in a frame that comes with the association of speech in contemporary media culture. Muteness foregrounds the citizens' inability to make their voices heard, to tell their stories.[2]

Whereas Ataman's piece challenges the simple objectivity of the audiovisual form with the series of television monitors and mute testifiers, Jayce Salloum's *everything and nothing* (Canada 2001) experiments with the conditions of the testimonial moment in a more explicit take on the talking head frame.[3] Salloum approaches the testimonial frame at the intersection of the recognizable testimonial moment and moments of affection. Accordingly, the video raises questions about the mediating aptitude of the testimonial frame as well as about its affective capacities.

Like many other testimonial videos, *everything and nothing* is actually an interview. It is an interview with the Lebanese resistance fighter Soha Bechara taped only a short while after her release from the notorious El-Khiam detention center in December 1999.[4] Bechara was twenty-one at the time of her arrest and spent ten years at El-Khiam, six years of which in complete isolation. She was arrested after a failed attempt to assassinate the leader of the South Lebanese army, Antoine Lahad. The assassination attempt and the captivity made her a national hero, a spokesperson for her people. When Salloum was in Beirut working on another project in 1992,

Figure 9: A testimonial moment. Frame enlargement courtesy of the filmmaker and the Video Data Bank.

he noted that posters of the woman were common; they graced the walls of public spaces and in private homes, they were placed next to martyrs of war, in places of honor.[5]

The interview takes place in Paris where Bechara relocated to study international law after her release. The resulting video coincides in part with the general interest directed at Bechara's experiences in captivity but it simultaneously refuses to simply mediate the rather stratified view of the political figure repeated in other media. Salloum remarks that he was hesitant to ask for the interview in the first place as Bechara was being "interviewed to death by the European and Arab press about her captivity [...]."[6] Put differently, the video is reluctant to position itself as another window on war experiences and torture.

This is obviously not to say that *everything and nothing* somehow bypasses the experiences that its subject embodies. Rather, the video aims at avoiding the "gratifications of immediacy"[7] that come with the simple objectivity of the testimonial frame. The video is part of an ongoing installation project – *untitled* – in which Salloum deals with the interstitial spaces and subjectivities shaped by experiences of war and conflict. In the variant setup of the installation, interviews in and about the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) are projected in pairs with ambient footage shot by Salloum from train and bus windows while he was traversing the country at the time of the NATO bombings in 1999. Footage from Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon is paired with views of clouds. In the installation setup, *everything and nothing* stands out: It is a single-channel loop played on a TV monitor.[8] Although the video stands out structurally, it is actually not that different from the other pieces. It is just that the interstices that the other pieces explore with the paired screenings – FRY and views from train

and bus windows; refugee camps and views of clouds – are internal to the testimonial video.

As the video loops in the farthest corner of the room, it attracts one's attention with abrupt cuts and rather perplexing changes of view: at first glance, the camera frames a solemn woman who looks directly into the space reserved for the viewer, but a second look shows the same woman smiling wholeheartedly in the frame. Thus far, her words are inaudible as they are transmitted through headphones that are placed on a black sofa in front of the TV monitor. The video lasts about 40 minutes and, as one sits through the loop, the transitions between these views become more and more tangible.

At the beginning of the video, Bechara sits on a bed with a serious look on her face and in Arabic tells the camera who she is and why she has agreed to do the interview. Framed in a medium shot – the testimonial frame – she talks about the struggle for Lebanon and her arrest. She speaks solemnly yet softly, convincing the listener of her dedication with calm and reflective articulation. The beginning of the tape ties the woman to a discourse of political witnessing in which the boundary between personal experiences and the public domain becomes blurred.

The interview space adds to a sense of blurred boundaries. A white wall and a closed door in the background structure the interview space. Even though the interview takes place in Bechara's room, there are no personal elements in sight. From the viewer's perspective, the enclosed and tightly framed space is easily associated with an anonymous setting in which Bechara speaks as the voice of the resistance. Overall, the beginning of *everything and nothing* reminds one of the simple objectivity associated with testimonial videos. A fixed camera records Bechara's speech and it is not difficult to imagine that Bechara has spoken of her capture and release and its historical context a thousand times before. She speaks in a reflective and convincing manner, directing her eyes to the floor submerged in thought or occasionally looking straight at the camera as if to summon the viewer to the cause.

A few minutes into the video, the testimonial frame changes. A sudden cut turns into black frames that are followed by a close-up of Bechara's face. Then, the camera zooms out to a medium shot only to zoom back in, this time to a tighter medium frame. The testimonial frame is restored, only at a slightly different angle. After a few minutes more, the camera zooms back to a close-up of Bechara's face. Over these first four minutes of the interview, Bechara explains that she agrees to participate in conferences and give interviews because it gives her a chance to talk about the choices

and possibilities available in the post-release period. It also gives her a chance to remind people of the long line of human rights violations inflicted on Lebanon and elsewhere that should be documented and remembered in order for a collective future to become possible. After Bechara has contemplated the need to act as a witness in order for us to know where we "who are a small drop in the world" are headed, a cut to black ensues. From the black frame, the visuals return to Bechara who now sits on the bed in the same position as before and looks at the interviewer beside of the camera. She rests her head in her hand with an expectant look on her face, smiles and asks in French "You don't understand?", to which Salloum answers from behind the camera, also in French, "I don't understand but it's ok."

Salloum's entrance into the testimonial frame follows the abrupt zooms and edits and yet it comes as a surprise. His sudden audible presence as well as the fact that he does not understand Arabic reorient the viewer's relationship to the video. What began as a recognizable testimonial moment passes into a compound of questions and answers in which the "failed transmissions" are clearly foregrounded. From this point on, the questions that Salloum poses in broken French are audible on the soundtrack. Sometimes he resorts to English when he cannot express himself otherwise. Once Salloum asks her from behind the camera if Bechara has finished answering because he has no idea what she just said.

Bechara's account becomes more personal as it becomes related to Salloum's search for words. She talks about what she left behind when she moved to Paris ["everything and nothing"], how she experiences the distances between Paris, Beirut, and El-Khiam and why she never puts flowers in water. When Salloum has difficulties in finding words, Bechara comes to his assistance and compliments his "very sweet questions." The speaking positions become more fluid as Bechara takes charge of the situation and Salloum openly reflects about the questions he poses. Addressing Bechara's survival methods in El-Khiam, Salloum states that "I don't want to ask you directly about that." Instead, he wants Bechara to tell the "little stories" of her captivity.

According to Michael Allan, *everything and nothing* is a conceptual site for considering the problems of representation, mediation, and translation.[9] What I have said about the tape thus far supports Allan's argument. The piece criticizes the overexposed way in which experiences of war and torture are typically mediated and represented, and one of the ways in which *everything and nothing* performs this criticism is by foregrounding the linguistic threshold between the two parties of the interview. As the video confuses the speaking positions and thus also the viewer's expectations

of the talking head testimonial, it takes a political stance regarding the recognizability of the testimonial moment. The testimonial frame in a sense breaks with itself in order to call into question the overexposed procedures of testifying. Judith Butler notes: "What happens when a frame breaks with itself is that a taken for granted reality is called into question, exposing the orchestrating designs of the authority who sought to control the frame."[10]

Everything and nothing weighs the conditions of the testimonial moment and evaluates the historically and culturally set positions of the testifier, the interviewer and the viewer in its audiovisual disposition. Thus, it offers a specter of new apprehensions about the testimonial moment itself. Politically speaking, it puts on display the norms that control the testimonial moment and its frame. This aligns with Butler's assertion that there is always something that exceeds the frame that does not conform to the established understanding of things.[11]

For the present purposes, Butler's suggestion that the breaking out of frames could be their very function in contemporary media culture is particularly poignant. In her discussion of images of war and torture, she draws attention not so much to what is seen in the images, but to the discursive connections of the images. The point is that as the images break with themselves, their circulation may eventually cause a break in the silent, quotidian acceptance of war.[12] As the frames open up to their outside, they gain a political function. It is, in fact, the outside of the frame – what is in excess of the frame – that holds political power in Butler's thought.

Another example that uses and considers the testimonial frame is useful in this regard. Errol Morris's documentary *The Fog of War* (2003) consists of 11 lessons in which the former American Secretary of State Robert McNamara presents his views on warfare. In *The Fog of War*, McNamara rationalizes the decisions made during the Vietnam War and aims at shedding light on the Vietnam experiences of the American nation. His apparent goal is to remove the fog surrounding the Vietnam War, but Morris's stylistic choices actually place the fog in McNamara's own gaze.

McNamara presumes to have subjective control of his words and the testimonial situation, and presents his rationalizations as convincing results based on years of experience and consequent expertise on warfare. According to Michael J. Shapiro, framing is one of the outstanding audiovisual devices with which the film enacts its politics against McNamara.[13] In *The Fog of War*, the camera moves constantly and places McNamara to the corners of the frame and at times even partly outside the frame. As a result, he is not given the position of an official testifier. Morris's criticism toward McNamara intensifies in the two moments where the former Secretary of

State is placed at the center of the frame: both times he implicitly admits to having made mistakes during the operation in Vietnam.

Morris's aesthetics of the frame breaks with the subjective control and rationalizations of the speaker by first refusing the testimonial frame and then using it as a heightened aesthetic device. In *The Fog of War*, the frame breaking with itself is deployed as an initial condition in the film's political setup, but the reinstitution of the testimonial frame is the documentary's ultimate path to a "moment of truth." In *everything and nothing*, the breaks of the frame take place in conjunction with a deep admiration of the political convictions of the testifier.

As *everything and nothing* vacillates between the official testimonial frame and its deframings it participates in discursive criticism of the testimonial moment. It offers a view of the possibilities of speaking, listening, and viewing involved in the testimonial moment. As a conceptual site or as a locus of discursive politics, the testimonial frame intertwines with the epistemological question of how a frame delimits the possible testimonies implicit in the testimonial moment. One could argue that the frame operates precisely in relation to the possibilities that remain outside, but that are constantly referred to in the frame's operations. However, although the experiments in the relationship between testimonial speech and the talking head frame clearly have a critical function regarding the associated speaking positions, ways of speaking, and practices of mediation, I would argue that *everything and nothing* is capable of much more than discursive criticism regarding the testimonial moment.

Frames of emergence

The discursive politics of the piece – its deframing of the testimonial moment – could equally be named the re-orientation of the emerged.[14] The political function of the frame is actualized in relation to ways of speaking, listening, and viewing that are already imbricated in the operational outer field of the frame. But there is also an outside of a different order, one that is more oblique in function and that does not translate into shifting testimonial positionalities:

> In one case, the out-of-field designates that which exists elsewhere, to one side or around; in the other case, the out-of-field testifies to a more disturbing presence, one which cannot even be said to exist, but rather 'insists' or 'subsists,' a more radical elsewhere, outside homogenous space and time.[15]

The distinction between these two outsides comes down to the difference between possibility and potential. Whereas possibility is an alternative occurrence implicit in the testimonial moment, potential is undetermined variation. In Brian Massumi's terms, it is "the immanence of a thing to its still indeterminate variation."[16] Possibility refers to the variations that are contained in the outside of the testimonial moment and that can be evoked with the breaking out of the testimonial frame. Potential, however, has to do with indeterminate forces of affection that "insist" or "subsist" in the moment although they do not belong to the testimonial structure as such. Here, the frame lines up with processes of emergence rather than re-orientations of the emerged.

Frames of emergence, then, purport asking how the insistent forces of affection operate within a situation so clearly entwined in a discursive politics of mediation. There are two particular instances in *everything and nothing* that deserve attention in this regard. Both are interstitial in the sense that they mark the transition between the interviewer and the interviewee. However, the uniqueness of these instances is not only in the re-orientation of the roles involved in the testimonial moment but particularly in the emergence of a relationality that is no longer subject to these positionalities.

The first instance appears after Bechara's lengthy description of her political work and commitment. After she has finished speaking, she looks at Salloum in anticipation. The brief moment feels longer than a couple of seconds – perhaps because it breaks the question–answer cycle so thoroughly. The feel of the moment could be described as something of a "leaning toward." As testimonial speech comes to its end, the speaker begins to step out of her position, but as the position of listening is not yet available, she leans in-between.

The other instance is equally fascinating, only this time the leaning is reversed. As Salloum searches for the words with which to formulate his question, Bechara looks at him attentively. When Salloum is about to find the right words and Bechara is about to understand what he is trying to say, an affinity beyond the testimonial moment emerges. This moment is expressive of qualities that are not bound to the representation or mediation of the testimonial moment: it expresses a relationality between Salloum and Bechara that emerges in the interstices of the testimonial exchange.

The leanings toward begin as ruptures in the testimonial exchange and become expressive of the intensity that gathers between the two participants during the interview. These "moments of affection" are disorienting because they exceed the norms of the testimonial and set the direction of

the tape beyond the patterns inscribed in the testimonial moment. They draw attention to the incipient dynamics taking shape between the two parties over the course of the interview and thus also affect the remainder of the video.

These moments of affection are analogous in function to other points of rupture that change the course of a film. For example, Amy Herzog notes that scenes that invert the subservient role of music to image can restructure the spatiotemporal coordinates of the narrative and change the affective impetus of the film in question. For Herzog, these "musical moments" are particularly interesting because, although they are potentially affirmative and even liberating, they can also end up as generic aesthetic devices. For her, the musical moment is unique because it is at once one of the most conservative and the most irreverent of filmic phenomena.[17]

Elena del Río detects a similar momentum of affection in melodramatic scenes where the characters push through the characteristic contours of their bodies.[18] She describes a scene from Douglas Sirk's *Written on the Wind* (1956) in which Marylee Hadley (Dorothy Malone) places a framed photograph of Mitch Wayne (Rock Hudson) on a glass shelf and begins performing a frantic mambo in front of the photograph. Marylee's unrequited passion for Mitch is expressed in her movements to the ascending pace of the music. The rhythm moving her body is so fast that her body seems to break through its bounds in the whirlwind. The dance is juxtaposed with Marylee's father laboriously climbing the stairs of the family home. At the top, he loses his grip on the banister and spirals to his death. This melodramatic moment expresses the two characters ferociously moving out of their bodies: one in the throes of passion and the other facing death. The relationality of the bodies, rhythms, and objects constitutes a momentum that changes the affective tone of the film: in the final scene, the dead father looks over Marylee from a portrait on the wall, while she cries forlornly at his desk.

Although *everything and nothing* is neither a melodrama nor a musical, its emphasis on ruptures and consequent affective relationalities creates a comparable sensation of emergence within the video. As the testimonial moment unfolds into a moment of affection, the charge of the encounter between Bechara and Salloum takes a new turn and carries the two beyond their assigned roles. This frame of emergence does not challenge or undermine the political impetus of the testimonial moment, but rather works with material relations that cannot be coded into the testimonial structure as such.

Amodal affection

The distinction between a testimonial moment and an audiovisual moment of affection brings the discussion to how these distinct yet related areas of *everything and nothing* are experienced. Following the Italian filmmaker and theorist Pier Paolo Pasolini, there is a double reality at play in the experiential: a grammatical and a pregrammatical plane. The first is the level of cinematic signs (*im-signs*) that can be arranged in a number of ways. Pasolini insists that the grammatical outline of cinema is an indispensable pretext for pregrammatical expression. Pregrammatical expression, on the other hand, is an unrealized film that unfolds beneath the grammatical ordering of images. It is freed of grammatical function and expressive as such.[19]

In the realm of spectatorship, the double reality of cinema – its grammatical and pregrammatical dimensions – entices the viewer with different means and thus requires a conceptualization of the viewing experience that is equally double. Raymond Bellour suggests conceptualizing the double reality of the viewing experience with the notions of modal and amodal perception. Bellour borrows the outline from the developmental psychologist Daniel N. Stern, who discusses the distinction in the context of an emergent sense of self in an infant. Stern argues that an infant is simultaneously aware of the process of an emergent organization as well as its product. The sense of self is emergent because the objects and compositions the infant perceives are tied to an emergent process in which the modally perceived objects are tied to an amodal process of organization.[20] Amodal experiences are elusive – hard to seize upon as such and they seldom fit existing lexicons of experience. He calls them "vitality affects" that are better described in dynamic and kinetic terms such as "fading away" and "bursting."[21] Bellour argues that the spectator in cinema is comparable to Stern's infant, in the sense that the cinema as an experience is composed of the dual perception of an emergent process and a more categorical dimension of objects and their relations.[22]

Bellour's insistence on the role of amodal perceptions in cinema coincides interestingly with William E. Connolly's outline of "materialities of experience," which coincide with the rich history of inter-sensory circuits that contribute to our perceptual habits.[23] These sensory circuits form an amodal history of perception that grids the conditions of modal perception. It is this level of materialities – sensory relations of movement, affect, touch, sight, and smell – that Connolly sees as politically most timely. He speaks in favor of media experiments that challenge the simple objectivity of mediation

with audiovisual means and, in this way, expose and address the ways in which perception is inflected and gridded in media-saturated society. He argues that this kind of audiovisual exposing may – eventually – lead to a more affirmative existential attachment with the world.[24]

Put differently, Connolly's take on the materialities of experience, Bellour and Stern's vitality affects, and Pasolini's double reality of cinema posit that an experience of reality as well as that of moving image media goes deeper than what is modally perceivable. The plane of grammatical relations and corresponding modal perceptions is constantly tweaked by pregrammatical intensities that unfold immanently to actual forms and positions. This unfolding has political repercussions for both analyses of testimonial cultures as well as perception itself. In the latter case, focus is transposed from weighing the conditions of perception and experience in their discursive determination to looking at the conditions of perception and experience on the amodal level of inclinations and inter-sensory circuits. The moments of affection in *everything and nothing*, on the other hand, confuse habitual ways of experiencing a testimonial moment and thus transpose the work of testimony from mediating experiences to the immediacy of unfolding.

Politics of emergence

The Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990), the massacres of Shatila and Sabra in 1982 as well as the 2006 conflict against Israeli occupation – to mention some of the crises the country has seen – have left their mark on the art created in the country and about its people. The infrastructure, material objects, and lives in general are so thoroughly permeated by war that its presence in art should come as no surprise. As the political events have infiltrated people's perceptions and ways of living, one of the goals associated with art about and in Lebanon is to learn how to see life in novel ways.[25]

For example, in the film *I Want to See* (France/Lebanon 2008), the Lebanese artists Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige depict bombed South Lebanon after the 2006 war with Israel. In order to see things they have previously not been able to perceive in the familiar landscape, its details and convolutions, they place a non-Lebanese character at the heart of their film. In the film, Catherine Deneuve plays herself perceiving the South Lebanese situation. The film deploys her "fiction-body" to inflict perceptions that might have been impossible to generate by relying on the ways of perceiving that have become typical in the country. The directors emphasize that they

wanted to avoid a televisual practice of witnessing and put the stress on the "chemical reactions" that the encounter of a foreign star and the South Lebanese people can produce.[26]

Deneuve's "double-body" resonates interestingly with Soha Bechara's double created by the Lebanese artist and filmmaker Walid Raad, who had previously worked as Salloum's assistant. His experimental documentary *Hostage: The Bachar Tapes* (Lebanon 2000) is a take on the Western hostage crisis in Lebanon in the late 1980s and the associated discourses of terrorism. The tape features Soheil Bachar, a male character directly inspired by Soha Bechara, who was allegedly held in solitary confinement for ten years, except for 27 weeks in 1985 when he shared a cell with five American hostages: Terry Anderson, Thomas Sutherland, Benjamin Weir, Martin Jenco, and David Jacobsen. In the video, Bachar talks directly at the camera in a testimonial frame against the backdrop of a blue-and-white cloth. He speaks in Arabic, but his words are simultaneously translated into English on the soundtrack by a female voice with an American accent.

The fictional setting of a shared cell enables the video to unfurl the common narratives of the Lebanese situation. For example, Bachar notes that the books written by the Americans after their release depoliticized their experiences by foregrounding their personal growth in detention. Bachar then talks about the cultural, textual, and sexual aspects of being in captivity and thus comments on the dominant narratives within the fictional setting. Mark Westmoreland notes that by focusing on the narrative aspects of the hostage situation and captivity, Raad intervenes in the ways meaning about Lebanon and the Middle East in general is constructed in Western discourse.[27]

The figures of the double in *I Want to See* and *Hostage: The Bachar Tapes* suspend typical ways of seeing and making sense of the South Lebanese context. They point to and work with the need to find new modalities of perception and signification in order to talk about the Lebanese situation. Similarly, Salloum's video wants to create a "body double" for the over-exposed image of the resistance fighter. The video achieves this by instituting "anotherness" to its core, by portraying both the testifier and the artist in transition, as emergent.[28]

Thus, the work of the frame in the video instigates a politics of emergence. With its moments of affection, *everything and nothing* becomes expressive of intensities that were not prescribed in the testimonial moment. The momentum of these moments no longer depends on what remains outside the frame (as excess) but it centers on what emerges within the frame – how the frame captures and expresses that which insists or subsists as indeterminate

potential. In *everything and nothing*, this potential is expressed as a feeling of mutual infatuation, an affinity between the two participants.

Although the moments of affection in *everything and nothing* are ruptures in the testimonial order, they nevertheless do not abolish the testimonial function, but rather change its charge. The moments of affection are followed by yet other reflections on the importance of speaking out and telling others about the situation in Lebanon and El-Khiam. Bechara talks about democracy and a regime that asserts itself without attacking the other. The effect of the latter part of the video is, however, remarkably different from the official tenor at the very beginning. The suspending moments of affection have induced a captivating intensity in the rest of the testimonial. This intensity is like an extra dimension; it co-exists with the political discourse and imbues it with a feeling of emergence. As the video taps into the subsisting potentials of the moment, it creates an affective experience that sticks with the viewer in a manner that the testimonial moment of truth could hardly match.

6. The primacy of feeling

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe was in a state of tumult. States that had previously been directly or indirectly under Soviet rule were suddenly independent and the rest of Europe had to review its relationship with both the newly organized East and its own ideological convictions. The situation created a commotion in bodies and thought as people could move more freely and as the physical and mental borders with which the continent had been divided needed redrawing.

Chantal Akerman approaches this agitation in her documentary film *From the East* (*D'Est*, Belgium 1993).[1] In an essay on the making of the film, Akerman asserts that "while there is still time, I would like to make a grand journey across Eastern Europe."[2] *From the East* documents the journey from East Germany to Moscow, passing through seasonal changes from the summery beaches on the Baltic Sea to the snowy Russian capital. "While there is still time" refers to the historical change in the East that Akerman captures in her frames.

Kanerva Cederström's *Trans-Siberia – Notes from the camps* (Finland 1999) intertwines with the same historical turning point as *From the East,* but from a different perspective. The starting point of Cederström's documentary is the quietness that ensued following the fall of the Soviet Union, while Akerman is intrigued by the imminent change in the East. Cederström recounts that she was surprised by the lack of analytical discussion following the change of regime in 1991.[3] She was particularly taken aback by the overall tendency of forgetting and moving on that prevailed over the possibility of engaging analytically with the silent sites of the Soviet Empire – such as the gulags in Siberia.[4]

An interesting feature of both *Trans-Siberia* and *From the East* is that even though they deal with specific historical events, the moments are not identified with temporal signifiers of before and after. Nor are the individual gulags or stops along the journey marked in any clear way. In Akerman's film, borders between Germany, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Russia blur. Shots from fields, rugged country roads, private homes, city streets, train stations, and concert halls follow one another in a series that does not point to distinctions and resemblances in a straightforward way. Rather, Akerman notes that she "would like [...] to make you feel the passage from one language to another, the differences, the similarities."[5]

Put differently, Akerman's documentary evokes a feeling of the passage across Eastern Europe instead of engaging in overt conversation about


Figures 10-11: On the cusp of change in Eastern Europe. Frame enlargements courtesy of Icarus Films.

the stakes of the historical situation. *From the East* captures the journey between the different countries with variations of stillness and movement in its frames and editing. The primacy of feeling, then, draws attention to the ways in which the sensation of the passage frames the political stakes of the documentary. In *Trans-Siberia*, this happens through the form the documentary gives to the temporal experience of the gulags, a form that bypasses explicit arguments and equivocations about the prison system. Both documentaries posit the primacy of feeling as their pathway to a discussion about Eastern Europe, thus also rearticulating the political dimension of documentary aesthetics.[6]

Stillness and movement

From the East consists of long ethnographic shots of groups of people in public spaces: women harvesting potatoes, people waiting at bus stops or stations, or walking down an icy road. In private homes, people are depicted doing everyday activities such as making a sandwich, playing the piano, or putting on lipstick. In both spaces, the ethnographic quality of the shots is simultaneous to a sensation that exceeds the frames. The shots in *From the East* coexist with a hypnotic rhythm.[7] This results in the sensation that even though each scene is allowed to come to its end, it never quite feels like an end. There is an inconclusive feel to Akerman's frames.[8]

There is no narrating voiceover in Akerman's film, which gives prominence to the frames and the activities depicted in them. The camera captures the places and the people with still frames or lateral tracking shots. In public spaces, the stillness of the frames is emphasized by people, cars, or trains moving through them. People enter the frame, for example, from the side

or from behind the camera and thus either elongate the depth of field with their movement or traverse it by entering from one side and exiting from the other. The stillness gains in weight with the lateral tracking shots, as the tracking is often done in parallel with groups of people standing and waiting at bus stops or sitting on benches at stations. In these shots, the camera is often placed at eye level or below, and always mounted on a support that makes its movement stable. The tracking shots capture the stillness of the people in relation to the movement of the frame.

The perpetual movement of the frame is often transposed to processions of people walking through still frames. Movement started in one scene with a moving frame is transposed to the next where it continues with the bodies moving through or in the frame. Moving frames turn into still frames with moving bodies, and still bodies in moving frames suddenly start moving in relation to still frames. The variations of movement and stillness in the documentary give form to a sensation of dynamism, hypnotic agitation. What is most interesting about the created momentum is that although it takes shape in relation to the excessive stillness of the bodies and frames and the wandering tracking shots and bodies moving *en masse*, it is nevertheless not visible as such.

Put differently, the audiovisual form of the documentary – the transpositions of movement and stillness – produces a feeling of momentum. As waiting at the train station does not amount to actually getting on the train, nor does harvesting potatoes amount to an end result, there is an inconclusiveness to the documentary's form. However, with the pitting of movement against stillness and stillness against movement indetermination intertwines with a sensation of commotion. This feeling in a way doubles the actual movements and stillnesses, and gives them an additional dimension. Standing, waiting, walking, and sitting are imbued with a sensation of time passing; the feeling of a force that suspends the bodies from determinate actions and instead envelops them in the indeterminate commotion of historical change. This is what Brian Massumi calls a "perceptual feeling," a sensation of momentum that flows through objects and forms and affords them with dynamism.[9] Akerman's technique of framing places and people at the turn of the 1990s captures and expresses the East in suspension – imbued with a momentum that has yet to be harnessed into a clear direction.

In this way, "while there is still time," Eastern Europe is not offered as an entity moving from one form to the other, one regime giving way to the next, but as a populated landscape with suspended differences and similarities. The overarching hypnotic momentum of the documentary has encouraged some to anchor the film back to clear markers of distinctions

and resemblances. Ivone Margulies, for instance, emphasizes the differences between each shot of the film. For her, each individual shot is a block comparable to the compartment of a train.[10] The shots are individualized with small gestures that make each of them different. In a scene shot with a static camera, a person unexpectedly walks through the frame on a snowy field; in another fixed shot, potato harvesters move perpendicularly toward the camera along the furrows on the field and occasionally stop to gaze at the camera. In a lateral tracking shot of people waiting at a bus stop in snowy dusk, a young boy observes the camera mounted on a car slowly passing the place where he stands. The boy disappears from the frame as the camera moves to the left, but he picks up the camera's pace and enters the frame again at a later point in the same shot, still chewing his gum and continuing his curious observation.

For Margulies, these individuating gestures in the shots resist the anonymity often attributed to Eastern Europe's "block societies." In her view, the documentary provokes the viewer to distinguish between the oversimplified image of the East produced for Western consumption and the differences in personal history that individuate from the presumed mass. With these gestures, *From the East* "momentarily dispels their uniformity, probing their faces as the very index of a resistance to anonymity."[11]

Put differently, Margulies conflates the suspended bodies and actions – and the created momentum – with the political task of representing the East in a more favorable light. By insisting on the individuating gestures that differentiate each shot, Margulies argues that the indecisive momentum, or what she calls a hypnotic rhythm of the documentary, is equal to a "hypnotized mass" from which individuations may arise. For her, the feeling evoked by the passage across the East speaks of personal histories individuated from the mass.

In my view, neither the political work, nor the feeling evoked in the passages between stillness and movement speaks of individuations from the mass. This has to do with the film's particular way of framing imminent change in the East. The scenes shot in private homes are especially important in this regard. Rather than following Margulies and viewing these scenes as personal histories that surge from the mass, I take them as breaks in the journey across the East and as moments where the momentum created in the transitions of stillness and movement is expressed as internal to the scenes.

In private homes, people are framed doing everyday activities. A teenager puts on lipstick in a bedroom, a woman cuts bread and salami in the kitchen, and an elderly woman sits in a chair by the television. The camera is placed

a couple of meters from them, framing their bodies in full. The duration combined with the still frame induces a curious sensation in the scenes. The elderly woman sits in the chair for more than forty seconds and the repetitive gestures of the woman and the teenager are even longer. The scenes depict banal everyday actions, but the actions themselves are excessive, suspended from determinate efforts of actual results. The woman prepares her sandwich for over two minutes and the teenager applies lipstick for over a minute – reminiscent of the repetitive gestures in Akerman's 1975 film *Jeanne Dielman* where comparable gestures of washing dishes and cleaning are used to question the conventions of identity imposed on women. However, instead of a metahistorical critique of representations of the East, the excessive, suspended actions in *From the East* give form to a temporal experience of suspension between two extremes. In this way, the documentary offers its viewers a direct experience of the hesitations, disorientations, and insecurities that marked the early 1990s in Eastern Europe.

Here, the work of the frame that contours the bodies in suspended excessive action is particularly important. The frame regulates the relationship between the body and its environment, and thus plays a part in how that relationality is experienced in the documentary. In *From the East*, the relationship between frame, body, and environment is expressed in *tableaux vivants* that have a pulse of their own. This is comparable to the internal rhythm of a painting. In his discussion of Francis Bacon's works, Deleuze argues that the internal rhythm in his paintings consists of the movement between the body and the field that surrounds it. This movement is regulated by contours that frame the body within the paintings. On the one hand, the field exerts its force on the body; on the other hand, the body moves toward the field in a kind of a spasm – moving out of its contours. Deleuze speaks of this movement as "the athleticism of the Figure."[12] He detects an extraordinary agitation in, for example, Bacon's painted heads – an agitation derived from the enveloping field of the painting exerting its force on the immobile head, and the heads moving out of their contours. This two-directional movement is composed of a systole contraction that goes from the field to the figure and a diastole dissipation that goes from the figure to the field.[13] The coexistence of these movements is the internal rhythm of the painting. It is "the sensible form related to sensation; it acts immediately upon the nervous system, which is of the flesh, whereas abstract form is addressed to the head, and acts through the intermediary of the brain, which is closer to the bone."[14]

In the scenes shot in private homes, the framed bodies are particularly agitated. Following Deleuze, one could say that the pressure of the field – the

yet to be determined changes in Eastern Europe – press on the bodies to such an extent that in the excessively long shots that frame them, their stillness becomes athletic and the repetitions more intense. The duration of the frames regulates the relationship of the bodies to the surrounding field, and it is precisely the duration of the frames that offers "hypnotic athleticism" as the perceptual feeling of these scenes.

The momentum of imminent change created in the editing and the internal rhythm of the *tableaux vivants* wrest the affective work of the documentary from alternative narratives and variance in representation to affection that works on the viewer directly. What works on the viewer is the felt perception of a momentum that accompanies the framed bodies but is not visible as such. Here, the desired political effect of documentary experience is transposed from mimicking bodies in action to the mimesis of momentum.[15] The documentary invites the viewer to sense imminent change and to respond to its momentum. Hence, the experience of change "while there is still time" offered in *From the East* exceeds the recognition of personal histories and geographical specificities. The documentary offers to perception much more than individuated stories and objectively perceivable activities. Paraphrasing Massumi, the documentary operates with a perceptual feeling as the extension of forms, structures and their historical patterns. The documentary's audiovisual form is the launching pad for felt perception, but this feeling (of momentum) is not reducible to the actual forms on the screen.

Archives of experience

The sensation that there is more to the film than meets the eye has inspired interpretations of *From the East* as a representation of the filmmaker's personal history. Alisa Lebow argues that Akerman's film is a transitive autobiography in which the director essentially wanders around her Jewishness.[16] Similarly to Margulies, Lebow foregrounds the domain of the documentary that has no visual correspondence in the film, but she reads the domain that exceeds the persistent shots and the lateral movement of the camera as indices of autobiographical filmmaking. For Lebow, the documentary is enveloped in the dispersal of Jewish culture after World War Two and Akerman's consequently transitive experience of her Jewish subjectivity.[17]

From this perspective, even though Akerman systematically eschews elements of her personal history – she does not visit the town her family

comes from, nor does she include any iconographic Jewish markers in the facade of Eastern Europe – the past that she on one level seems to evade nevertheless sticks out in the landscapes and portraits she records. In Lebow's analysis, the documented landscape is held together by a past life that the filmmaker has experienced only transitively through her mother.[18] In this sense, *From the East* is a representation of the filmmaker's quest for a past that is experienced only indirectly in the present. Akerman's "while there is still time" becomes, in Lebow's analysis, an index of a process in which the search for flashes of resemblance and commonality of Jewish culture is represented indirectly with the very absence of Jewish iconography.[19] Here, the ethnographic frames are instances in which Akerman looks for herself in the faces of others.

In Lebow's reading, the sensation of inconclusiveness becomes a sign of the filmmaker's personal history. Thus, similarly to Margulies, Lebow places the context of the film before the felt perception of its momentum. Put differently, both implicitly argue that the film can be felt only after it has been understood. In my view, *From the East* avoids the metahistorical strategy of reconstructing the historical moment with audiovisual means and opts for a more experimental methodology of capturing and expressing the momentum of time's passing in its form.

In this sense, the audiovisual form of the documentary can be defined as an archive of experience. Archiving refers to the capturing of the momentum of on-going change in the form of the film. Here, "a body or object is a self-archiving of a universe of felt relation."[20] In the documentary context, this refers to the self-archiving of felt relation on the level of the subjects and objects filmed, and consequently on the capturing and expressing of this felt relation with an aesthetic of the frame in the documentary.

Considering objects and bodies as archives of experience connects *From the East* to Mark Hansen's reading of Bill Viola's *Anima* (2001) as a trace-form of affect. Viola's piece consists of three video portraits placed side-by-side. In the videos, three individuals portray the passages between joy, sorrow, anger, and fear. Filmed at a speed of 384 fps and projected at 24 fps, Viola's work offers an overload of stimuli that perception cannot objectively register. The passages between the emotions extend to eighty-one minutes of playback time although the recorded time was merely one minute. As a result, the viewer encounters the supersaturated microstages between the emotions that Hansen calls affective excess. In his view, "the affective excess is a dimension of the living present that by definition cannot become a content of perception; it is a nonlived paradoxically *within* the living present."[21]

Hansen's affective excess archived in the temporally oversaturated images in Viola's *Anima* can be linked to the sensation captured and expressed in Akerman's still frames. Viola's *Anima* depends heavily on the experimental use of the cinematic technology of time, particularly the discrepancy between the recording and projection speeds, whereas Akerman's frames are saturated by the length of the shots and the stillness or repetitive gestures of the people in the frames. Akerman's audiovisuality might be less experimental than Viola's but it nevertheless bears witness to time's passing in a similar manner.[22] In *From the East*, the momentum captured and expressed in the documentary's frames is not content that could be registered objectively. Rather, it is affective excess within the living present of the depicted bodies that exerts its force on the viewer directly.

As an archive of experience, *From the East* resonates in a fascinating manner with the sensation captured and expressed in the French filmmaker Nicolas Rey's cine-voyage across Soviet Russia made in 2001. *The Soviets and Electricity* is a three-hour documentary that consists of the filmmaker's audio-diary, documentary shots recorded along the way, and a few biographical elements the filmmaker surveys en route. The film is an exploration of the historical and political resonances of Soviet Russia in the present. The journey itself took six months and it extended from Paris, France to the city of Magadan on the Pacific shore. In the Soviet state, the Siberian city of Magadan was synonymous with deportation. It was founded in 1941 to house the gulag workers of the region.

Rey's documentary frame is remarkable for two primary reasons: the film stock and the shooting speed. The film stock used in shooting the documentary was long past its expiration rate. In the intertitles the filmmaker declares: "To shoot a long traveling shot from West to East on these Soviet super-8 reels and see the colors that appear." *The Soviets and Electricity* was shot with 27 cartridges of super-8 Orwo Sviema stock produced in cooperation between the Soviets and the GDR at a factory in the Ukraine.[23] The number of available cartridges limits the length of the film to approximately one hour. As *The Soviets* is a three-hour long film, the remaining two hours can be accounted for in the shooting speed and frames of black leader that punctuate the scenes.

The Soviets was shot at a speed of nine fps and with the length of the film, the movements in the frame become strangely indecisive. It is as if movement was somehow suspended from the cars, boats, people, and animals Rey frames with his camera. In one scene, somewhere on a river – supposedly on the river Lena – Rey's camera finds a group of people on a small rowing boat. They row and they row, but they barely seem to move.

On a different occasion, Rey films the demounting of a statue – the slowness of the process and the reduced frame rate turn into an incertitude about whether the workmen are, in fact, demounting or remounting the statue.

As the documentary suspends movement from the events it films, it creates a sensation of indecisiveness that invites the viewer to move in the historical layers of the Soviet era. *The Soviets* bypasses clear positions of the past and the present, and instead focuses on the depths of history that can be explored from a point of view in the present. For one, the history of film is placed in an immanent relationship to Rey's documentary frame. The Orwo Sviema film stock places the film within the technological possibilities of Soviet cinema – it in a sense simulates the images that might have been shot some twenty or thirty years ago. The strange tinted yellows and blues as well as the peculiar grain of the film allow the documentary to capture possible images from the Soviet era. The images of Rey's visit to the nuclear power plant and its surroundings in Chernobyl are not far from the Zone depicted in Andrei Tarkovski's *Stalker* (USSR 1979). On the soundtrack, Rey announces that one of the places he absolutely wants to visit is Dniepropetrovsk, a city where Dziga Vertov realized some of his films. "As if that would not be enough of a reason," he states.[24]

The suspension of decisive movement in *From the East* as well as in *The Soviets and Electricity* points to the primacy of feeling as momentum that is felt before it is understood. In Akerman's documentary, the variations of stillness and movement produce a sensation of inconclusiveness. In Rey's work, the suspension of movement from the actual events produces a sensation of indecisiveness. The captured and expressed momentum connects the two films to the way in which Kanerva Cederström's *Trans-Siberia* approaches the Siberian gulags.

The impossibility of knowing, the necessity of feeling

For Cederström, Siberia is a site with mythical dimensions. Her explorer grandfather had told her stories about the massive rivers of Siberia and the Soviet state produced further images of vast natural resources and working class heroes. She describes the clash between these mythical images and the awareness of the gulags as decisive for the making of *Trans-Siberia*.[25] After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Western left remained relatively silent about the massive prison system – partly because of pressure from the Russian Federation. The silence was complemented by the fact that many nevertheless assumed to know what had happened in the gulags. There are,

of course, such accounts as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's literary document *The Gulag Archipelago* and Marina Goldovskaya's documentary film *Solovki Power* (1988), which had already offered information about the camps, but the silence, in this instance, refers above all to the sentiment that these accounts were enough and that it was not necessary to think about things further. The starting point of *Trans-Siberia* is the impossibility of knowing what went on in Siberia and the simultaneous impossibility of not being aware of what happened in the penal colonies.

Cederström approaches the prison camps with the combination of contemporary footage and the notes of two prisoners. The imagery consists of people, train stations, and landscapes recorded over an eight-day journey on the Trans-Siberian express. There are no images of the camps in the film. Eight years after Cederström imagined the possible lives of her disappeared uncle in *Two Uncles*, she felt that archival footage had gone through inflation and was too often used to just visualize history. Hence, although archival material had just become more readily available from Russian sources, she decided to combine contemporary footage with the notes of two prisoners. Amalia Susi (1889–1972) and Andrei Sinyavsky (1925–1997) served years in the Siberian prison camps. Susi was imprisoned in 1942 and served ten years in Siberia. Sinyavsky spent seven years in the camps after he was imprisoned in 1965. Their notes are heard on the soundtrack of the documentary.

The authors of the notes that accompany the journey on the Trans-Siberian are connected only through Siberia: Amalia Susi was an Ingrian math teacher who inscribed the daily routines of the camps on 28 pieces of fabric – drapes, dresses, sheets – after her release. On the frail sheets, she chronicled the freezing cold train carriages, bloody struggles over food, sicknesses, and stealing. The carefully hidden notes were found only after her death and eventually smuggled to Finland fearing that authorities might destroy her descriptions in case they were found. Being an Ingrian, Susi wrote in Finnish, which explains why the notes were brought into the country and later placed in the Finnish National Archive. The fragile sheets at the National Archive played an initiating part in the making of the documentary.

Andrei Sinyavsky – a Muscovite author – wrote bi-monthly letters to his wife from the camps. The letters are philosophical in tone and more literary in form than the word "note" might suggest. In the letters, Sinyavsky describes the temporal experience of the gulags and its effect on thinking and perception. He explains how isolation and the feeling that time is standing still actually give greater freedom for thought. Sealed off from the rest of the world, the faces of other prisoners feel expressive of everything that

is missing and the surrounding clouds become displays of infinite dramas. Sinyavsky outlines human existence on the axis of freedom and imprisonment, the good and the evil. After his release, Sinyavsky immigrated to France where he published the letters as the novel *A Voice from the Chorus* (1976/1973). Sinyavsky's role as the protagonist of the documentary is loosely based on the novel.[26]

Trans-Siberia takes off from Finland, leading the viewer through the corridors of the National Archive into an apartment in St. Petersburg. There, a woman introduced as Amalia Susi's niece types up the diary notes from the old cloths. The camera stays close to her hands, investigating the subtle and determined gestures of her fingers. On the soundtrack, the filmmaker tells the viewer that Amalia's niece has taken on the task of collecting the memories of Stalin's victims. The camera sweeps over the surfaces of the pieces of fabric, documenting the handwriting on the fragile cloths. A cut from the apartment takes the viewer onto a train heading to Vladivostok. At the end of the film and at the end of the rails, on the Pacific shore, another cut takes the viewer to the Bibliothéque Nationale de France in Paris. In the library, the camera records Sinyavsky's interview from a computer screen.

The prologue and the epilogue place the documentary in a context of collecting and archiving the memories of Stalin's victims. However, the body of the film, the time spent on the rails, suggests a different approach to the prison system. As the documentary withholds images of the camps and relates the notes on the soundtrack to contemporary imagery, the emphasis moves from collecting and archiving personal histories to the prison camps as an experience that extends beyond the two individuals that guide the viewer to Siberia. The documentary does not dwell on the personal histories of the two prisoners but just lets them speak. Hellevi Seiro delivers Amalia's notes in a deep voice that resonates with the harsh daily content of Susi's notes.[27] Tomi Jarva reads Andrei Sinyavsky's philosophical notes with a soft tenor that foregrounds the reflexive content of the writing. The voices heard on the soundtrack connect with contemporary sceneries, fellow travelers, and cities along the rails in a manner that extracts the experiences of the camps beyond the life stories of the two guides.

Imaginary worlds

In his notes, Sinyavsky compares the psychological experience of the camps to travelling on a long-distance train. The movement forward gives meaning to the days because their passing at least serves the purpose of nearing the

future, the final destination. People could, Sinyavsky notes, be happier if they knew what to do about waiting for time to pass. In the camps, an ordinary sense of days, weeks, and months disappears as letters that could give a sense of time passing outside the camps take a month to be delivered. One lives simultaneously a month ahead and a month behind according to the letters written and received; either too early or too late.

In isolation, days pass by and mornings follow one another but time also stands still. Prisoners preserve the manners and expressions they had once imprisoned. Days are comprised of activities that fill them without any concrete end beyond the acts themselves. Sometimes, Sinyavsky points out, it feels as if time had stopped and one was simultaneously still and flying beyond oneself:

> While space practically ceases to exist here, time that shrinks together in front of any obstacles tends to reach past them, running years ahead inside your mind. When you wake up in the morning, time seems to be either nearer or further off than you had expected. It slows down at times, then picks up again, past itself. It is both too big and too small for what it used to be.

The documentary expresses the sense of isolation and the simultaneity of stillness and flying in its audiovisual form. Most of the time, the camera stays inside the train, looking out the windows or observing the other travelers. Being in the train foregrounds isolation from a typical everyday schedule: people read, drink tea, and play games in their cabins. They fill their days with activities that bring them closer to their destination. At times, the pace of the images picks up and at other times, the images roll in slow motion giving the sensation of being further or closer to the destination.

Sinyavsky points out that in the isolated context thought actually runs more easily. The surrounding faces and objects acquire imaginary dimensions in isolation. In the documentary, the views from the train occasionally turn into an "imaginary world" tinted with distinct colors and a floating rhythm. The camera captures people walking on a platform and as their movement is expressed in slow motion they seem to float and be lifted off the platform. In another instant, the camera descends from the train and captures a train station at night. The expression of the space is reminiscent of a science fiction film replete with dusky fog and the occasional bright light. The floating visuals are lined with percussions that echo around the imaginary space. In one scene, a forest by the railway is filmed through the train window. The smudgy window is in focus in the foreground whereas

the forest in the background is just a black pointy shape. The frame of the windowpane divides the image in two areas, in a manner reminiscent of a Mark Rothko painting.

The experience of being still and nevertheless floating, which Sinyavsky describes in his notes from the camps, is captured in the audiovisual form of *Trans-Siberia*. The inside of the train is contrasted with the imaginary outside where common dimensions and rules of orientation have ceased to exist. Thought running faster in prison is expressed with the landscapes and sceneries that acquire an imaginary feel that exceeds the isolating walls of the train. The sceneries captured in the present thereby become a trace-form of the prison camp experience. *Trans-Siberia* archives the sensation of the prison camp experience in its audiovisual form.

Although the personal experiences of the two prisoners are the path the documentary takes to preserving the prison camp experience in its form, the preserved sensation flows through particular locations or individuals. The flickering reflections of trees the camera captures on the bank of the rails or the red clouds on a clear blue evening sky preserve the sensation of an imaginary world in contemporary landscapes. Similarly, the images captured inside the train, the accelerations and the slowing downs, preserve a sensation of time's passing that is in excess to Sinyavsky's individual experiences.

Politics of affection

The documentary as a trace-form of sensations initiates *Trans-Siberia*'s political leanings. The sensations preserved in the documentary's audiovisual form could be interpreted as a documentary strategy that encourages the viewer to think about what the documentary nevertheless refuses to show. In other words, as *Trans-Siberia* aligns the notes of the two prisoners with contemporary footage, it makes the viewer feel what the documentary only suggests in images. This observation coincides with Bill Nichols's conceptualization of "oblique politics"[28] that draws from the magnitudes that exceed the documentary. This is a politics of affection conditioned on "a tension between the representation and the represented as experienced by the viewer."[29] The tension emerges from the absence of the historical referent in the images. According to Nichols, this is a question of "rendering *felt* what representation may only allude to."[30]

Although this conceptualization purports the primacy of feeling in documentary politics and takes the magnitudes that exceed documentary images

into account, it nevertheless seems problematic, given what *Trans-Siberia* is interested in doing. More specifically, the oblique politics of affection is geared to overcoming the absence of a historical referent by awakening the viewer to its absence. This awakening comes about by rendering felt what the images only suggest. To my mind, *Trans-Siberia* is ultimately not as interested in awakening the viewer to the absence of a historical referent as it is in pointing out that we are not yet thinking.

The choice of not showing the camps at a time when ample material had just become available and when a general awareness of the camps was already established speaks of a politics of which the purpose is not to enhance perceptions about what is not or cannot be represented. The politics of affection at play in *Trans-Siberia* does not feed on the referential, but becomes operational within the composition of the documentary. This emerges with particular valence in the disjunction created between Amalia Susi's notes, Andrei Sinyavsky's reflections and the contemporary imagery.

Amalia Susi's notes cut through the imaginary world preserved in the form of the documentary. Her observation of a man being beaten to death because he was falsely accused of taking two servings of food creates a fissure within the preserved sensation, somehow obstructing the fulfillment of the philosophical reflections into ideas about the camps. In the manner of a meticulous chronicler, she gives an account of the icy cold walls one could not sleep against, the stolen goods market led by bandits, and the transportations from one camp to the next during which people died. Susi's notes cut through the imaginary world as the impossibility of fully imagining or knowing what it was like to tend to the fireplace in the middle of the night and get a place to sleep only after somebody got up and space was liberated.

The notes of the two witnesses are the closest the documentary gets to the camps and they serve two distinct yet connected roles in *Trans-Siberia*. With Sinyavsky's existential reflections, the documentary preserves the feeling of the temporal rhythm of life in prison. With Susi, the documentary creates a fissure into its audiovisual disposition and thus creates a shock that – instead of making us think about the prison camps – presents the sentiment that we are incapable of thinking about the camps at this moment in time. In this way, the documentary responds to the political climate of the 1990s by foregrounding the void that exists in thought itself.

Moreover, the politics of affection at play in *Trans-Siberia* speaks of a paradigm shift in how cinema itself is understood. Nichols's oblique politics pertains to cinema as a "machine of the visible," a machine that enhances our perception and understanding of the external material

world by producing impressions and reproductions of that world.[31] Here, the politics of affection patches the gaps in visibility and works toward the end of making us more aware of the world that surrounds us. *Trans-Siberia's* take on the prison camps in the late 1990s, however, operates in a register where audiovisual worlds are not so much disembodied representations to be viewed, but thoroughly immanent to the ways in which we think. Instead of mediating an external world, the audiovisual composition of the documentary *immediates* a situation where, despite the abundance of evidence, the prison camps are neither discussed, nor analyzed critically.

This ties in with the paradigm of invisibility in cinema. As a machine of the invisible, cinema no longer explores an external reality, but weighs the conditions of awareness and their transformability in reality.[32] This is crucial for Deleuze's conception of cinema and its relationship to thinking. Drawing from Antonin Artaud, Deleuze notes that cinema has replaced our capacity to think for ourselves. A camera consciousness has replaced subjects who master and own their thought processes with subjectivities that are, by definition, networked with orders that exceed them – such as cinema. However, instead of simply announcing this condition as a given in our lives, Deleuze adds that Artaud "believes in the cinema as long as he considers that cinema is essentially suited to reveal this powerlessness to think at the heart of thought."[33] The paradigm of invisibility locates cinema as immanent to the viewer's perception and thought processes, and thus it modifies the political work of cinema from enhancing perceptions about an external reality to showing our capacities to think in reality.

In *Trans-Siberia*, then, the split between the contemporary sceneries, Sinyavsky's reflections, and Amalia Susi's notes expresses precisely the powerlessness to think. Rather than investing in the absent historical referent, the documentary builds on the sensation of disconnection in the present. The documentary offers the viewer sensations of a prison camp experience but simultaneously posits that these experiences cannot be thought of as such. Deleuze continues: "[I]f it is true that thought depends on a shock which gives birth to it (the nerve, the brain matter), it can only think one thing: *the fact that we are not yet thinking*."[34] The fissure in *Trans-Siberia* does just that.

However, as with Artaud, a given impossibility is also an issue of potential. In *Trans-Siberia*, the powerlessness to think about what went on in the gulags turns into a politics of affection where the "unthought in thought" is the condition for thoughts to come. By making us viewers feel that we are not yet thinking, the documentary inaugurates a necessity to think when thought is missing. This happens through the effect of first being invited to

Figure 12: Toward a documentary politics of thoughts to come. Frame enlargement courtesy of Kinotar Oy.

share and understand the prison camp experiences and then being denied that possibility.

The audiovisual forms in *From the East* and *Trans-Siberia* wrest the documentaries from the figurative tasks of representing the change of regime in Eastern Europe or the atrocities of the Siberian gulags. *From the East* captures and expresses the incipient change in its hesitant rhythm and engages the viewer with an affective non-localizable momentum. *Trans-Siberia*, on the other hand, first preserves the experience of Siberian gulags in its audiovisual form, but then, with a remarkable change of tone, the documentary deploys the traces of first-hand gulag experiences to point out that these experiences cannot be accessed, conveyed, or even thought of as such. However, rather than ending with a bleak vision of incapacities and impossibilities, the documentary posits the impasse as the viewer's point of entry to a re-evaluation of what we know and how we know it, and consequently also of the ways in which we attune ourselves to the world we inhabit.

Epilogue

Ethics of sustainability

Documentary cinema operates in the real by framing it and, therefore, also engages with what remains beyond the frame. This endows documentary films with a particular agency in the real and issues them with a related ethical prerogative. Framing comes with the double bond of capturing and expressing, which locates documentary agency in capturing the world in its becoming and expressing it as a sensation of the real's continuous unfolding. When a documentary intervenes in the real as process, it highlights that the lives and events depicted in its frames continue beyond the film. The ethical stakes in working with the vibrant and expressive nature of the real – its perpetual becoming – have to do with harnessing process into a sensation that the world could be different.

The three variations of documentary capacities mapped in this book – imagination, fabulation, and affection – offer singular responses to documentary ethics. Imagination tallies with *Two Uncles* and *The Last Bolshevik* seeking to actualize the lives of a disappeared uncle and a deceased filmmaker in documentary cinema. These films create possible lives in the face of loss. Fabulation confronts clear-cut distinctions between the normal and the abnormal, and thus resists the categorization of the subjects in *Grey Gardens* and *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* by their respective communities. Finally, *everything and nothing*, *From the East*, and *Trans-Siberia* experiment with habitual ways of perceiving and thinking about particular political situations and attune the viewer to the situations on an affective level.

What is of primary importance in all of these cases is that ethics intertwines with creating. Possible lives, resistance, and affective experiences are not preformed content for the documentaries to convey, but substance that the films create and release into the real. This movement is channeled through the capturing work of the frame and the expressions it lets out. The aesthetics of the frame, then, promotes ethics as an act that sustains the potential of becoming in the real.[1] Ethics pertains to the specificities of framing and the expressions created with the aim of affirming the potential of becoming in individual bodies and actual forms. This is also an ethics that works alongside the individual responsibilities a filmmaker has toward their subjects and the audience. The ethics of sustainability is an impersonal ethics that works to affirm the stretch of becoming that traverses individual

bodies and actual things, historical events and social systems, ecological processes and political economies alike.

Hence, ethics is not a moral perspective, but integrally woven into analyzing the composition of actuality captured in documentary frames and proposing alternative lines of life in the face of deadlocked or unlivable circumstances. Ethics includes the evaluation of the situation at hand and a proposal for its rearrangement with the available means.[2] This does not necessarily entail a happier life or a better future for the filmed subjects, but it does purport visions of how the framed lives could be lived differently. In *Grey Gardens*, the collaborative style of filmmaking facilitates the Beales' self-expressions and offers Little Edie and Big Edie a stage to present themselves on their own terms. The documentary challenges the view of the two women as somehow inferior or incapable and instead affirms their quirkiness with song and dance. In *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils*, ethical stakes are even more critical as the girl at the center of the film is for the most part silent. In this case, the filmmaker could not intervene in the situation in any way, but the resulting documentary is capable of undoing the categorical claims that posit Tanyusha with the devils. In both documentaries, framing amounts to evaluating the norms posed on the filmed subjects and breaking through them in the expression of the film. From an ethical point of view, documentary fabulation falsifies harmful categories and thus proposes the beginnings of more affirmative settings.

The ethics of imagination pertains to fashioning life in the face of death. In *Two Uncles* and *The Last Bolshevik* this coincides with tending to the referential limits of archival documents and expressing the more-than-referential in them. In *Two Uncles*, the framing of a photograph and a magazine cover enables the narrator to remember an uncle she never had a chance to meet. In *The Last Bolshevik*, various modalities of fictional and documentary footage are used to forge the memory of the late Soviet filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin. The differences in image types are overcome with an emphasis on what is immanently available in them. In both documentaries, first person narrators occupy positions of remembering *with* the archival documents, and within these dispositions the referential is foregone in favor of what is incipient in the images. Here, ethics intertwines with the epistemological prerogative of cracking open the self-evident level of visibilities and statements in order to re-arrange what can be seen and said at a given moment in time.[3] In the two documentaries, this enables imagining emergent lives when individual lives have waned.

The testimonial video *everything and nothing* excavates the characteristic ways of discussing the Lebanese resistance movement and viewing

one of its heroes. The interview that forms the foundation of the video contains disorienting moments of rupture in which Soha Bechara and the artist behind the camera step out of their respective roles. These moments connect the viewer to the emergent side of the resistance fighter. *From the East* and *Trans-Siberia* focus on Eastern Europe after the demise of the Soviet Union. The former captures change as it unfolds and the latter deals with the paralyzing aftereffects of the new situation. *From the East* uses still frames and lateral tracking shots to capture the indeterminate state of the East, and *Trans-Siberia* attends to the personal experiences of two gulag prisoners to show the vast unknown that still veils political debates about the Siberian prison system. In all three documentaries, explicit political argumentation is replaced by an interest in the underexposed sides of the resistance movement, the indeterminate in changing political systems, and the unthought that remains in political discourse. The ethics of affection in these cases has to do with challenging habitual perceptions and modes of thinking.

The documentary films discussed in this book deal with a variety of "crisis situations"[1] to which they give distinct responses. As I have shown, they do not promise salvation to desolate circumstances, but instead affirm the potential of becoming in the situations they deal with. Instead of promising a different world, the documentaries engage with the limits that need to be transgressed for differentiation to take place in this world. Here, the ethical prerogative translates into excavating the more-than-referential in archival documents, into falsifying oppressive norms, and into challenging habitual perceptions.

As documentary films tend to the limits of the referential, the discursive, and the perceptual, they express the ruptures and breakpoints where transformations can begin. This is a capacity available for all documentaries, although it is not enacted universally. However, more often than has thus far been admitted, documentaries do explore the limits of the world in ways that affirm the potential in becoming and inaugurate the first steps towards realities to come. These realities, it has to be remembered, are not visions of a different world, but propositions of how the world we live in could be arranged differently.

Notes

Prologue: Capturing a world of becoming

1. Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, vi. See also Barrett and Bolt (eds.), *Carnal Knowledge*; Kontturi, 'Moving Matters of Contemporary Art'.
2. Coole & Frost, 'Introducing New Materialisms', 7.
3. Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, xvii, 95, 99. The philosophical lineage that considers the real in its emergence extends from Friedrich Nietzsche, Gilbert Simondon, Henri Bergson, and Alfred North Whitehead to Deleuze and Guattari. Nietzsche's "eternal return," Simondon's "transductive unity," Bergson's "élan vital," Whitehead's "actual entities," and Deleuze and Guattari's "becoming" are all articulations of the relations that shape vibrant realities. They posit processuality in being. See Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*; Simondon, 'The Genesis of the Individual'; Bergson, *Creative Evolution*; Whitehead, *Process and Reality*.
4. Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 97.
5. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 132. John Mullarkey notes that the two-state ontology takes other names throughout Deleuze's work. In addition to the distinction between the actual and the virtual, Deleuze builds on the conceptual dyads of determinate and indeterminate life, and the molar and the molecular among others. The two-state ontology also appears in the cinema books, of which the final argument could be paraphrased along the lines of the cinema being an expression of that which produces it in the first place – time. Mullarkey, *Post-Continental Philosophy*, 8, 20–24, 27–32.
6. See Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 30.
7. Documentary theory began to take shape around the late 1970s and early 1980s when apparatus theory was particularly prevalent. One of its key arguments is that cinema is a machine of the visible that enhances our perception and understanding of the material world by producing impressions of reality. Jean-Louis Comolli argues that the paradigm of visibility is constituted on the paradox of cinema technology working to enhance the objective duplication of the real, while the disposition of objectivity in itself is inherently imperfect. Resonating with psychoanalytic film theory of the time, perfect reproductions of reality are, by definition, imperfect, for they are saturated with an ideological delusion caused by the impressions of reality. A similar discrepancy pertains to the key tenets of documentary theory. Comolli, 'Machines of the Visible', 133. See also Pisters, 'Delirium Cinema', 113.
8. Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 141–142.
9. For Brian Massumi, the ethical clause is connected to the question of expression: "It is a basically pragmatic question of how one *performatively*

contributes to the stretch of expression in the world [...]." Massumi, 'Like a Thought', xxii.

10. Deren, *Divine Horsemen*, 6.
11. In her experimental film practice, Deren places tremendous emphasis on detailed shooting scripts, pre-arranged shooting locations, and editing. It is precisely this dimension of creative manipulation that she sees as problematic for the documentary. On Deren's shooting scripts, see Clark et al., *The Legend of Maya Deren*, 84–97.
12. See Rosen, *Change Mummified*, 246.
13. Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, 146.
14. Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, 13.
15. Winston, *Claiming the Real*, 38–39.
16. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 7.
17. Grierson speaks of the documentary as a "hammer" geared to shape the society, whereas Nichols aims at a comprehensive taxonomy of the different modes with which the documentary accounts for the real (expository, observational, interactive, reflexive, and performative). Philip Rosen locates Grierson's legacy to developments in modern mass media and particularly the structuration and distributability of signs, thus providing an additional interface between Grierson and representational articulations of the documentary. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 32–75; *Blurred Boundaries*, 92–106; Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, 24; Rosen, *Change Mummified*, 250, 252.
18. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 4.
19. Cowie, *Recording Reality*, 10, 118–134.
20. Bruzzi, *New Documentary*, 78–79, 153–154, 185–218.
21. Baron, *The Archive Effect*, 8–9, 16–47.
22. Wahlberg, *Documentary Time*, xiii–xv, 28–30, 41–43.
23. Tom Gunning proposes a similar move away from the index in his reconsideration of the impression of reality in the cinema. With a reading of Christian Metz's phenomenological presemiotics, Gunning proposes that movement be considered a key constituent in the production of cinematic realism. His proposition is in many ways timely and groundbreaking, but the insistence that cinema works with "impressions of reality, not its materiality" is somewhat different to the ambitions and context of this study. New materialism and philosophies of becoming insists that art and media – and the documentary with them – are embedded in "real matter," the relationalities and reverberations of emergent matter. This is not to say that a body and an image thereof are the same, of the same matter, but that the real and the image have agential capacities that are mutually implicating. In this ontological setup, impressions of reality and perceptions of reality are not as far apart as in Gunning's proposal. Gunning, 'Moving Away from the Index', 44.

24. This appears in an interesting light when one takes into consideration Deren's own experiences of possession and her initiation to Voudoun. See Deren, *Divine Horsemen*, 247–262.
25. Annette Michelson notes that Deren's realization of the convoluted consistency of Haitian reality eventually precipitated her abandonment of the project and led her to acknowledge defeat as an artist. The footage shows a rupture in Deren's modernist ontology and aesthetic, particularly in relation to her conception of the photograph as a "form of reality." In a manner that echoes Clement Greenberg's declaration of the self-sufficiency of the avant-garde, Deren argues that photography functions to keep culture alive: "Photography [...] deals in a living reality which is structured primarily to endure, and whose configurations are designed to serve that purpose, not to communicate its meaning [...]." Michelson, 'Poetics and Savage Thought', 40; Deren, 'Cinematography', 116; Greenberg, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', 531.
26. Marks, 'Information, secrets and enigmas', 87–88.
27. Marks, 'Signs of the Time', 211. See also Marks, *Enfoldment and Infinity*.
28. Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art*, 12.
29. Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art*, 11.
30. Lambert, *Who's Afraid of Deleuze and Guattari?*, 45–46, 52–53; Lambert, 'Expression', passim. For further elaborations on cinema and sensation, see for example Herzog, *Dreams of Difference, Songs of the Same*; Del Río, *Deleuze and the Cinemas of Performance*; Beugnet, *Cinema and Sensation*; Kennedy, *Deleuze and Cinema*; Marks, *The Skin of the Film*.
31. Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 107.
32. Cf. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 68.
33. Spinoza's statement that "no one has yet determined what a body can do" has been take up in analyses focusing on the capacities of both human and non-human bodies. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 71; Buchanan, 'The Problem of the Body'; Parikka, 'Ethologies of Software Art'.
34. Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, 24.
35. See particularly books II.1 and II.2, as well as the notes 412a27, 414a19–28 and 415b8 in Aristotle, *De anima*.
36. Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 27.
37. Giorgio Agamben notes that from this perspective Deleuze's immanence is different from Aristotle's conception. Aristotle's soul as a capacity of the body has a nutritive function; it attributes life to the body. In Deleuze, immanence is processual and contributes to differentiation in the virtual state and differenciation as the actualization of a body. Agamben, *Potentialities*, 232–233.
38. The persistence of capacities differs from D.N. Rodowick's concern for the persistence of cinema in the contemporary media environment. What persists for Rodowick after film disappears is "the cinematic" as "the virtual life of film." Although his proposal does allow building important connections between old and new media, classical film theory, and media theory, ascrib-

ing cinema as the virtual life of film is a little too reductive for the present argument. It runs the risk of essentializing "the cinematic" into a particular set of forms, effects, and experiences. My ambition with documentary capacities is the opposite; I wish to connect the documentary to areas and fields that, in a sense, make it more "unrecognizable." This enables widening the conception of what the documentary can do, as opposed to looking into how a particular conception of the documentary persists in the face of changing media ecologies. See Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*, 181–189, passim.

39. In semiotic terms, this entails a move away from Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic model of signifier and signified – that proposes a correspondence between expression and content – toward a system in which both content and expression are fashioned on the documentary plane. Deleuze and Guattari call this relationship a double articulation. They draw double articulation from the Danish linguist Louis Hjelmslev, who argues for the distinction and mutual presupposition of content and expression. With Hjelmslev, they insist that content and expression are not to be confused with the signified and the signifier. Rather, content has its own substance and form and expression has its own form and content. Deleuze and Guattari note that even when content and expression seem most distinct – one a plane of bodies the other a plane of signs – they are still in reciprocal supposition. One does not pre-exist the other. Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 43–44, 108.
40. See Nichols, 'The Question of Evidence', 29.
41. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 109.
42. Elizabeth Grosz insists that the frame forms a territory that "is always the coming together both of spatiotemporal coordinates (and thus the possibilities of measurement, precise location, concreteness, actuality) and qualities (which are immeasurable, indeterminate, virtual, and open-ended)." Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art*, 19.
43. Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art*, 18.
44. Grosz grounds her notion of framing on Deleuze's insistence on architecture as the primordial art form. Her frame differs from the discursively oriented one promoted by Judith Butler, who in her recent work on framing war argues that something always exceeds the frame that troubles our sense of reality. For Butler, what remains outside actually determines the inside; what we see and recognize in the frame is determined by what remains outside the frame. The outside in Grosz's frame does not determine the inside – on the contrary, the inside becomes expressive of the outside, and ultimately the expressed sensations are released back into the outside. Anne Friedberg's outstanding history of the frame enables further considerations of both conceptions. With a reading of Leon Battista Alberti's seminal fifteenth-century treatise on painting and sculpture, Friedberg accounts for the centrality of the frame and the perspectival paradigm in visual

knowledge and signals shifts in "physical windows" and their philosophical meanings with the emergence of new technologies from the camera obscura onwards. Friedberg construes the concept of the virtual window as a "windowed elsewhere" with which she performs an archeology of modern visuality. Butler, *Frames of War*, 9; Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 1–55; Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 243, passim.

45. Deleuze, *Foucault*, 53.
46. Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, 6–7.
47. In this sense, Foucault's notion of the document could be described as "incorporeal materialism," where incorporeality refers to the dimension of becoming that actualizes in material forms although it is not reducible to them. Thus, a material body is an expression of its incorporeal becoming, and similarly a document is an expression of its own arrangement. Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, 231; Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 5.
48. Deleuze, *Foucault*, 64–65.
49. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 256.
50. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 272.
51. Laura U. Marks notes that the parallel Deleuze makes between Foucault's visibilities and statements and the images and sounds in cinema is not completely solid. She argues that Deleuze conflates "sound image" with "speech act," and does not address the difference between speaking voices and the soundtrack. Marks claims that actually the seeable and the sayable in Foucault is not the same as images and sounds in the cinema, because the cinema contains extra-discursive sounds and images that have not been encoded in discourse and thus cannot be cracked open. Marks, 'Signs of the Time', 204–205.
52. This is also the point in Deleuze where the distinction between fact and fiction no longer holds. It has been addressed and elaborated on for example in Marks, 'Signs of the Time', 194, 201; Pisters, *The Matrix of Visual Culture*; Pisters, *The Neuro-Image*.
53. Marks, 'Signs of the Time', 211.
54. Lazzarato, 'Struggle, Event, Media', 215.
55. Lazzarato, 'Struggle, Event, Media', 213; Lazzarato, 'Art, Work, and Politics', 3.
56. Here, Lazzarato refers to Gottfried Leibniz's distinction between actualization in souls and realization in bodies. A similar distinction can be detected in Franco 'Bifo' Berardi's discussion of the "soul at work," in which he argues that "control over the body is exerted by the modeling of the soul." He even uses "soul" rather ironically, playing on the more typical connotation of the soul as spirit. Bifo's argument relates to the increasingly mental content of labor in the post-Fordist phase of capitalism and its simultaneity to the more vague limits of productive labor. He claims that contemporary capitalism modulates life by putting the soul to work: capitalism deploys our capacities to think, to feel and to communicate – and thus it also controls our corporealities. As capitalism becomes cognitive, the soul is constantly

at work, even outside the workplace. Lazzarato, 'Struggle, Event, Media', 215; Deleuze, *The Fold*, 105; Berardi, *The Soul at Work*, 75, 200.

Imagination: Relational documents

1. Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, 73.
2. Williams, 'Mirrors without Memories', 11.
3. Grundmann and Rockwell, 'Truth is not Subjective', 8.
4. Williams, 'Mirrors without Memories', 20.
5. The immanent past of the document intertwines with recent descriptions of the "anarchival." Drawing from Deleuze's discussion of the Foucauldian archive, Alanna Thain defines the anarchival as the anonymous noise that underpins the seen and said in the archive. Wolfgang Ernst, for his part, connects the anarchival to an "anarchical archive," a collection of abandoned artifacts that resists the classificatory order of the traditional archive. Thain, 'Anarchival Cinemas'; Ernst, *Digital Memory*, 115.
6. The creation of memories in this context differs from the production of cultural memory as explicated within the representational paradigm. For example, Marita Sturken claims that cinema is a technology of memory that produces ideas of the past – cultural memories – that propose a shared condition for present lives. Cinematic articulations of the past produce ideas of the past that affect the present. Similarly to Linda Williams's position on truth in the documentary, Sturken argues that although the postmodern condition has called memory into question by emphasizing amnesia, it has not made memory any less central to cultural processes. Although the two documentaries discussed in this section can be placed within Sturken's disposition, their intricate approach to the temporality and materiality of archival documents calls for taking into account the immanent layers and the consequent creative possibilities of the documents themselves. Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 9–10, 16.

1. Frames of the photograph

1. *Two Uncles* was produced by the now extinct companies Netrum Oy and Tiedotustoimisto Murtovaara & Tenhunen Oy. It is available for viewing on vimeo: https://vimeo.com/55007287 (accessed 20 Feb 2015).
2. According to statistics from the Finnish National Archive, the number of disappeared soldiers (who have since been pronounced dead) in the different phases of the 1939–1945 war is 5321. Most of the disappearances took place either during the Winter War (30 Nov 1939 – 13 March 1940) or during battles over the summer of 1944. Paavo's disappearance took place in the beginning of the Continuation War (25 June 1941 – 19 Sept 1944). The number of dead Finnish soldiers during World War Two was about 95,000 of a total population of 3.7 million people.

3. The detective novel, as it is referred to here, belongs to an epistemological paradigm that Carlo Ginzburg traces to the nineteenth century. He finds a triple analogy in Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic processes, Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novels, and Giovanni Morelli's method of attributing authors to paintings – all of which depend on a semiotic model based on the interpretation of clues. The basic idea behind this conjectural paradigm is deduction on the basis of involuntary or unconscious traces or gestures. The chain of deductions forms a "story" or a "history" that deciphers the hidden causes behind the traces. Thus, an opaque reality can be deciphered with symptomatic clues, such as the photograph. Ginzburg, 'Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes'.
4. Doane, 'The Indexical', 136.
5. Lang's film is replete with deictic indices from the letter M to kids playing a game of pointing fingers, and the finale where the murderer points his finger to the mob prosecuting him. Doane argues that in Lang's film, the deictic index gains significant ethical dimensions. Doane, 'The Indexical', 138–140. See also Doane, 'Trace and Sign'.
6. Hitchcock states that using deictic signifiers is also a way of keeping control in his hands. As he did not want to let go of his own vision, even in the editing process, he shot scenes in ways that were impossible for other people to place into a larger context. Thus, for example, the beginning of *Strangers on a Train* required his presence throughout the process of making the film. Truffaut & Hitchcock, *Hitchcock*, 194–195.
7. Jacques Rancière notes that in Fritz Lang's *M* the logic of action works in relation to a metamorphosis of the murderer. He argues that the action of catching the villain is punctuated by poetic moments of stasis in which the character played by Peter Lorre is given a photogenic touch of grace. The character is tied to the role of the villain in the action of the police, but the moments of stasis in the mise-en-scène embed the character with a degree of humanity. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 48–50. I will return to these moments of stasis in Chapter 2, *A documentary fable*.
8. Barthes, *Camera lucida*, 76–77.
9. Peirce, *Philosophical Writings*, 104.
10. Peirce, *Philosophical Writings*, 108–109; Greenlee, *Peirce's Concept of the Sign*, 86. The causal reactive nature of photography has inspired Brian Winston to track the documentary's evidential work to such instruments as the thermometer and the barometer, which provide science with the basis of its arguments: "The centrality of this scientific connection to documentary is the most potent (and sole) legitimation for its evidentiary pretensions. Thus, documentarists cannot readily avoid the scientific and the evidential because those contexts are 'built-in' to the cinematographic apparatus." Winston, 'Scientific Inscription', 41.
11. Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photograph', 14.

12. This resonates with Malin Wahlberg's description of the poetic enactment of the trace in the documentary. Enactments of the temporal contingency of the trace bring attention to cultural memory objects, such as photographs, and the fragile textures of objects and their vestiges at the throes of the destructive power of time passing. Wahlberg, *Documentary Time*, 42.
13. Rosen, 'History of Image, Image of History', 43–44.
14. Barthes, *Camera lucida*, 7.
15. Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photograph', 15.
16. Bazin, 'An Aesthetic of Reality', 20, 36.
17. Here, my reading of Bazin deviates from Daniel Morgan's comprehensive analysis in which he argues that style in Bazin is a question of acknowledging the physical reality a film emerges from. In my take on *Two Uncles* and its suspense structure, style is more akin to acknowledging the temporal specificity of the depicted events. This aligns with Philip Rosen's account, according to which, for Bazin, any "real existent in space is by definition in a temporalized state, a state of change." Morgan, 'Re-thinking Bazin', 471–472; Rosen, 'History of Image, Image of History', 55.
18. Bazin, 'An Aesthetic of Reality', 37.
19. The private perspective on grand scale political events is typical of Forgács's approach more generally. For example, the film series *Private Hungary* consists of hundreds of hours of home movies from the 1930s to 1960s with which Forgács tells the private stories of Hungarian history. Bill Nichols notes that Cederström's film veers more strongly to the personal side than Forgács's works, the political level of World War Two remaining a more opaque yet forever present background for Paavo's imaginings. Nichols, 'An Uncle too Many', 66. See also Nichols & Renov (eds.), *Cinema's Alchemist*.
20. Doane builds her thesis in relation to an analysis of modern culture and particularly the increasing standardization of time that took off in the industrial age. She places Etienne-Jules Marey's chronophotography in the context of a more general process of quantifying time and motion. Marey's treatment of instantaneous images as points provided the conditions that made cinema possible. Cinema emerged out of the reversibility of Marey's method, the re-synthesizing of points that broke movement from instants back into a series that reconstituted movement. Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, 210–212, 217.
21. Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, 208, 214, 223, 231–232.
22. Rosen, 'History of Image, Image of History', 52, 62.
23. Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photograph', 15.
24. This opens Doane's project up to an understanding of cinema that is better adjusted to the contemporary media environment.
25. Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, 231.
26. Ogonyok is literally a small flame, but it also connotes light in such contexts as "a gleam in one's eye" or "small flames glimmering afar." Ogonyok was a rather liberal magazine during the Soviet era and also a flagship of pere-

stroika. Metaphorically, one could interpret the magazine in terms of "a glimmering light" that infused the mother with belief in Paavo's survival.

27. Both Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Rancière insist in their respective outlines that cinema is above all an aesthetic and only secondarily a technology. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 267; Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 32; *Film Fables*, 10.
28. All references to the filmmaker's account are from a personal communication (20 August 2010).
29. Barthes, *Camera lucida*, 57–58.
30. Looking at a photograph of a Parisian schoolboy from 1931 by A. Kertész, Barthes exclaims: "It is possible that Ernest is still alive today: but where? how? What a novel!" Barthes, *Camera lucida*, 83, see also 19–20.
31. Barthes, *Camera lucida*, 27, 47.
32. Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, 217, 224.
33. Krohn is a prolific author whose works have been translated into several languages, including English. In her work, she often investigates and plays with the borderlines of reality and fantasy as well as technology and human life. The piece *Kaksi enoa*/*Two Uncles* was first published in a collection of short stories and essays, *Rapina ja muita papereita* in 1989.
34. The use of the first-person narrator in *Two Uncles* comes close to Chris Marker's method of questioning the "I" in "I remember," for example in *Sunless* (1982). For both Marker and Cederström, memories cannot be reduced to subjective content but are constantly re-written in the relations between voices, bodies and images. I will return to this in Chapter 2, *A documentary fable*.
35. The memory work in *Two Uncles* resonates vividly with Sarah Polley's more recent *Stories We Tell* (Canada 2012). The family chronicle focuses on her mother, Diane Polley, who passed away in 1990. Polley is interested in how lives are construed by way of stories and she fashions the story of her own life through the stories told about her mother by family and friends. With a combination of super-8 home movies shot by her father, faux family footage created specifically for the film, interviews, and striking voiceover narration, Polley examines the layers of her family history and the ways the family story gets told. The force of the documentary is in the convolutions that remain, in the insistence that each story offers a different vision of the past.
36. Deleuze, 'Creative Act', 317.
37. Films deploy different methods of weaving heterogeneous elements together. For example, in Robert Bresson's *A Man Escaped* (France 1956), the fragmented space-times are connected by Fontaine's working hand that prepares his escape. In *Pickpocket* (France 1959), Michel's thieving hand ties the fragmented bodies of anonymous crowds together. The hand in Bresson is a character of creation; it creates a cinematic space-time. In *Two Uncles*, the hands that touch the photograph belong to the dimension of subjective investments in the image. See Deleuze, 'Creative Act', 320–321.

38. Cf. Bellour, 'The Pensive Spectator', 6–7.
39. Laura Mulvey arrives at a different conclusion in her take on Bellour's conceptualization of the "pensive spectator." She foregrounds the temporal delays still images produce in film and concludes that the stopping of an image or its repetition dissolves fiction and directs attention to the time of its registration, the moment of recording. Mulvey, 'The possessive spectator', 184. See also Mulvey, 'The "pensive spectator" revisited'.
40. Batchen, *Forget me not*, 39–40.
41. The immanent mobility of the photograph aligns with Erin Manning's reading of Leni Riefenstahl's documentary films that make emerging movement felt. Manning argues that Riefestahl's camerawork brings movement into stillness – to sculptures, bodies standing still – by "actively pulling force out of the incipiency of movement, inciting it to appear." Manning, *Relationscapes*, 140.
42. Yet another documentary frame on "still lives" is noteworthy in this context. Harun Farocki's *Still Life* (Germany 1997) delves into commercial still lives and their genealogy to paintings by sixteenth-century Dutch masters. A meditation on the image of man, the documentary explores the production of contemporary commercial photographs for advertising. With the focus on the production of still lives, photographs of inanimate objects, the documentary suggests that the stilled objects bear witness to their producers, who reveal something of themselves in the act of production. However, because the producers of commercial photographs do not appear with their objects, they remain unimaginable. In Farocki's philosophy, this makes the spectator unimaginable to himself.
43. Cf. Sutton, *Photography, Cinema, Memory*, 38.
44. The crystal-image is an adaptation of Henri Bergson's schema on time and memory. According to Bergson, the present coexists with its virtual pasts – an idea that Deleuze sees as the fundamental operation of time. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 161–162; Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 294n222.
45. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 81–82.
46. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 82.
47. Damian Sutton goes as far as to suggest that photography, at its core, always offers a glimpse of immanence, a "shared glimpse of past and future in the captured present." Deleuze, on the other hand, notes that this indiscernibility is "the objective characteristic of certain existing images which are by nature double." Sutton, *Photography, Cinema, Memory*, 227; Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 69.

2. A documentary fable

1. *The Last Bolshevik* is a coproduction between La Sept/Arte (FR), Channel 4 (UK) and Epidem Oy (FIN). It is distributed on DVD by Icarus Films.
2. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 11.

3. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 147.
4. Rancière, *The Future of the Image*, 4; *The Emancipated Spectator*, 107.
5. Göran Hugo Olsson deploys a similar strategy in his recent *Concerning Violence* (Sweden 2014), in which image-fragments, replete with visual forms, text, and voices, are mobilized in a discussion of decolonization. In the film, Olsson collates documentary footage of African liberation struggles with textual excerpts from Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). In the English version, Lauryn Hill reads passages from Fanon's text on the soundtrack. The archival footage is drawn from Swedish documentaries depicting the violent process of decolonization in different parts of Africa between 1966 and 1987. Much of the footage centers on Portuguese colonies and their struggle from the authoritarian rule of António de Oliveira Salazar. Focusing on the violence of the colonizer, the composite layers of the visible and the discursive in Olsson's pensive images suggest that we have yet to understand the scope of the effects and uses of violence.
6. Moreover, Rancière extends the notion of fable from making films to theorizing about them. To underline the transversal contexts of the concept, he opens *Film Fables* with an extract from Jean Epstein's text 'The Senses 1 (b)' in which Epstein describes photogenic drama with film fragments extracted from the melodramatic plot they belong to. With the fragments from 'The Senses', Rancière argues that theoreticians from Epstein to Gilles Deleuze extract snippets of films from their narratives to arrive at the powers of cinema: "The fable that tells the truth of cinema is extracted from the stories narrated on its screens." Moreover, the fable belongs equally to the experience of viewing films as scenes of films fuse with others in the minds of the spectators. In short, making fables with other fables constitutes cinema as an art, as an experience and as an idea of art. It belongs to a theoretical impetus that considers the three domains through a shared organizational ontology. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 6.
7. Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, 122.
8. See for example Rancière, *Film Fables*; Lupton, *Chris Marker*; Niney, *L'Epreuve du réel*.
9. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 157.
10. Niney, *L'Epreuve du réel*, 104.
11. Alter, *Chris Marker*, 47. See also Renov, *Subject of Documentary*, 104–106, 118.
12. In Protazanov's film, Aelita observes the hero of the film, Los, with a telescope from Mars. Los feels uneasy and senses that he is being observed. Later, Los takes off to Mars to wage a revolution and confronts Aelita. Perhaps Marker hints at the themes of observation and revolution with the scene from *Aelita*.
13. Whether or not one recognizes the woman looking at the book as Aelita and the lone peasant as Khmyr, the gesture of looking and the duality that is seen in the book is straightforward. It follows a standard form of continuity editing.

14. Gorky's essay has been reprinted in Macdonald and Cousins (eds.), *Imagining Reality*, 6–10.
15. Rancière, 'L'inoubliable', 50.
16. Rancière's idea of an age as a common temporal texture of actions coincides with his postulation of the aesthetic regime of art. In his view, the aesthetic regime came about in the past two centuries when it emerged in opposition to a representational regime. According to Rancière, "the aesthetic regime asserts the absolute singularity of art and, at the same time, destroys any pragmatic criterion for isolating this singularity. It simultaneously establishes the autonomy of art and the identity of its forms with the forms that life uses to shape itself." In the aesthetic regime, everything is available to art and worthy of art. This challenges the representational regime in which speech holds a privileged position over visibilities and in which subject matter dictates forms of expression, producing genres valued on the basis of what they represent. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 23, 81, 91; *Film Fables*, 9.
17. Rancière, 'L'historicité du cinéma', 51.
18. Flat ontologies are opposed to hierarchical ontologies that explain reality with transcendental principles – such as categories of the image that have different essences or values. Speaking in the context of the ontological status of species, Manuel de Landa argues that "an approach in terms of interacting parts and emergent wholes leads to a *flat ontology*, one made exclusively of unique, singular individuals, differing in spatio-temporal scale but not in ontological status." De Landa, *Intensive Science*, 51.
19. Cf. Rancière, 'L'historicité du cinéma', 48.
20. Rancière, 'L'inoubliable', 54–55; *Film Fables*, 17.
21. Rancière uses several pairs of terms to account for the double bind – active/passive, significance/insignificance, conscient/inconscient, and signifiant/a-signifiant. His categorical way of writing sometimes confuses the distinctions between the different double binds he identifies, but for the present purposes it suffices to emphasize the movement between the sides of the double binds. Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, 123; *Film Fables*, 18; 'L'inoubliable', 54, 58; 'L'historicité du cinéma', 49.
22. Between these works is a third film on the end of communism: *Out of the Present* (1995).
23. Blouin, 'Ceausescu tordu', 20.
24. Blouin, 'Ceausescu tordu', 20–21.
25. Elsewhere, Rancière speaks of these moments of the everyday as "the real of fiction" (*le réel de la fiction*). Fictional chains of actions and reactions are punctuated with moments of stasis. These moments invest the subjects of action with a life, with a reality that coexists their actions. Rancière, 'L'inoubliable', 56–57.
26. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 17.

27. Marker is renowned for playing with the "I" of the first-person narrator – the most emblematic example being *Sunless* in which the self, indicated by the narrating "I," is located somewhere between a woman reading letters written in the first-person singular, the writer of the letters, Sandor Krasna, and the filmmaker, Chris Marker. The play of the "I" is evident also in Marker's career at large: he is not keen on giving interviews and hence his biographies have to adjust to a dissolving author with many names – Chris Villeneuve, Fritz Markassin, Sandor Krasna, Jacopo Berenzi, Chris. Marker, and Chris Marker – and the cat Guillaume-en-Egypt that travels with them. See Lupton, *Chris Marker*, 11–12.
28. With the other Left Bank filmmakers, Marker was involved in organizing a political film group that documented workers' strikes in France and enabled the strikers to use film for their purposes. The group was called the Medvedkin Group – in homage to Alexander Medvedkin's film-train work. See Lupton, *Chris Marker*, 117.
29. Niney, 'L'éloignement des voix', 104; *L'Epreuve du réel*, 104.
30. Jaimie Baron argues that the viewer's experience of temporal disparity within a film gives rise to the recognition of an archival document. The reappropriation of documents while maintaining their distance to the present produces what Baron calls the "archive effect." Baron, *The Archive Effect*, 18.
31. Niney, 'L'éloignement des voix', 106.
32. Lupton, *Chris Marker*, 188; Niney, 'Le regarde retourné', 30. It is well established that Marker's manner of processing images in his film work anticipates future technological advances. Catherine Lupton quotes Marker commenting on the development of the AVID non-linear editing system that it does what he has been trying to do with his rudimentary tools for years. Although Marker is a pioneer of new media, his work also draws extensively on old media. For example, *Level Five* (1996), which occupies the virtual universe of video games, the Internet, and databases, makes simultaneous use of the traditional means of documentary interrogation and fiction cinema. In *Immemory* (1998), Marker offers a hypermedia setting of a variety of "old" memory objects – photographs, books, and other mementos – that are organized on the representational plane of a CD-ROM. Lupton, *Chris Marker*, 178–179; Blümlinger, 'The Imaginary in the Documentary Image', 5.
33. Lupton, *Chris Marker*, 187.
34. The spatial disposition of *The Last Bolshevik* could be read in conjunction to Walter Benjamin's conceptualization of aura and masses, where the aura is the unique phenomenon of a distance that the masses constantly overcome with the desire to bring things closer. Reframing and the consequent rewriting could be seen as strategies to bring familiar images closer, but this does not comply with the emphasis on the potential of past images. Whereas Benjamin speaks of photographic images and cinema in terms of failed opportunities and unrealized promises, Rancière speaks of film fragments in a

way that affirms their potential. In addition, Chris Marker's cinema could be described in terms of an affirmative fondness to reproduction and reproducibility. See Hansen, 'Benjamin, Cinema and Experience', 182–183.

35. Paraphrasing Laura. U. Marks, the disposition of writing in *The Last Bolshevik* is a plane of information that regulates the enfolding-unfolding aesthetics of his cinema. For Marks, the plane of information is a viewpoint that shapes what can be perceived. For example, cinematic conventions filter the enfolding-unfolding of images and thus bear on the actualization of images' potentials. Marks, 'Information, secrets and enigmas', 88.
36. Marker, 'Le tombeau d'Alexandre', 47.
37. In France, *The Train Rolls On* was double-billed with *Happiness* of which screenings were organized at the time of Medvedkin's visit in 1971. French audiences saw a diptych that consisted of Medvedkin's satirical fable of a peasant on the lookout for happiness and Marker's display of the film as fact in service of the Soviet Revolution. The diptych is repeated in a revised arrangement with the DVD edition of Marker's *The Last Bolshevik*. The Icarus Films release of Marker's film comes with Medvedkin's *Happiness*, restored clips of the kino-train pieces and recreations of two of his lost films. See Lupton, *Chris Marker*, 128.
38. Marker, 'Le tombeau d'Alexandre', 47.
39. Lupton, *Chris Marker*, 129.
40. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 158.
41. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 165.
42. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 38.
43. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 17–18, 158–159.
44. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 165.
45. Braidotti, *Transpositions*, 167.

Fabulation: Documentary visions

1. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 184.
2. Robert Scholes pins fabulation to mid-twentieth-century literary modernists such as Kurt Vonnegut and John Hawkes, whose practice does not fit into the traditional genres of realism and romance, and instead blurs the boundaries between the fantastic and the everyday. Scholes, *The Fabulators*.
3. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 150.
4. "*C'est le devenir du personnage réel quand il se met lui-même à 'fictionner', quand il entre 'en flagrant délit de légender', et contribue ainsi à l'invention de son peuple*." Deleuze, *Cinéma 2: L'image-temps*, 196. Here, Deleuze draws on Pierre Perrault's description of storytelling and his use of the term "*en flagrant délit de légender*." Perrault insists that storytelling is not separate from the lived but an integral part of it. Deleuze echoes Perrault's position in his conceptualization of fabulation and speaks of storytelling as free indirect

gravitation between fabulous telling and the filmmaker's approach. Perrault & Allio, 'Cinéma du réel', 54; Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 147–155.

5. Bruzzi, *New Documentary*, 185–187, 198.
6. Nichols, *Blurred Boundaries*, 106.
7. She does, however, discuss the implications of the performative on documentary auteurs and offers a particularly striking analysis of Nick Broomfield's transformations. Bruzzi, *New Documentary*, 207–217.
8. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 126, 147–155. The ontology of the time-image and particularly that of the powers of the false resonate strongly with Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, the ones who declare themselves to be truthful are ultimately in judgment of life. In the section 'How the "true world" ultimately became a fable' of *The Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche moves from the Platonian disposition of the true world being present to the pious and the virtuous to a disposition in which the idea of the true world becomes fable-like. Both Nietzsche and Deleuze's projects dispose presumed ideas of truth and accompanying worlds of appearances in favor of emphasizing the creative force of time. Whereas Deleuze speaks of time as a stretch of becoming that is no longer subjugated to movement, Nietzsche argues for time and free will – a will to power that is no longer subjugated to a model of truth. Time as becoming, continuous change, challenges the ontological discernibility of the true and the false, and puts the emphasis on becoming as potentialization. It is thus no coincidence that fabulation and its connection to Nietzsche emerge precisely in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. See Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 22–23; Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 141; Bogue, *Deleuzian Fabulation*, 31.
9. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 150.
10. See Connolly, *World of Becoming*, 64.
11. See Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*, 157.
12. Deleuze's postulation of fabulation as an issue of "inventing a people" connects to Henri Bergson's definition of fabulation in *The two sources of morality and religion*. Bergson discusses the fabulatory function of religion in relation to the cohesion of social groups. For him, fabulation consists of creating false representations – "phantasmic representations" and "hallucinatory fictions" – that have real effects. In Bergson, these hallucinatory fictions can have negative effects by regulating behavior in a given social group, such as a religious community. However, Bergson speaks of false representations also as "efficient presences" that may have potentially affirmative effects. Deleuze takes up this side of Bergson's discussion and transposes fabulation from enhancing extant social conditions to envisioning collectivities beyond those that exist in actuality. See Bergson, *Two sources*, 88–89; Bogue, *Deleuzian Fabulation*, 16, 44; Bogue, *Deleuze's Way*, 91–94, 106; Hongisto & Pape, 'Unexpected artivism'; Mullarkey, 'Life, Movement and the Fabulation of the Event'.
13. Smith, 'Introduction: A Life of Pure Immanence', xlv.

3. Making up legends

1. At the time of writing this chapter, in March 2015, *Grey Gardens* celebrated its 40th anniversary. Janus Films released a new 2K digital restoration of the film for the occasion. Albert Maysles gave his approval to the restoration drawn from the gritty 16mm original just before passing away on 5 March 2015. DVD and Blu-ray versions of the documentary are available from Criterion Collection.
2. Vogels, *The Direct Cinema of David and Albert Maysles*, 140, 146.
3. Winston, 'Scientific Inscription', 42; Vogels, *The Direct Cinema of David and Albert Maysles*, 148–149.
4. Robson, 'The Crystal Formation', 44.
5. Robson, 'The Crystal Formation', 53. See also Rosenthal, 'Grey Gardens. An Interview with Ellen Hovde', 383.
6. Vogels, *The Direct Cinema of David and Albert Maysles*, 125, 130, 136. See also Tinkcom, *Grey Gardens*, 67–83.
7. Vogels, *The Direct Cinema of David and Albert Maysles*, 134.
8. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 14–15, 18, 24–26.
9. Matthew Tinkcom reads *Grey Gardens* as a melodrama and notes that the film is structured around a seductive bond between the Maysles and the Beales, particularly David Maysles and Little Edie. The observation is astute, but Tinkcom's claim that the flirting in fact leads to yet another failed romance for the Beales undermines the complicity of the Beales in the making of the film. Interestingly enough, the 2006 sequel to *Grey Gardens* puts much more emphasis on the seductive play between the parties. *The Beales of Grey Gardens* elaborates on the relationship self-reflexively, thus offering an interpretation of the relations between the Maysles and the Beales and confirming their importance for the making of the 1975 documentary. See Tinkcom, *Grey Gardens*, 63.
10. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 21.
11. In Tinkcom's view, the household of Grey Gardens epitomizes melodrama's key concern of the private space being shaped by larger forces such as sexual desire, social duty, and reproduction. Hence, the house is a central character in the drama of the Beales' lives. Tinkcom, *Grey Gardens*, 24.
12. Vogels, *The Direct Cinema of David and Albert Maysles*, 1.
13. Levin, 'An Interview with Albert and David Maysles', 275.
14. Balázs, *Theory of the Film*, 55–56; *Early Film Theory*, 37–38.
15. Balázs, *Early Film Theory*, 9–11; *Theory of the Film*, 60, 77.
16. Koch, 'The Physiognomy of Things', 176.
17. Koch, 'The Physiognomy of Things', 173.
18. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 232–237. Cf. Balázs, *Theory of the Film*, 46–51.
19. Cf. Levin, 'An Interview with Albert and David Maysles', 274–275; Dixon, 'An Interview with Albert Maysles', 180; Robson, 'The Crystal Formation', 44.

20. Carter, 'Introduction', 94; Carter, 'Introduction: Early Film Theory', xli–xliii. Cf. Balázs, *Theory of the Film*, 284–285; *Early Film Theory*, 87–89.
21. Robson, 'The Crystal Formation', 43.
22. Inventing new styles of being also resonates particularly well with Félix Guattari's distinction between subjected groups and group-subjects. The former struggle against forms imposed on them from the outside and in acts of self-defense they inflict fixed positions and hierarchical structures on themselves. Group-subjects, on the other hand, form themselves from within, offering their members shifting roles and fluid positions. A subjected group remains a closed unit, whereas a group-subject keeps itself open to lines of collective development with other group-subjects and existential modes. In essence, the problem of subjected groups in Guattari is similar to Bergson's problem with closed societies: both are guided and controlled by external myths that regulate patterns of behavior. Deleuze's take on fabulation, on the other hand, sides with Guattari's description of group-subjects. Guattari, *Molecular Revolution*, 22–44; Bogue, *Deleuze's Way*, 97–98.
23. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 152. Intercessors do not mediate roles and routines that have already been assigned and performed; they facilitate the passage between roles and routines. This nuance is lost in the translation of Deleuze's 1990 essay 'Les intercesseurs', which has been rendered 'Mediators' in the 1995 English version. See Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 121–134.
24. Michael, 'Claiming a Style', 39; Garneau, 'Les deux mémoires de Pierre Perrault', 26.
25. Saunders, *Direct Cinema*, 190–191.
26. Perrault & Allio, 'Cinéma du réel', 52; Bogue, *Deleuze's Way*, 99–100.
27. Michael, 'Claiming a Style', 36.
28. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 150.
29. D.N. Rodowick exemplifies the decolonizing impetus of fabulation in West African cinema. He argues that the biggest political problem of West African cinema is that the local audiences are not accustomed to images of black skin. Or more precisely, they are accustomed only to certain kinds of images of black skin, images that the colonial censorship passed. From the colonial perspective, images of black skin, for example in Tarzan movies, enhance the colonial order by homogenizing blackness into a single category, "The Negro," which becomes internalized in the workings of the social group. As colonial hegemony becomes internalized, individuals become alienated from their own myths, languages, and customs that are replaced by those of "The Negro." When the unifying myths, languages, and customs are replaced, the collective is fragmented into alienated atoms harnessed by a foreign culture. This brushes out the differences between African cultures and offers "the White Hero" as the only positive figure with which the local audiences can identify with. Rodowick notes that the "double colonialization" of the individuals and the collectives alike is so severe that remedying the situation with representing the repressed varieties of black skin is not

enough. Nor can the constitution of individual psychological memories of repression do much for the cohesion of the collectives. What is needed is a vision of blackness in which individuals and collectives could find common points of existence. According to Rodowick, storytelling in West African cinema can amount to a double-becoming of individuals and collectives if it engages with the creative powers of visionary invention. An example of such visionary storytelling is the cinema of Ousmane Sembene; the Senegalese filmmaker who not only relates fact and fiction in a free indirect manner but also takes it as his cinematic task "to show that the people are missing as a precondition for their becoming." Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*, 158–159, 160, 165.

30. Garneau, 'Les deux mémoires de Pierre Perrault', 26.
31. This connects *Grey Gardens* to the figure of the aging actress that began to emerge in Hollywood in the 1950s and 1960s. In addition to *Sunset Boulevard*, such films as Robert Aldrich's *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* (1962) and Joseph Mankiewicz's *All About Eve* (1950) discuss an earlier moment of cinema through aging characters and actresses (Joan Crawford, Bette Davis, Gloria Swanson). These characters – played by stars of the earlier moment in cinema – decline to occupy the position of an aging refuse and make last attempts at remarkable performances. Brooks, 'Performing Aging', passim. I would like to thank Kaisa Kurikka for pointing out this connection.
32. Bogue, *Deleuze's Way*, 100.
33. Dixon, 'An Interview with Albert Maysles', 192.

4. Acts of resistance

1. The documentary is the second installment in Honkasalo's trilogy on the secular and the sacred. The first documentary in the series, *Mysterion* (1991), observes the life of nuns at the Pyhtitsa convent in Estonia. The third film, *Atman* (1996) follows the pilgrimage of two Hindu brothers to the source of the Ganges River in the Himalaya. The trilogy is not available on Blu-ray or DVD, but a 35mm print of *Tanyusha and the 7 Devils* is available at the Finnish Film Foundation [www.ses.fi].
2. Bogue, *Deleuzian Fabulation*, 20.
3. Lagaay, 'Between Silence and Sound', 54.
4. Lagaay, 'Between Silence and Sound', 57–58.
5. Lacan's elaboration on the voice stem from his extension of Freud's *fort/da* -model. Whereas for Freud, a child playing a game of "gone" and "here" (*fort/da*) is indicative of the child mechanically repeating the mother's absence, Lacan interprets the game of throwing an object away and pulling it back as constitutive of the child's subjectivity. He foregrounds that the child is not, in fact, pulling back the absent mother – not even in a metaphorical sense – but throws away and pulls back a part of himself (*objet petit a*). In Freud, the game is the child's way of dealing with the threatening experi-

ence of the mother's absence, whereas in Lacan, the child comes to realize the mother's absence in the game and identifies with the absent mother. The identification with the absent mother is crucial, for the child simultaneously realizes his own incompleteness. The Lacanian *fort/da* thus foregrounds the realization of incompleteness and the fantasy of a primordial unity in the transition from the mirror stage to the symbolic order. See for example Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, passim; Lacan, *Ecrits*, 75–81.

6. Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 7.
7. Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 72–100.
8. Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 7.
9. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 61–62.
10. Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 7.
11. Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 10.
12. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 23.
13. Silverman's reading of Lacanian psychoanalysis is remarkable, especially in how it transposes the discussion of partial objects to an issue of sexual difference. Emphasizing the entry into language as a bodily castration and thus foregrounding that also the male subject is marked by absence already before the realization of a woman's anatomical difference, Silverman turns the Lacanian disposition into a feminist potential. With the transposition, she shows how classical Hollywood repeatedly works to cover and deny the male subject's castration by identifying lack with female anatomy. It is noteworthy that Silverman reads Chion's take on the voice in cinema along the same lines and posits it as "a fantasy about precultural sexuality." Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 74.
14. Comolli, 'Le son et la voix', 58–59. Elsewhere, Chion insists that synchronous sound and its nuances are often "forgotten" in scholarly research because the meaning and effects of synchronous sound are swallowed by the images or the film as a whole. He claims that the sounds that stand out – such as voiceover – get more scholarly attention because synchronous sound is easily perceived within the film's general setting. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 3–4.
15. Comolli, 'Le son et la voix', 54. In his discussion of fiction film, Chion insists on the voice being radically other from the body that adopts it or from the body that it adopts. Distinguished from the body, the voice appears much less stable and is thus prone to become a fetish. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 174.
16. Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 7–8.
17. Chevrie & Le Roux, 'Site and Speech', 44. On the speaking voices in *Shoah*, see Felman & Laub, *Testimony*, 204–283. On the role of the site, see Didi-Huberman, 'The Site, Despite Everything', 113–123. On the relationship of speech and the sites, see Chevrie & Le Roux, 'Site and Speech', 37–49.
18. Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, 42.

19. Massumi, *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 31; Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 75–89.
20. This resonates with the relationship of the self and the image in psychoanalytic film theory. Kaja Silverman argues that our conception of a self is fundamentally permeated by images. Concrete images as well as imaginary ones constitute a cultural screen that we use as a vestige for our actions and that we reproduce in our own poses. The role of photography is crucial in Silverman's thinking, for the gestures taken on from the cultural screen turn into "photographic poses" for further repetition. The medium of photography is in a sense an emblem of how a subject poses as an image to be perceived by others. In Silverman's view, images function as signifiers with which a self is both perceived and asserted. Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World*, 202, 221.
21. All references to the filmmaker's account are from the interview 'Seitsemästi riivattu lapsi' by Asta Leppä (*Anna*, 7/1993, 59–61).
22. Honkasalo discusses these reactions in *Films from Finland. The Finnish Film Foundation's Newsletter* (1/1994). She claims that Western audiences tend to be more severe on the people portrayed in the film, whereas Eastern audiences seem more merciful – perhaps because they lack the illusion of being in complete control of their lives.
23. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 96–97, 100.
24. According to Chion, an acousmatic being – the *acousmêtre* – accounts for the powers that emerge when a voice and a body are in disjunction; when a voice is without a place, without a body to attach itself to. The acousmatic being is, in his view, indicative of the magical powers of cinema because voices wandering about the screen harbor a potential omnipresence, and thus omnipotence. In the documentary, the dynamics of omnipotence is more easily associated with the voiceover, but a certain haunting magic can be attributed to off-screen voices as well. See Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 26–27.
25. Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 75–76. In her outline of the sonorous envelope, Silverman is particularly critical of Chion who conceptualizes the mother's voice as a "uterine night." Silverman suggests that the sonorous envelope is reversible and that in mirroring devalued female qualities onto the male, it poses a threat causing defensive reactions that comprise many a Hollywood film. Cf. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 61.
26. Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 4–5, 7, 9. See also Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 323.
27. Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 94–95. From this perspective, Kaja Silverman's reading of Lacan is close to Guattari, for she goes to considerable lengths in order to show the cultural implications of a subjectivity constituted on lack. In her interpretation, the Lacanian partial objects are appropriated into the reproduction of sexual difference and gender binaries within popular culture. See Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, passim.

28. Guattari, 'Ritornellos and Existential Affects', 165. Guattari's frequent use of the term "existential" most likely comes from his readings of Sartre and Bakhtin. A Guattarian existential territory is a combination of actual conditions and incorporeal virtual fields, signifying and a-signifying regimes, and therefore not to be confused with a phenomenological understanding of existentialism.
29. This coincides with Guattari's psychotherapeutic work at the La Borde clinic. The therapeutic work at La Borde focused on breaking the habitual patterns of what the patients are and what they can do by giving them responsibilities outside their habitual modes of being. The patients were given responsibilities as nurses, cooks, and gardeners in order to find cuts or shifting points that could enable transforming their problematic mental cartographies into more sustainable modes of living. In other words, psychotherapy at La Borde aimed at re-singularizing the immanent capacities of the patients and consequently to reanimate their characteristic patterns into more self-sustainable forms. Lichtenberg Ettinger, 'A conversation with Félix Guattari', 243; Berardi, *The Soul at Work*, 137; Genosko, *Félix Guattari*, 34–47.
30. Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 13–14, 18–20.
31. Deleuze and Guattari describe a similar process with the notion of the refrain. The refrain (*ritournelle*) describes the process in which the heterogeneous components of subjectivity are composed into an existential territory. In the refrain, the components form a consistency that marks a territory. The dynamics of the refrain also includes a movement of deterritorialization in which the organized elements undergo a shift and deterritorialize. The establishing of a counterpoint is one of the crucial phases in the dynamics of an existential territory. The counterpoint keeps the process moving and powers the deterritorializing phase of the process. Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 311–312, 330–331.
32. Chevrie & Le Roux, 'Site and Speech', 45.
33. This reading is indebted to Laura U. Marks's enfolding-unfolding aesthetics in which the enigma has a particular position. For Marks, an enigma is a point of resistance that can never be completely unfolded. It cultivates the process of images' enfolding-unfolding because it always refers to what did not unfold and why a certain image unfolded the way it did. Marks quotes Mario Perniola: "[The enigma is] capable of simultaneous expression on a many different registers of meaning, all of which are equally valid, and it is thus able to open up an intermediate space that is not necessarily bound to be filled." Marks, 'Information, secrets and enigmas', 97.
34. The music is by the baroque composer Henry Purcell and it is performed by the Finnish baroque orchestra *The Sixth Floor Ensemble*, Pirjo Bergström carrying out the vocals.
35. Working from the neomaterialist points of view of emergence and transversality, Milla Tiainen suggests that the voice be studied in terms of its scalar

entanglement with cultural, technological and environmental factors. Expanding postulations of signification and the psyche to relationality and connectedness, Tiainen figures the voice as a sound event in excess of linguistic signification, ever-emergent in its relationality. Tiainen, 'Revisiting the voice', 401–403.

36. Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 293.
37. Smith, 'Introduction: A Life of Pure Immanence', xlv.
38. Minor politics, then, is not identifiable with minority politics or the status of a minority – and its collateral dependence on a majority. Rather, it is about undoing both categories as determinants of subjectivity. Deleuze and Guattari describe Kafka's use of "Prague German" as an instance of minor literature. They argue that Kafka's language bends the structures and methods of "official German," makes them stutter, and thus inaugurates a minor politics that undermines the hierarchical distinction between the official and the unofficial. Deleuze & Guattari, *Kafka*, 16–18; *A Thousand Plateaus*, 105–106, 471.

Affection: Documenting the potential

1. Connolly, *World of Becoming*, 8.
2. The social impact report published by the Canadian documentary film festival Hot Docs is particularly interesting in this regard. The report first maps the creating, measuring and evaluating of social impact in the documentary – without forgetting to stress that "the story is everything." Then, it lays out the goals, strategies, and outcomes of five successful social impact campaigns as explicit models of how "impact is done." See http://www.hotdocs.ca/resources/documents/Hot_Docs_2014_Documentary_Impact_Report.PDF (accessed 24 April 2015).
3. Torchin, *Creating the Witness*, 4–5.
4. Gaines, 'Political Mimesis', 92–93.
5. Williams, 'Film Bodies', 4.
6. Williams, 'Film Bodies', 12. In their seminal 1969 essay, Fernando Solanas and Ottavio Gettino declare Third Cinema a militant practice of summoning the people to fight the system. Solanas and Gettino speak of cinema as a weapon geared for "creating a political sensitivity as awareness of the need to undertake political-military struggle in order to take power." The direct politics of Third Cinema with its call to action is an early precursor to the documentary's corporeal turn. For Solanas and Gettino, the battle waged by the Third Cinema movement "begins without, against the enemy who attacks us, but also within, *against the ideas and models of the enemy to be found inside each one of us*." The representations of political action create shocks to thought that build awareness, and it is within that awareness that film can lead to political action. Solanas & Gettino, 'Towards a Third Cinema', 47, 63. See also Wayne, *Political Film*.

7. Williams, 'Melodrama revisited', 52.
8. Del Río, *Deleuze and the Cinemas of Performance*, 13–15, 24n15.
9. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 142.
10. Sobchack, 'Nonfictional Film Experience', 241. Anglophone phenomenological film theory focusing on the question of experience owes largely to Sobchack's earlier book *Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (1992). Whereas Linda Williams draws on and negotiates the Lacanian "original fantasies" in her take on the film experience, Sobchack deploys Maurice-Merleau Ponty's phenomenology as well as the ideas of the relatively unknown Belgian film phenomenologist Jean-Pierre Meunier.
11. Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts*, 261.
12. See especially Marks, *The Skin of the Film*.
13. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 70; Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, xvi, 149–168.
14. Spinoza, *Ethics*, 71.
15. Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 28–29.
16. Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, xvii.

5. Moments of affection

1. The upsurge in talking head testimonial videos can be traced roughly to the 1980s, to the newly available video format, and to the beginnings of archival projects that collect testimonials for example from Holocaust survivors, victims of war and discriminated groups and individuals. The talking head testimonial video is the core form of expression for example in the videos housed at the Holocaust memorial archive; it also played a significant role in second wave feminism and the related political project of making women's stories heard. See Lesage, 'Feminist Documentary'; Guerin & Hallas (eds.), *The Image and the Witness*; Ahmed & Stacey, 'Testimonial cultures'.
2. The spiral form of the installation mimics Trajan's column (113 CE) erected in celebration of the emperor's victory in the Dacian wars. Here, the talking head form embodies a critical function regarding the imperial practices that wage their might on European citizens. My experience of the installation is from Ataman's *Mesopotamian Dramaturgies* show at MAXXI, the National Museum for 21st century Arts in Rome over the summer of 2010.
3. *Everything and nothing* is distributed by Video Data Bank and it is also available for viewing on vimeo: https://vimeo.com/71401594 (accessed 17 April 2015).
4. There is a crucial distinction between detention centers and prison camps. The latter implies a legal entity but in the Lebanese context there was none. Salloum notes that even more accurate a definition would be "South Lebanese Army run Israeli detention centers. Set up by Israel with commandants present but run on a daily basis by the SLA" (personal communication 23 July 2013).

5. Salloum, 'Sans titre/ untitled', 164. The 1992 project included community and individual productions of several installations and videotapes such as the video *Up to the South* (*Talaeen a Junuub*, 1993), a collaboration with Walid Raad, who was Salloum's assistant at the time.
6. Salloum, 'Sans titre/ untitled', 168–169.
7. Salloum, 'Sans titre/ untitled', 164.
8. The details for the setup of the installation are given in Salloum's production notes. This chapter relies on the setup of the installation at the 2006 Sydney Biennale where *everything and nothing* was screened on a TV monitor. In other instances, the video has also been shown on a screen. Salloum, 'Untitled: video installation description'.
9. Allan, 'The Location of Lebanon', 166.
10. Butler, *Frames of War*, 12. Similar breaks of the frame are evident in the digital environment. Miriam Ross discusses the impact of vertical framing with mobile devices on the perceived authenticity of produced content. Her take on framing and its breaks is linked to an interest in the circulation of vertical videos and the role of a wider user base in policing the aesthetic parameters of "proper framing." See Ross, 'Vertical Framing', passim.
11. Butler, *Frames of War*, 9.
12. Butler, *Frames of War*, 10.
13. Shapiro, *Cinematic Geopolitics*, 81. Other significant audiovisual parameters are the interlacing of photographs, film clips and maps with the interview, and Philip Glass's music that comments and punctuates McNamara's words. McNamara has the liberty to present his theses, but the stylistic choices put his liberties into a critical frame. The images and the music edited into McNamara's words point to how he is only capable of approaching the war from the point of view of the state's war machine – even though he tries to convince the viewer otherwise. The politics of *The Fog of War* is born out of the conflict of what McNamara says and how the film expresses the worldview he tries to put forward. See Shapiro, *Cinematic Geopolitics*, 76–77.
14. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 10.
15. Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, 15.
16. Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 9.
17. Herzog, *Dreams of Difference, Songs of the Same*, 7–8.
18. Del Río, *Deleuze and the Cinemas of Performance*, 1, passim.
19. Pasolini, *Heretical Empiricism*, 170–171, 173, 182.
20. Stern, *The Interpersonal World of the Infant*, 45.
21. Stern, *The Interpersonal World of the Infant*, 54.
22. Bellour, 'Le dépli des emotions', 109.
23. Connolly, 'Materialities of Experience', 185. Connolly's project is to come to terms with the materiality of perception by placing Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Michel Foucault, and Gilles Deleuze into conversation. He notes that the link between Merleau-Ponty and Foucault is in how they attend to the preconscious, affective dimensions of discipline and experience and how they

both outline a prior disciplining of the senses in which a history of inter-involvement organizes perception. The connection to Deleuze is construed with Deleuze's proposal of enhancing our existential attachment to the world precisely on this level in the face of "our universal schizophrenia." See Connolly, 'Materialities of Experience', 190, 198.

24. Laura U. Marks speaks of this complexity of perception in an elucidating manner in relation to Shauna Beharry's video *Seeing is Believing* (Canada 1991). The tape is composed of an image of the artist wearing her mother's sari and Beharry telling her story. The framing of the image and the voice evoke the tactile memory of the artist's deceased mother, thus affirming her existential attachment to this world by way of the inter-involvement of sensory experience. Marks, *The Skin of the Film*, 128–129.
25. See for example Marks, 'Dangerous Gifts'; 'Mohamed Soueid's cinema of immanence'.
26. Frodon, 'Éloge de la guérilla symbolique', 29–30.
27. Westmoreland, 'Crisis of Representation', 202.
28. Alanna Thain approaches the figure of the double in cinema as a direct experience of "anotherness" at the heart of the self. In her impressive account of time, suspension, and affect, the figure of the double entangles with a "double vision" that suspends the present moment in favor of an experience of auto-alterity, a perceptual feeling of anotherness immanent to the cinematic body. Thain, *Bodies in Time*, passim.

6. The primacy of feeling

1. Although made as an individual piece, the idea for the documentary emerged in conjunction with the multimedia installation 'Bordering on Fiction: Chantal Akerman's *D'Est'*. The installation was first displayed at the Walker Museum in Minneapolis. On the installation, see Lebow, 'Memory Once Removed', 39–40; Halbreich & Jenkins (eds.), *Bordering on Fiction*, passim.
2. Akerman, 'On D'Est', 17. The essay is also reprinted in the booklet of the 2009 Icarus Films DVD-edition of the film.
3. All references to the filmmaker's statements are from a personal communication (20 August 2010).
4. The word "gulag" comes from the Russian *Glavnoje upravlenije lagerej*, which refers to the section of the NKVD (Soviet security service) that administered the labor camps and penal colonies.
5. Akerman, 'On D'Est', 20.
6. This setup speaks of the primacy of the experiential over the cognitive in film experience, and coincides with Steven Shaviro's account of experience in Alfred North Whitehead's philosophy. Reading Whitehead in relation to Immanuel Kant and William James, Shaviro maps experience that is first affective and then cognitive. This means that perception is first a matter of

being affected bodily and it is only afterwards that we identify or cognize what it is that we are feeling. In this context, I use "feeling," "sensation," and "affect" interchangeably to distinguish them from cognitive processes in the documentary experience. This is in line with Steven Shaviro's use of the terms in his account of the primacy of feeling in Whitehead. However, one should also note Brian Massumi's distinction between "affect" and "emotion." Shaviro argues that Massumi's intensive pre-subjective "affects" coincide with Whitehead's "feeling" and there is an equivalent for Massumi's derivative emotions that are attributed to an already constituted subject in Whitehead as well. Shaviro, *Without Criteria*, 56–58, 47n51; Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 27–28.

7. Margulies, *Nothing Happens*, 199.
8. Alisa Lebow argues that the feeling of inconclusion is a sign of Akerman's sense of time and timing that ties her to the tradition of avant-garde as opposed to narrative filmmaking in which shots are determined according to the needs of a story. Lebow, 'Memory Once Removed', 63.
9. Massumi defines momentum as a feeling of a change of state to which nothing visible corresponds as such. He describes a billiard ball hitting another ball and launching it forward. Objectively, we register two trajectories: the first ball moves toward the second, hits it and stops. The second ball starts to roll and moves away. But Massumi insists that even though this is what we objectively see, we perceive the movement of the first ball continuing with the second. The perceptual feeling of the situation constitutes a link between the two trajectories: movement detaches itself from the first ball and is transposed on the other. This is an issue of seeing dynamics through actual form, a double vision where visual form is felt in the immediacy of its occurrence, a *thinking-feeling* of what happens. Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 44–45, 106–107.
10. Margulies, *Nothing Happens*, 202.
11. Margulies, *Nothing Happens*, 200.
12. Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 34.
13. Laura U. Marks's enfolding-unfolding aesthetic for the cinema continues the movement of enclosing and dissipating in an interesting way. See Marks, 'Information, secrets and enigmas'.
14. Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 34.
15. Cf. Gaines, 'Political Mimesis'.
16. Lebow, 'Memory Once Removed', 38.
17. Lebow, 'Memory Once Removed', 39, 45–47.
18. Lebow, 'Memory Once Removed', 36.
19. Lebow, 'Memory Once Removed', 50. Lebow draws on Walter Benjamin's conceptions of history and autobiography in her analysis: "Benjamin and Akerman share an oxymoronic methodology of acute indirectness that astounds in its ability to communicate more nuanced and suggestive

resonances between history and the present than any forthright approach toward the subject ever could." Lebow, 'Memory Once Removed', 37.

20. Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 116.
21. Hansen, 'The Time of Affect', 614.
22. The name of Viola's piece – *Anima* – has obvious resonances with the title of this book. Based on Hansen's reading, one could claim that affective excess is the auto-animation of Viola's piece – it is its soul in the sense "soul" is used in *Soul of the Documentary*.
23. Rey had come across twenty-something reels by accident and came across the rest in Kiev, where an unknown person gave him the cartridges that had been lying around in his fridge for years. He talks about the material specificity of the stock on the soundtrack.
24. Rey uses the soundtrack of the film – recorded on a small Dictaphone – to reflect on the process of making the film and on what is going on around him, what he is doing and what he will do next. Background noises, public announcements and people speaking around him blend into his dictation. Occasionally, Rey's narration intertwines with a whispering female voice reading Lenin's texts '*L'imperialisme, stade suprême du capitalisme*' (1916) and '*Gauchisme, maladie infantile du communisme*' (1920). Thus, the film offers a sensation of indecisive movement as an opening to Lenin's statement, according to which communism comes down to the Soviets and electricity.
25. *Trans-Siberia* is available on VHS and distributed by Kinotar Oy.
26. The documentary uses the philosophical parts of Sinyavsky's novel. *A Voice from the Chorus* also includes a variety of "notes" – expressions and phrases typical to the camps – that Sinyavsky collected during his time in Siberia.
27. Seiro's voice is perhaps familiar to some Finns from her acting roles and her position as a radio announcer and a journalist for the Finnish national broadcasting company YLE.
28. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 237.
29. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 232.
30. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 234.
31. See Comolli, 'Machines of the Visible', 133.
32. Pisters, 'Delirium Cinema', 114.
33. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 166; Artaud, *Oeuvres complètes*, 66. This line of argumentation has produced a number of seminal studies on the ways in which contemporary screen cultures move through and with brain circuits or mental landscapes. Building on Deleuze's film philosophy and image typology, Patricia Pisters offers the notion of the "neuro-image" to account for the neural connections and disconnections in the present media environment. Pasi Väliaho, on the other hand, speaks of the neoliberal brain in his account of the impact of contemporary image economies on our minds and brain tissue. Both Väliaho and Pisters draw extensively on neuroscience and also emphasize the affective politics involved in the contemporary distribution of our minds across screens. Both underline that "camera conscious-

ness" puts the focus on how brain functions take place irrespective of an individual fully present to itself. Pisters, *The Neuro-Image*; Väliaho, *Biopolitical Screens*.

34. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 167.

Epilogue: Ethics of sustainability

1. In philosophical postulations that engage with the world in its becoming, this approach to ethics amounts to the pragmatic act of engaging with the ontogenesis of being. See e.g. Massumi, 'Like a Thought', xxii.
2. Rosi Braidotti speaks of ethics and sustainability in the context of subjectivity and notes that they have to do with diagnosing the limits of subjective endurance and turning those limits into thresholds of sustainability. Franco Berardi shares Braidotti's insistence on ethics in claiming that diagnosing the limits of subjective endurance is a therapeutic intervention. He notes that diagnosis is actually a political act because it can "refocus our attention to deterritorializing points of attraction." These points function as signposts in breaking through unsustainable limits. Braidotti, 'The Ethics of Becoming Imperceptible', 138–143; Berardi, *The Soul at Work*, 140. See also Braidotti, *Transpositions*, 204–262.
3. See Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, 6–7; Deleuze, *Foucault*, 53.
4. This is a contact point to Deleuze's time-image as a response to the traumatic gulf between humanity and the world erected by World War Two. For Deleuze, French cinema of the 1950s and 1960s is a response to the incapacities created by the war. The disjunction of images and sounds, of bodies and speech, typical, for example, of Alain Resnais's cinema coincides with the aim of affirming that life is worth living again. Deleuze claims that in situations such as World War Two "we need reasons to believe in this world" and it is the task of cinema to film that belief. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 172. See also Bogue, 'To Choose to Choose', 121–122; Rodowick, 'The World, Time', 108.

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