

Late style and contrapuntal histories

The violence of representation in Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Livre d'image*

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If the category 'late' has generally served to designate an ever-extending period of Jean-Luc Godard's filmmaking career – typically dated from his return to cinema at the end of the 1970s when Godard was approaching fifty – with the release of his latest feature, *Le Livre d'image: Image et parole* [*The Image Book: Image and Word*] (2018), we are now well into the period of late late Godard. Beyond a mere periodising label, however, the category 'late', as James S. Williams has noted, more critically conveys the kinds of artistic and communicational forms and strategies that Godard has developed over these years, and which can be productively understood by turning to Edward Said's reflections on the idiom of 'late style'.¹

Said takes the phrase from Adorno's essay fragment 'Spätstil Beethoven' [Late Style Beethoven] (1937), where the German philosopher employs the term to capture how Beethoven's late compositions, rather than attain a sense of 'harmony and resolution', are instead marked by 'intransigence, difficulty and unresolved contradiction', as well as 'a peculiar amalgam of subjectivity and convention'.² Following Adorno, the 'remorselessly alienated and obscure' character of Beethoven's late style becomes for Said a 'prototypical modern aesthetic form' by virtue of its insistence on an increasing and unyielding sense of 'apartness' and 'exile' from bourgeois society, which late style 'expresses and, more importantly, uses to formally sustain itself'. Where one would expect to find expressions of maturity, transcendence or unity, in late style artists such as Beethoven – as well as late style thinkers such as Adorno – one is instead confronted with bristling challenge, resolute negativity and unsynthesised fragmentariness.³ 'In the history of art', as Adorno writes,

'late works are the catastrophes.'⁴

Since the early 1980s Godard has repeatedly presented himself, to borrow Said's characterisation of both Beethoven and Adorno, as 'a figure of lateness' itself: an 'untimely' commentator on the present whose alienation from society is expressed not only through the obstinate difficulty and fragmentary character of his work, but in his geographic apartness from the metropolitan 'centres' of contemporary art and filmmaking, producing much of his work close to home in the small Swiss village of Rolle.⁵ While the countless films, videos, exhibitions, CDs and books Godard has produced over this period diverge in terms of their content, medium and formal techniques, a central theme that pervades almost all of this work is what Godard views as the coming to pass of cinema, or, more specifically, a certain idea and history of cinema – a subject most notably explored in his eight-part video project *Histoire(s) du cinéma* [(Hi)stories of Cinema] (1988-1998). As Godard states in his long interview about *Histoire(s)* with Yousseff Ishaghour for *Trafic* in 1998:

We can say broadly that a certain idea of cinema ... which I myself feel quite close to – that idea of cinema has passed, as the Fontainebleau School passed, as Italian painting passed ... As Hegel said, an epoch has ended. Afterwards things are different. One feels sad because childhood has been lost. But it's normal too. Now there's a new cinema, and a different art, whose history will be made in fifty or a hundred years.⁶

Godard's innumerable pronouncements on the twilight of a particular cinematic history are, however, rarely articulated wholly in terms of mourning or melancholia,

but, as Christopher Pavsek observes, are generally shot through with ‘utopian energy’.⁷ Indeed, the reason that the utopian possibility of cinema lives on for Godard, as Pavsek contends, is precisely because, as Adorno famously said of philosophy, ‘the moment to realise it was missed’.⁸ As Godard expresses it in his 1983 video-letter to Freddy Buache (a film critic and director of the Swiss Film Archive): ‘You and I are too old, and cinema will die soon, very young, without giving everything it could.’⁹ It is, accordingly, this ‘sentiment of dusk’ for an obsolete (or soon-to-be obsolete) cinematic project that gives Godard the ‘desire’ to continue working in it until he dies, construing his death as somehow coterminous with the death of the medium. As he relates in an interview from the same year: ‘I say to myself that the cinema and myself may die at the same time.’¹⁰ Godard’s conviction that his life is directly imbricated with the life and death of his artistic medium is emblematic of late style artists, who, as Said writes, ‘care enough about their métier to believe that it too ages and must face death with failing senses and memory.’ Rather than ‘admit the definitive cadences of death’ into his work, however, as Adorno said about Beethoven, Godard’s reflections on lateness – of being ‘in, but oddly *apart* from the present’ – are predominantly refracted through an allegorical or ironic mode.¹¹ Exemplary here is Godard’s tendency since the early 1980s to perform his condition of lateness or anachronism in his films and video works by assuming the role of an outdated geriatric, a holy fool or idiot prince, quixotically pursuing the unfulfilled utopian potentials of cinema’s past.¹²

This combination of romantic irony and utopian promise in relation to the imminent demise of both Godard and the cinema resurfaces at multiple moments in *The Image Book*. ‘The world’s masters should be ... wary of Bécassine’, a clipped epigraph to the film reads, ‘she is silent’. The name of an iconic Breton comic book heroine (usually portrayed without a mouth), the word ‘Bécassine’ has also come to mean ‘fool’ in French. An image of the provincial peasant, with whom Godard appears to be identifying, crops up later in the film, her raised arm pointing upwards. It serves as an ironic counterpoint to another more mysterious image of a hand that appears at the opening and near the end of *The Image Book*, *détourned* from what is widely thought to be Leonard da Vinci’s final painting, *St. John the Baptist* (1513–1516).

The painting depicts the titular figure against a shadowy background, smiling enigmatically, index finger pointing toward the heavens, a gesture intended to denote salvation through baptism. Drained of colour, as if photocopied several times, Godard severs the hand from its original context, enabling it to float free in a void of empty black space, detached from any definitive meaning. Does the pointing digit symbolise Godard’s approaching departure, or humanity’s impending doom or salvation? Is it about to teach us a lesson or warn us of where the planet appears to be heading (the Old English word for forefinger, *tæcan*, can mean to teach, direct or warn)? Is it an accusatory gesture – an angry *J’accuse ...!* – directed at the ‘world’s masters’? Or perhaps it indicates Godard’s long-held belief in the ostensive power of the cinema to *index* (deriving from the Latin *indicō*: ‘to point out’), and possibly redeem, the visible world? ‘Even scratched to death’, as he proclaims in *Histoire(s)*, ‘a simple thirty-five millimetre rectangle saves the honour of reality’.



This romantic-ironic conjunction of gallows humour and utopian promise, bodily finitude and possible redemption, appears again towards the end of *The Image Book*’s post-credits coda, where, over a black screen, Godard reads a passage from the French translation of the third volume of Peter Weiss’s historical novel, *The Aesthetics of Resistance* (1975–1981).¹³ As Godard intones in a faint and gravelly voice, ‘even if nothing would be as we hoped it would change nothing of our hopes, they would remain a necessary utopia’. Continuing to speak about ‘immutable expectations’ and ‘resistance’ his voice gives way to a cigar-deepened cough. Throughout *The Image Book*, and especially at this moment, we are made to hear what Roland Barthes termed the ‘grain’ of Godard’s voice – the ‘materiality’ of his fragile and ageing ‘body speaking’ – which, due to the film’s multi-channel sound design, was dispersed around the space of the movie theatre,

making it seem as if Godard was in the space delivering the text live (an experience that is lost when viewing the film on a laptop).¹⁴ The sudden cacophony that was created by the layering of multiple voice-tracks in the moments leading up to Godard's fit of coughing, moreover, gave the impression that the cinema itself was about to croak.¹⁵ Godard nonetheless coughs his way through, with odd phrases, such as 'ardent hope', still audible. The film then cuts to fin-de-siècle Paris, to a ballroom scene taken from Max Ophüls's *Le Plaisir* (1952), in which an old man, disguised as someone younger, dances frenetically in circles until he collapses – another veritable allegory for Godard's condition of lateness. Over this black-and-white image – which, like all the archive footage in *The Image Book*, is significantly faded, as if sourced from a degraded VHS copy – Godard superimposes the opening and elegiac piano chords of Hans Otte's *Das Buch der Klänge* [*The Book of Sounds*] (1984). Phrases from Otte's minimalist score, which oscillates between melodic repeating patterns and dissonant horror-movie-esque chords, recur throughout *The Image Book*, where its cyclical swings between irenic harmony and agitated discord serve to dramatise Godard's tragic-romantic portrayal of history as an endless spiral of dread, barbarism, despair and transient hope.¹⁶ The clip from *Le Plaisir* similarly has multiple historical and personal resonances. Made following the German-born Jewish director's exile in the United States, it was described by Godard in 1965 as the best French film 'since the Liberation', and represents the rebirth of national cinemas in Europe following World War II, which would subsequently give rise to Godard's career (first as a critic and then a filmmaker) in the French New Wave: a movement typically viewed by Godard as one of the final flickers of resistance to the occupation of cinema by a uniform (and Americanised) film industry.¹⁷ The image of *Belle Époque* Paris further invokes a period of regional peace and artistic flourishing ominously foreshadowed by the catastrophic wars of the twentieth century, as well as the years when the cinema (or cinematograph) first came into existence.

If Godard's post-1979 works are less overtly political than those of the late 1960s and early 1970s – particularly the agit-prop style of his films produced under the moniker Groupe Dziga Vertov (1969-1970) – they nonetheless remain politically charged in their insistence on the idea of cinema, and art more generally, as a form

of *resistance* to the aesthetic, cultural and economic imperialism of a tendentially global capitalist system.¹⁸ Emblematic here is Godard's televisual-short, *Changer d'image* [*To Change the Image*] (1982), which reflects on the (im)possibility of making what he refers to as 'an image of change' when cinema and television are 'occupied' by capital and the state; a situation that is literally acted out through a scene in which Godard, tied to a chair, is beaten by a male interrogator. During this scene we hear a third-person male voice-over recount Godard's failed project, undertaken in the late 1970s, to work with the socialist government of the newly independent Mozambique in their establishment of the country's first television station – a symbol of the failure of Third Worldism and of socialist projects across the globe more generally (including that of Mitterrand's presidency in France), as well as the idea that television might serve as a communicational tool in such struggles.¹⁹ The video ends with Godard relating a comic anecdote from his childhood about his grandfather who, when driving Godard and his siblings around, would never leave first gear. The children would cry from the backseat, 'change, grandfather, change'. Whether Godard has become the grandfather unable to change or is still the child in the back crying out for change is left open to interpretation.

Contrapuntal histories

Godard's venture in *The Image Book* to irradiate and excavate densely layered histories through the constellation and superimposition of fragmentary audio-visual citations extends the historical montage method he developed in *Histoire(s)*; a work which, as Michael Witt details, presents less a history of cinema than a story of what became of the experimental potentials of early silent cinema in the age of the talkies and television.²⁰ As Godard rehearses this in his series of screenings and lectures given in Montreal in 1978 – his first significant exploration of cinema history – the early experiments of silent film brought about 'a different way of seeing' that 'gradually came to be called montage', an operation 'that filmed not things, but the connection between things'.²¹ The essential 'mystery' of the cinema, as Godard advances it in *Histoire(s)*, lies in its capacity to present what he terms 'a form that thinks' [*une forme qui pense*]: to construct enigmatic relations between images and

sounds that induce, rather than forestall, reflection and interpretation.²² Akin to the micrological and constructivist method of literary montage in Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, in *Histoire(s)* Godard carries the cinematic principle of montage 'into history', fashioning an interstitial and 'stereoscopic' mode of historical perception wherein far-off times and remembered events interpenetrate with the present.²³ The double irony of *Histoire(s)*, and late period Godard more generally, then, is that while repeatedly declaring cinema's death, his work nonetheless breathes new life into the medium's corpse by revitalising the cinematic potential of montage to generate new audio-visual figures and forms of thought and perception. This work of resurrection, moreover, is undertaken with one of the technologies said to have destroyed the cinema's aura: video. As Godard relates on a number of different occasions, his grand scheme to tell the history of cinema with the medium of cinema – that is, made with and projected on 35mm film – was 'unrealisable'.²⁴ Instead, *Histoire(s)* presents only a (videographic) 'souvenir' or 'trace' of this utopian project.²⁵

As with other video works made during and following the completion of *Histoire(s)*, *The Image Book* effectively functions as an additional episode or footnote to Godard's potentially infinite video series, the impossible task of which, as he declared at the outset of Chapter 1A, was to tell and show 'all' the histories of cinema that 'have been', 'might have been' and 'will be'.²⁶ *The Image Book* is comprised of five chapters or movements, corresponding to the five fingers of the hand. The first, 'REMAKES' – which is later transformed into 'RIM(AK)ES' (containing the word *rimes* [*rhymes*]) – charts an endless cycle of war, conquest and genocidal violence in a manner reminiscent of the opening montage sequence of Godard's 2004 film *Notre musique* [*Our Music*] (2004), with images (both documentary and fictional) amassed from the history of cinema (including Godard's own oeuvre), television and the Internet. In one arresting sequence Godard cuts a scene from the end of Roberto Rossellini's neorealist war drama, *Paisan* (1946), showing Italian partisans being summarily executed by drowning, together with an online video of an Islamic State militia executing their victims by blood-stained water. 'Please, please', a voice repeatedly pleads over another clip from *Paisan* that follows this gruesome (yet disturbingly placid) footage, which is in turn followed by a clip from Hitchcock's

Vertigo (1958), depicting Scottie (James Stewart) diving into the San Francisco Bay to save Madeleine (Kim Novak) from drowning. If read simply as a formalist operation of iconographic association, Godard's rhyming montage of three widely distant representations of historical and fictional scenes of execution and drowning comes across as strikingly crass. Yet the jarring pictorial resemblance between these images also draws our attention to how, as Joram ten Brink and Joshua Oppenheimer argue, the cinema 'has long shaped not only how political violence, from torture to warfare to genocide, is perceived, but also how it is performed'.²⁷ The cinema, as Chad Elias contends, 'does not just represent or thematise violence but also provides an imaginative resource for the (re)production of violence in the world' – an idea that Godard also seems to be suggesting with the cinematic phrase 'remakes'.²⁸ From 'powerful missiles and bombs that aim to shock and awe' to 'medieval-style decapitations brought straight to home computers', the last two decades, as Susie Linfield observes, have seen 'East and West' embraced 'in a diabolical pas de deux of violent of images and actions.' These documents of atrocity are 'neither mere images nor mere actions, but are *designed* to be both: they are propaganda of the spectacle and of the deed.'²⁹

The ISIS video, however, can additionally be read as an extreme instance of what the French film critic Serge Daney characterised as 'a world "without cinema"'; that is, a world and media environment where the ethical and political dilemmas of how to show, or not show, the reality of violence and suffering no longer guides how images are produced and consumed; where, as Daney puts it, 'there are no longer good or bad ways to manipulate images'.³⁰ Like Daney's late film and media criticism, Godard's late works present a reflection on the production and consumption of images acquired from a deep and impassioned engagement with the history of cinema in which problems of form were seen as critical. Indeed, both saw themselves as belonging to a culture of cinephilia for whom, as Daney (paraphrasing Godard) asserts, even 'a tracking shot was a "moral affair"'.³¹ The decision to place the ISIS video alongside works by Rossellini and Hitchcock, then, should not be taken lightly.³² If the formalist rhyming of Godard's montage can be seen to aestheticise and render equivalent the significant differences (in form and content) between such imagery,



this structural indifference and violent levelling is accordingly to be understood as evidencing a global media environment flooded with representations of war and violence, which makes for a condition of perceptual and cognitive anomie toward such images. This line of argument is of course not new, and already finds an early articulation in what Benjamin Buchloh characterised as the pronounced ‘media pessimism’ of Siegfried Kracauer’s famous 1927 essay on photography, in which Kracauer portrayed the ‘flood’ or ‘blizzard’ of photographic imagery in Weimer Germany as carrying out an ‘assault’ on memory and understanding.³⁵ ‘ARCHIVES AND MORAL’, reads an intertitle near the opening of *The Image Book* that follows an image from Buñuel and Dalí’s *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) of an emotionless woman about to have her eyeball sliced open with a razor, indicating how the spectacle of ever-increasing generic representations of violence and death has served to empty images of their representative weight and ethical burden.³⁴

The following three chapters of *The Image Book* continue to catalogue an ‘anomic archive’ (Buchloh’s phrase) of representations of brutality, war, sex and scatology, featuring clips from films such as Pasolini’s *Salò* (1975) and Gus Van Sant’s *Elephant* (2003). Chapter 2, ‘LES SOIRÉES DE ST. PETERSBOURG’ [The evenings of St. Petersburg], begins with another faded ballroom scene, this

time nineteenth-century Russia, and is framed around Joseph de Maistre’s *St Petersburg Dialogues* (1821), whose deliberations on humanity’s tendency toward violent destruction and extermination are considered to have presciently foretold the catastrophes of the twentieth century. The dialogues can be related back to Godard’s argument, outlined in *Histoire(s)*, about the prophesising capacity of art, and the way in which a number of films from the 1920s and 1930s – such as Jean Renoir’s *Le règle de jeu* (1939) – can retrospectively be seen to have foreseen ‘the disintegration of Europe into war’.³⁵ The point here, as with the ballroom scene from *Le Plaisir*, appears to be less one of inevitable and unavertable fatalism, than an attempt to recover and return to a past moment when history could have veered in a very different direction. Rather than simply exhibit symptoms of melancholic attachment or mourning about a lost past, the aim of Godard’s constellation of nonlinear relays of anticipated futures and reconstructed pasts is to break out of history’s temporal loop of violence and trauma, as well as to open up the self-identity of the historical present and its claims on futurity. As with Benjamin’s disjunctive citational method in the *Arcades Project*, Godard wrenches historical fragments from their immediate spatio-temporal contexts to create new grammatical constellations between past and present, so that each may

be contemplated through a 'prism of historical time that is not its own'.³⁶

Chapter 3, 'CES FLEURS ENTRE LES RAILS, DANS LE VENT CONFUS DES VOYAGES' [Those flowers between the rails, in the confused wind of travels] (a line from Rilke's *The Book of Hours* [1905]), surveys cinema's long connection and fascination with the train, compiling clips from the Lumière's *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat* (1896), Buster Keaton's *The General* (1926), von Sternberg's *Shanghai Express* (1932), and Straub/Huillet's *Sicilia* (1999). Both the train and the cinema embody the radical transformations in travel and communication wrought by modern technology in the nineteenth century, with the train and the railway track coming to symbolise a vision of history as linear, progressive and propelled by irresistible technological advancement. Any sense of teleological progressivism is, however, swiftly undercut by a number of archival images that remind us of the railway system's implication in histories of colonial expansion and deportation, along with the cataclysmic horrors made possible by technological warfare. Godard's Benjaminian endeavour to trace the barbarism that underlies every document of civilisation, and to hold together the both liberating and destructive possibilities of modern technology, can be understood as performing an audio-visual version of what Said called a 'contrapuntal' reading of history and the archive.³⁷ Indeed, Godard gives an unprompted definition of musical counterpoint in chapter 5, which can be linked not only to the film's weaving together of independent movements, motifs, historical events and audio-visual elements to create a complex polyphony, but also Godard's general historiographical method.³⁸

To read 'contrapuntally', as Said outlines in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), means to interpret history not as a univocal and symphonic harmony, but as an atonal ensemble of contrapuntally connected historical processes and experiences.³⁹ A contrapuntal approach to history, for instance, must take account of how a certain lifestyle in nineteenth-century Europe was made possible by overseas colonial exploitation, as well as the way in which dominant narratives work to forcibly exclude and repress particular histories and experiences, such as the history of French colonialism in Algeria. *The Image Book* notably includes clips from Godard's *Le Petit Soldat*, a film made in 1960 during the Algerian War of Independence, but

censored by the French government until 1963 because of its portrayal of political violence and torture.⁴⁰

In chapter 4, 'L'ESPIRIT DES LOIS' [The Spirit of the Laws], this theme of historical counterpoint is connected to the question of law. The chapter – which features several scenes from John Ford's *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939) of Abraham Lincoln (Henry Fonda) studying legal text books – takes its name from Montesquieu's 1748 political treatise on law, which argued for the need of constitutional systems of government to reflect the social and geographical aspects of a particular community or nation. The deployment of Montesquieu here appears to be bound up with the film's broader contestation of the violence of externally imposed forms of representation (whether legal, historiographic or artistic) that work to stamp out alterity and difference. These ideas are brought to bear on the final and longest chapter of *The Image Book*, 'LA REGION CENTRALE' [The Central Region] (a reference to Michael Snow's experimental 1971 film of the same name), which explores representations of 'the Arab world' in art and film history. The chapter features a number of audio-visual references to Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville's *Ici et ailleurs* [Here and Elsewhere] (1974), and can be seen to return to the latter's auto-critical inquiry into the problems encountered by Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin when filming and editing the material for their unfinished film project, *Jusqu'à la victoire* [To Victory] (1970); in particular, the way in which the two filmmakers had superimposed their own Western (and patriarchal) political discourse over images of the Palestinian resistance movement in Jordan, consequently failing to grasp the reality of the situation they sought to depict, and unintentionally drowning out the voices of those they purported to represent.⁴¹ 'Can the Arabs speak?', asks one intertitle in *The Image Book*, recalling the title of Gayatri Spivak's famous 1985 essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?'. 'SOUS LES YEUX DE L'OCCIDENT' [Under Western Eyes], flashes another.⁴²

While 'Islam' at present holds 'the West's' attention 'politically', as Godard at one point comments, the great diversity of peoples, languages and cultures that make up 'the Arab world', as the chapter goes on to expose (in a critique echoing Said's work on the subject of Orientalism), are all too often swept aside in favour of falsely unifying rubrics and reductive Orientalist stereotypes.⁴³ The chapter references various Western literary and cine-



matic cultural representations of the Orient – from Alexandre Dumas’s nineteenth-century fictional travelogue, *L’Arabie heureuse* [Happy Arabia], to Pasolini’s *Arabian Nights* (1974) – which are counterposed with a number of images from the history of Arab cinema, including Youssef Chahine’s *Cairo Station* (1958) and *Jamila, the Algerian* (1958), Nacer Khemir’s *Wanderers of the Desert* (1984), and Abderrahmane Sissako’s *Timbuktu* (2014). The latter function not only as an important rejoinder to the former, but also provide a critical addendum to the predominantly Eurocentric focus of *Histoire(s)*, highlighting the inevitably incomplete character of Godard’s (self-consciously personal) cinema history project, and the need for further supplementation.⁴⁴ The chapter additionally incorporates passages from the 1984 novel, *Une Ambition dans le desert* [*An Ambition in the Desert*], by the Egyptian-born French writer Albert Cossery, which tells the story of Dofa, a fictional Gulf state whose absence of oil leads its ruler to stage fake terroristic acts in the hope of drawing international attention to his poor nation. ‘Archaeology and Pirates’, one intertitle announces, alluding to how the West is interested in the Arab world not only when it is turned upside down by acts of terror and conflict, but when it can be plundered for cultural artefacts or natural resources. As a counterpoint to these mythical and lurid historical and media representations,

The Image Book is punctuated by high-definition and colour saturated images of everyday scenes and stunning landscapes shot in the north-eastern Tunisian coastal town of La Marsa.⁴⁵

The violence of representation

A central problem raised in *The Image Book*, as the final chapter makes clear, is not simply the representation of violence, but the constitutive violence of representation itself. This problem is formulated most explicitly in chapter 5, where Godard quotes from a 1985 interview with Edward Said (although, as is typical of Godard’s intertextual practice, Said is not directly cited).⁴⁶ ‘[R]epresentation’, as the quotation reads,

or more particularly the *act* of representing (and hence reducing) others, almost always involves violence of some sort to the *subject* of the representation, as well as a contrast between the violence of the act of representing something and the calm exterior of the representation itself.⁴⁷

Whether considering ‘a spectacular image, or an exotic image, or a scholarly representation’, as Said continues in the interview, ‘there is always this paradoxical contrast between the surface, which seems to be in control, and the process which produces it, which inevitably

involves some degree of violence, decontextualisation, miniaturisation, etc.⁴⁸ If acts of representation tend towards surface, or what Daney termed the ‘sphere of the visible’ (the image as unmediated objectivity), Godard in *The Image Book* works in the opposite direction, disrupting and splintering the calm exterior of representation through various forms of audio-visual manipulation. From abrupt changes of aspect ratio and colourisation, to slow, accelerated and saccadic motion, Godard continually foregrounds the process of manipulation and mediation behind the immediacy of the projected moving-image, calling attention to the violence of cinematic devices such as framing and cutting, as well as the fiction of cinematic forms of narrative continuity in smoothing over contradiction and otherness.⁴⁹ As if to highlight this absence of harmony and continuity in image resolution and ratio, the film begins with a rapid series of projection calibration charts, traditionally used by projectionists to test the focus, aperture and framing of the film projection. In contrast to the high-quality glossiness of contemporary cinema, however, the effulgent shots of La Marsa sit alongside bleached film clips, pixelated mobile phone footage and glitchy digital images.

As with the murky video quality of *Histoire(s)*, these ‘poor images’, as Hito Steyerl dubs them, testify to the accelerated circulation, dislocation and degradation of images in today’s digital economy; an increasingly globalised image-space where the continuous displacement and reformatting of images has become the norm.⁵⁰ Yet whereas debates around digital technology have promoted notions of frictionless immaterial flows and the image as a de-realised entity, the stuttering image-track and discontinuous syntax of *The Image Book* instead attempts to re-inscribe its visual archive with an emphatic materiality and sensibility. Central here is the film’s endeavour to put the human body back in the frame, which can be seen not only in the way that its sound design makes audible the grain of Godard’s voice, but also its recurring focus on the human hand as an organ of expressive execution – manipulation, as Erika Balsom points out, is etymologically derived from the Latin ‘manipulus’, or ‘handful’.⁵¹ ‘Man’s true condition’, as Godard comments in the opening moments of *The Image Book*, is ‘to think with one’s hands’. A citation from Denis de Rougemont’s 1936 book *Penser avec les mains* [*To Think With One’s*

Hands], Rougemont’s plea for an engaged and creative form of theoretical reflection, is linked by Godard (as it is in previous works) to the connection between hand, eye and mind in the practice of film editing – the quote follows from an image, taken from Godard’s 1987 film *King Lear*, depicting hands at an editing table attempting to bind together two pieces of celluloid with a safety pin.⁵²



As Godard remarked at the Cannes press conference for *The Image Book* – which was conducted via Face Time with Godard’s collaborator, Fabrice Argano, holding up an iPhone with Godard’s face on it to the audience – ‘editing, even digital editing, is done with the hands’.⁵³ While, with the introduction of video and digital technology, the craft of film editing has undoubtedly undergone a form of deskilling (replacing the physical cutting and gluing of film with the pressing of buttons), Godard’s painterly manipulation of images works to underscore both the material and embodied nature of vision and filmmaking, as well as the continued power of the hand to reanimate and open to change what has become reified or neutralised by history and the archive.

The videographic montage and manipulation of pre-existing archival materials is accordingly seen by Godard, as Richard I. Suchenski notes, to ‘deepen’ rather than ‘threaten’ the integrity of a document (whether a film, a painting or a text) and its ‘connection with history’.⁵⁴ Godard’s (present-oriented) archaeological enterprise can here be compared with the archival film practice of Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian, to whom a number of references are made in *The Image Book*.⁵⁵ In a similar way to Godard (albeit in a more rigorous fashion), Lucchi and Gianikian employ various (analogue) forms of visual manipulation – such as hand-tinting, speed alteration and re-framing – as a means to analytically and affectively scrutinise the naturalised violence

of the colonial archive that their work investigates. As with Lucchi and Gianikian's analogue processing techniques, moreover, Godard's videographic manipulation of archival film clips works to foreground the surface texture and the essential alterity of images, performing what Peter Osborne, drawing on Paul Ricoeur, terms an 'acculturation' to the otherness or 'externality' of the historical past (typically figured as a relation to the otherness of others) as it is represented in the externality of the image.⁵⁶

History is thus presented in Godard's archival video essays not as a settled archive of past monuments, but as 'an agonistic process still being made' (Said); a process which, as in musical counterpoint, 'will always remain open to changing combinations of sense and signification.'⁵⁷ The de- and re-contextualisation of audio-visual fragments in Godard's late works is accordingly not merely a formal or aesthetic exercise, but is inherently tied to his conception of history as an endless process of fragmentation and displacement, of destruction and reconstruction. As such, Godard's archival videographic practice brings to light that other critical moment of Kracauer's essay on photography (a moment that is downplayed in Buchloh's reading), which turns to the potentiality afforded by the 'warehousing' of history in the photographic archive when combined with the experimental techniques of cinematic montage. For Kracauer, the 'scrambling' of archival fragments through montage had the possibility to counter what he saw as photography's reification of social reality and history into 'a nature alienated from meaning', affording 'consciousness' not only with the capacity to reflect on a reality that, under conditions of industrial capitalism, 'has slipped away from it', but, in introducing an image of time and change into the world, to 'establish the *provisional status* of all given configurations'.⁵⁸

If the ever-changing geo-political configuration that is 'Europe' and 'European' history becomes such a privileged subject in Godard's late work, it is, as Williams contends, as the site of an 'ongoing crisis of fragmentation and decontextualisation'. This crisis is perceived by Godard to undergo intensification following the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the subsequent generalisation of capitalist social relations across Europe, where 'the different processes of history and memory, as well as art and culture, risk being flattened if not cancelled out'. Godard's

'stubborn belief' in a 'pan-European imaginary' made up of diverse national cultures and histories, as Williams suggests, is to be understood as presenting a form of opposition to the increasingly commodified and administered project and vision of post-wall Europe, in which the violent conflicts and political struggles of Europe's past are forgotten or re-written as a superficial narrative of inevitable progress and final reconciliation.⁵⁹

A work that directly engages this transformative moment of economic and political integration is Godard's 1991 film *Allemagne 90 neuf zéro* [*Germany Year 90 Nine Zero*], which was filmed in the post-industrial environs of former East Germany, and which contains the iconic of image of a Mercedes unceremoniously driving over a street sign, left in the gutter, bearing the name 'Karl-Marx Straße'. Films such as *Allemagne*, as Williams notes, 'revel in a polyglot, pan-European artistic and historical past imaginary' – in the film's opening moments we witness a scene in which two characters translate passages from different German and French editions of Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*.⁶⁰ Themes of translation and non-translation become central in Godard's late works as another artistic means to resist the increasing standardisation of European culture, as well the pervasive invasion of (American) English as the new global lingua franca.⁶¹ At least seven languages can be heard in *The Image Book* – French, Arabic, English, Italian, German, Greek and Russian. Yet, as with previous works, only a fraction of the voice and text is subtitled into English (and is often mistranslated), calling attention to the violence performed by translations that attempt to smooth over the differential specificity of particular languages.

Connected to this resistance against monological and monolingual uniformity, and the attempt to reduce complex and conflicted historical experiences to fixed and falsely unifying narratives, is Godard's tendency in his late works to present only fragments of paintings, photographs, film clips and textual excerpts, which are themselves constantly interrupted by various audio-visual elements, and which always gesture 'towards a narrative unity and whole located forever off-screen and thus forever deferred.'⁶² Godard's montage of sound and image in all these instances is essentially allegorical – in the sense given to the term by Benjamin in his writings on the baroque *Trauerspiel* and Baudelaire – engendering a discontinuity between, as David Cunningham puts it,

'image and meaning, which disrupts the false appearance of "unity" located in the symbol'.⁶³ Indeed, rather than enact a 'montage of attractions' à la Eisenstein, the detached hovering of sound and image fragments in films such as *The Image Book* seem to evoke a feeling akin to what Benjamin described as the 'desolate, sorrowful dispersal' of allegorical emblems in baroque *Trauerspiel*.⁶⁴ Benjamin's analysis of Baudelaire's poetry as embodying a modern form of 'late allegory', in which the *correspondences* 'souvenir[s]' [*Andenken*] serve to express the recollection of experiences that have 'died out', provides a further model for understanding the melancholic sensibility of Godard's late works, as well as his characterisation of *Histoire(s)* as presenting only a (video) souvenir of his utopian cinematic project.⁶⁵ As in Baudelaire's poetry, furthermore, Godard's films and videos aim to represent the social world as a complex of signs and relics pointing beyond their present to things now disappeared – the final episode of *Histoire(s)* is notably titled '*Les signes parmi nous*' [The Signs Amongst Us], a phrase which reappears in *The Image Book*.

'Only a fragment carries the mark of authenticity', Godard comments in *The Image Book*, attributing the quotation to Brecht. The authenticity of the fragment as a form, for Godard, as it is for Early German Romanticism (a key influence on Godard from his youth), is premised on the essential incompleteness it enacts, offering an image of both art and history as an open-ended project of association, translation, remembrance and renewal; a project whose 'real essence', as Friedrich Schlegel puts it in *Athenaeum* fragment 116, 'should forever be becoming and never perfected'.⁶⁶ This enactment of fragmentary incompleteness is particularly manifest in the repetition of identical images, literary quotations and musical phrases throughout Godard's late corpus, which establish an intertextual axis of associations that cuts across the compositions of each individual work. The metaleptic repetition of audio, visual and textual fragments, which acquire new layers of meaning as they pass through different contexts, creates not only the impression of a sustained dialogue between the individual films and videos, but serves to underscore their provisional or essayistic character, whereby a problem or idea can always be revised or reconsidered at a later juncture. In *The Image Book*, this impossibility of narrative unity or closure is embodied in the film's recurring references

to the finite and enclosed form of the book, forever dominated by the figures of bounded totality and the completion of meaning. As the tension between the film's absolutising title and its proliferating representations of and citations from various works of literature, as well as religious and legal texts, suggests, we may still be in an epoch of the book, but we no longer believe in any singular or absolute Book.⁶⁷ Modernity is for Godard, following Maurice Blanchot (another recurring reference in Godard's late works), the infinite movement between the desire for a total or absolute Book or Work and the 'worklessness' or 'unworking' [*désœuvrement*] that leaves this desire for finality and higher synthesis in fragments.⁶⁸

This is, finally, how we should approach the recurring theological motif of redemption or salvation in Godard's late works, which, as in Benjamin and Adorno, comes to stand for the impossible moment of totalising transcendence from which history and the present can be thought. As Adorno writes in the final aphorism of *Minima Moralia*:

The only philosophy which can be responsibly practised in the face of despair is the attempt to contemplate all things as they would present themselves from the standpoint of redemption ... Perspectives must be fashioned that displace and estrange the world, reveal it to be, with its rifts and crevices, as indigent and distorted as it will appear one day in messianic light.⁶⁹

Such a standpoint, however, as Adorno insists, remains practically unrealisable, as it would not come until the end of time: Judgment Day. It is correspondingly the unrealisability of this standpoint that Godard intimates with his recurrent deployment, in *Histoire(s)* and elsewhere, of the 'quasi-Pauline' phrase, 'the image will come at the time of the resurrection' – in *The Image Book* only a fragment of the phrase appears, cutting off the final part of the sentence.⁷⁰ While the *image* – which, for Godard, is always defined as the tensely articulated relation or association that is created through the rapprochement of disparate elements – carries with it the *idea* of reconciliation or redemption (an idea often represented in Godard's late works through the iconographic motif of hands reaching towards each other), it is the impossibility of receiving the image in its fullness that is instead suggested by this messianic phrase.⁷¹

This impossible fullness is figured in the increasingly dissociative and disjunctive form of Godard's late style,

which works to deny any immediate sense of reconciliation or comprehension, resisting what Pavsek, following Adorno, terms ‘the imperialism of the concept’ – the violence of abstract conceptuality and universality exercised over individuality and particularity.⁷² What is envisioned in Godard’s ‘paratactic revolt against synthesis’, however, to borrow Adorno’s remarks on the paratactic poetic syntax of Hölderlin’s late poetry, is not the destruction of synthesis or meaning as such, but an attempt to evade and subvert hierarchical structures and subordinating grammars of logic and narrative in order to construct forms of unification and identity without the coercive anesthesia of difference and contradiction.⁷³ Godard’s late works are accordingly not simply *about* remembering particular historical instances of artistic and political resistance, but aspire to performatively engage the spectator, at the level of form, in a process of ‘internal self-resistance’.⁷⁴ By denying the spectator any positive forms of conceptual reconciliation or syntactical resolution, his films and videos can be seen to formally *figure* the immanent possibility, however minimal and uncertain, of resistance and historical change. It is, perhaps, to this horizon of historical possibility, rather than to any guarantee of future salvation, that St. John the Baptist’s severed hand is now pointing.

Images from *Le Livre d’image* (2018). Copyright Jean-Luc Godard, Casa Azul Films and Ecran Noir Productions.

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Notes

1. James S. Williams, *Encounters with Godard: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2016), 4.
2. Edward Said, *On Late Style: Music and Literature Against the Grain* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), 7, 12. ‘Spätstil Beethovens’ was included in the 1964 collection of musical essays, *Moments musicaux*. For an English translation, see Theodor W. Adorno, *Essays On Music*, trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 564–568.
3. Said, *On Late Style*, 17, 12.
4. Adorno, *Essays On Music*, 567.
5. Said, *On Late Style*, 14. Godard notably won the Adorno prize in 1995.
6. Jean-Luc Godard and Youssef Ishaghpour, *Cinema: The Archaeology of Film and the Memory of the Century*, trans. John Howe (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 112.
7. Christopher Pavsek, *The Utopia of Film: Cinema and its Futures in Godard, Kluge, and Tahimik* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 25.
8. Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York and London: Continuum, 2007), 3. As Adorno correspondingly puts it in *Aesthetic Theory*: ‘If the utopia of art were fulfilled, it would be art’s temporal end.’ Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), 41.
9. The full title of the video is *Lettre à Freddy Buache: À propos d’un court-métrage sur la ville de Lausanne* [Letter to Freddy Buache: About a Short Film on the Town of Lausanne] (1981).
10. Jean-Luc Godard and Gideon Bachmann, ‘The Carrots Are Cooked: A Conversation with Jean-Luc Godard’, in *Jean-Luc Godard: Interviews*, ed. David Sterritt (Jackson: University Press Mississippi, 1998), 138.
11. Said, *On Late Style*, 24; Adorno, *Essays On Music*, 567.
12. See especially the films and videos: *Changer d’image* (1982), *Prénom Carmen* (1983), *Soigne ta droite* (1987), *King Lear* (1987) and *Les enfants jouent à la Russie* (1993).
13. Only the first volume of Weiss’s novel has been translated into English. However, an English translation of the passage quoted by Godard can be read in Fredric Jameson’s foreword to the book. See Fredric Jameson, ‘Foreword: A Monument to Radical Instants’, in Peter Weiss, *The Aesthetics of Resistance: A Novel, Volume 1*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), xlviii. Thanks to Hannah Proctor for pointing this out to me.
14. Fabrice Argano – Godard’s producer, co-editor and cinematographer – has noted how *The Image Book* was conceived as the cinematic equivalent of a chamber piece (as opposed to an orchestral/cinematic symphony), as well as Godard’s plan to put on small screenings of the film in non-cinematic spaces so that the speakers could be arranged to their liking. See Daniel Kassman and Kurt Walker, ‘The Chamber Piece: An Interview with Fabrice Aragno’, accessed 14 February 2019, <https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/the-chamber-piece-an-interview-with-fabrice-aragno>.
15. Roland Barthes, ‘The Grain of the Voice’, in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. and ed. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 182.
16. Phrases from Otte’s *The Book of Sounds* appeared in earlier works, such as Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville’s video short, *De l’origine du XXle siècle* (2000), which also features the ballroom scene from *Le Plaisir*. For a reading of the appearance of the clip in relation to the latter, see Daniel Morgan, *Late Style Godard and the Possibilities of Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 256–258.
17. See Morgan, *Late Style Godard*, 257.
18. This idea of art as a form of resistance can also be found in earlier works, such as his 16mm short *Camera Eye*, made as a contribution to the collective film *Loin du Vietnam* (1967). It is an idea shared by both Adorno and Weiss. As Adorno writes in *Aesthetic Theory*: ‘Art keeps itself alive through its social force of resistance’, without which ‘it becomes a commodity’. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, 226. As Weiss correspondingly states in an interview from 1981 about *The Aesthetics of Resistance*: ‘I tried to show how literature and art – so long as they’re alive – al-

ways struggle against something ... Artists – whether they are painters or writers – stand in opposition to their time and offer a kind of resistance; the aesthetic that they realise is an aesthetic of resistance.’ Peter Weiss, Burkhardt Lindner and Christian Rogowski, ‘Between Pergamon and Plötzensee: Another Way of Depicting the Course of Events’, *New German Critique* 30 (Autumn 1983), 110.

19. *To Change the Image* was commissioned for television on the occasion of the one-year anniversary of Francois Mitterrand’s election in 1981, who came to office on the promise of radical socialist change. Mitterrand’s presidency, however, was characterised by a sharp move to the Right and the implementation of neoliberal economic policies. On Godard’s work in Mozambique, see Daniel Fairfax, ‘Birth (of the Image) of a Nation: Jean-Luc Godard in Mozambique’, *Film and Media Studies* 3 (2010), 55–67.

20. Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 112.

21. Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, trans. and ed. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose Books, 2014), 217–218.

22. See Williams, *Encounters with Godard*, 71.

23. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 461, 458. For a discussion of *The Arcades Project* and Benjamin’s theory of historical interpretation in relation to *Histoire(s)*, see Monica Dall’Asta, ‘The (Im)possible History’, in *For Ever Godard*, ed. Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (London: Black Dog, 2004), 350–363.

24. See Serge Daney, ‘Godard Makes (Hi)stories’, in *Jean-Luc Godard: Son + Image, 1974-1991*, 159.

25. As Godard says to Daney, it is only as a ‘souvenir’ that it was feasible to tell the ‘projectable history’ of cinema. In the Montreal lectures, Godard makes a similar comment: ‘In the end, the history of cinema you make will be a trace, like a regret that it isn’t even possible to make the history of cinema. But you’ll see traces of that history.’ Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema*, 135.

26. As Godard noted to Ishaghpour, he did not consider the series in any way complete, explaining that it could have ‘hundreds’ of other chapters and ‘even more appendices’. Godard and Ishaghpour, *Cinema*, 5. This desire to tell the history of cinema in its totality, as Witt points out, evokes not only the grand-sweep of André Malraux’s iconographic art historical studies, but the Annales school historian Fernand Braudel, who approached history writing in terms of an interdisciplinary ‘total history’ [*histoire totale*]. See Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 83.

27. Joram ten Brink and Joshua Oppenheimer, ‘Introduction’, in *Killer Images: Documentary Film, Memory and the Performance of Violence* (London: Wallflower Press, 2012), 1.

28. Chad Elias, ‘Emergency Cinema and the Dignified Image: Cell Phone Activism and Filmmaking in Syria’, *Film Quarterly*, 71:1 (Fall 2017), 25.

29. Susie Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 152. What is ‘new’ here, as Linfield notes, ‘is not just the ease with which such images are transmitted but the intimate relationship

between the acts of violence and their documentation; it is hard to distinguish the two. Some terrorist groups now regularly send cameramen, just as the Nazis did, to film their missions, including attacks in Iraq and Israel; suicide bombings, especially in Iraq, are photographed as they happen and immediately broadcast.’ Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance*, 163.

30. Serge Daney, ‘The Tracking Shot in *Kapo*’, in *Postcards from the Cinema*, trans. Paul Douglas Grant (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007), 34.

31. Daney, ‘The Tracking Shot in *Kapo*’, 18.

32. This is despite Godard’s apparently indifferent response, when asked about the connection between the scene from *Paisan* and the ISIS video, that they are simply two images of people being thrown into the sea: ‘I don’t see anything else.’ See Jean-Luc Godard, Dmitry Golotyuk and Antonina Derzhitskaya, ‘Words Like Ants’, trans. Ted Fendt, accessed 14 February 2019, <https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/jean-luc-godard-2018-words-like-ants>.

33. See Benjamin Buchloh, ‘Gerhard Richter’s *Atlas*: The Anomic Archive’, *October* 88 (Spring 1999), 131; Siegfried Kracauer, ‘Photography’, in *The Mass Ornament: Weimer Essays*, trans. and ed. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 58. Linfield similarly returns to Kracauer’s essay to characterise the way that media representations of violence work to preclude ‘the development of analytic abilities’ and ‘historic understanding’. See Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance*, 170.

34. Chapter 3 notably begins with amateur pixelated footage of a father filming his daughter’s expression in response to an approaching train, which is cut together with the Lumière’s *L’arrivée d’un train en gare de La Ciotat* (1896), the first screenings of which represents one of the founding myths of early cinema; namely, that of a naïve audience made to flee the cinema because of their belief in the realism of the projected image.

35. See Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 124. As Witt points out, Godard’s argument here resonates with Siegfried Kracauer’s identification in *From Caligari to Hitler* (1947) of the premonitions of fascism in the German cinema of the 1920s.

36. Gerhard Richter, *Thought-Images: Frankfurt School Writers’ Reflections from Damaged Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 64

37. See thesis seven of Benjamin’s ‘On the Concept of History’ (1940), in *Selected Writings, Vol. 4, 1938-1940*, ed. Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 389–400. Passages from ‘On the Concept of History’, particularly Benjamin’s famous image of the angel of history, appear in a number of Godard’s late works. See Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 79–80.

38. As Godard states: ‘Counterpoint is a discipline of superimposition. Melodies don’t need to be identical. In harmony, the arrangements produce melodies. In counterpoint, it’s the melodies which, to the contrary, become arrangements.’ The latter definition recalls Godard’s citation in *Histoire(s)* of Beethoven’s axiom: ‘The perfect union of several voices prevents, all in all, the progress of one towards another.’ Quoted in Williams, *Encounters with Godard*, 74. Musical counterpoint is of course also central to the presentational form of Adorno’s philosophical writings (particularly *Aesthetic Theory*), the paratactical arrange-

ments of which are partly modelled on musical serialism.

39. See Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 51.

40. *Ibid.*, 66–67.

41. See Michael Witt, 'On and Under Communication', in *A Companion to Jean-Luc Godard*, ed. Tom Conley and T. Jefferson Kline (Chichester and Malden, MA: John Wiley, 2014), 319–322.

42. Since *Ici et ailleurs*, Godard has returned to the subject of Palestine in a number of films, most notably *Notre musique*, which features a cameo from the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, and a number of quotations from Darwish's poetry. As Rebecca Dyer and François Mulot note, instrumental to getting Darwish to agree to play the part in *Notre musique* was Godard's friendship with the translator Elias Sanbar, who translated Darwish's poetry from Arabic into French, and was originally asked by Godard and Miéville, while they were in the process of making *Ici et ailleurs*, to review and translate the voices in the footage of the Palestinian resistance that Godard and Gorin had filmed in Jordan. See Rebecca Dyer and François Mulot, 'Mahmoud Darwish in Film: Politics, Representation, and Translation in Jean-Luc Godard's *Ici et ailleurs* and *Notre musique*', *Cultural Politics* 10:1 (2014), 72.

43. See especially Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

44. These new additions to Godard's cinematic canon are largely the result of research performed by the French film historian Nicole Brenez. For a discussion of her role in the project, see Nicole Brenez, 'IFFR Frameworks Master Talk', accessed 14 February 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9PkLYNxo8g>.

45. Godard notes how he chose this location for largely personal and practical reasons (such as his friendship with the Tunisian actress Ghalya Lacroix), and that he would have rather filmed in Algeria, because of its stronger historical entanglement with French history. In contrast to French colonialism in Algeria (which began in 1830 and lasted until 1962), Tunisia was only ever a 'protectorate' of France between the years 1881 and 1956, and was given relative autonomy in comparison to that of Algeria. Yet the choice to film in La Marsa, which is located next to the Ancient city of Carthage, could also be linked to the number of references made in the film to Gustave Flaubert's historical novel, *Salammbô* (1862), which was, in part, inspired by the author's travels around north-eastern Tunisia. See Godard, Golotyuk and Derzhitskaya, 'Words Like Ants'.

46. In *The Image Book*, as with all of Godard's late works, literary, cinematic and musical citations and references are identified by a summary list of authors names, with no attempt to distinguish the origin of the text or work in question.

47. Edward W. Said, 'In the Shadow of the West', in *Power, Politics and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*, ed. Gauri Viswanathan (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), 40. The interview was interestingly first published in the journal *Wedge*, in an issue titled 'The Imperialism of Representation/The Representation of Imperialism', that also included a script of Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin's *Letter to Jane: An Investigation About a Still* (1972), which consists primarily in the analysis of a magazine photograph of Jane Fonda in Vietnam.

48. Said, 'In the Shadow of the West', 40–41.

49. As Godard notes, the film would be ideally shown on a large TV screen, with speakers distant from the screen, so that the spectator is not tempted to naturalise the disjunctive relation between the film's image-track and sound-track: 'What bothers me about the screen, whether it's a TV or a computer, is that the sound goes with the image and we believe what we are seeing.' See Godard, Golotyuk and Derzhitskaya, 'Words Like Ants'.

50. Hito Steyerl, 'In Defence of the Poor Image', in *The Wretched of the Screen* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012), 32

51. Erika Balsom, 'The Image Book Review: Jean-Luc Godard's Ruminative and Radical Montage', *Sight & Sound* (Jan/Feb 2019), accessed 14 February 2019, <https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/reviews-recommendations/image-book-jean-luc-godard-ruminative-radical-montage>.

52. On the importance of Rougemont's book and the recurring motif of the hand in Godard's late works, see Volker Pantenburg, *Farocki/Godard: Film As Theory* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 217–247.

53. For a recording of the press conference, see 'A (virtual) encounter with Jean-Luc Godard, director of *Le Livre d'image*', accessed 14 February 2019, <https://www.festival-cannes.com/en/69-editions/retrospective/2018/actualites/audios/a-virtual-encounter-with-jean-luc-godard-director-of-le-livre-d-image-the-image-book>

54. Richard I. Suchenksi, *Projections of Memory: Romanticism, Modernism, and the Aesthetics of Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 171.

55. *The Image Book* includes a clip of a sticky piece of nitrate film being unspooled, which is taken from Lucchi and Gianikian's short video about their archival film practice, *Transparence* (1998), and Godard also quotes from their manifesto 'Our Analytical Camera', which was first published in *Trafic* in 1995. For a translation of this text, as well as a number of essays on Lucchi and Gianikian's work, see the special issue of *Found Footage Magazine* 3 (March 2017).

56. Peter Osborne, 'Information, Story, Image: Akram Zaatari's Historical Constructivism', in *The Postconceptual Condition: Critical Essays* (London and New York: Verso, 2018), 156–157.

57. Edward W. Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 25.

58. Kracuer, 'Photography', 61–62. This utopian possibility of the photographic archive is what Kracauer famously calls the 'go-broke-game of history'. *Ibid.*, 61.

59. Williams, *Encounters with Godard*, 73–74.

60. *Ibid.*, 56. For a detailed reading of this scene, see Daniel Fairfax, 'Godard the Hegelian', in *A Companion to Jean-Luc Godard*, ed. Conley and Kline, 403–07. On *Allemagne*, see also Pavsek, *The Utopia of Film*, 33–56.

61. An emblematic instance of Godard's non- or anti-translation can be seen in his subtitles for *Film socialisme* (2010), which were created by Godard erasing words and punctuation from the script's English translation and presenting the resulting subtitles with noticeably large gaps between words. As Stuart Kendall notes, figures of translation and non-translation in Godard's films (as well the published scripts for his films) typically serve

a double function: on the one hand, they reflect 'the collapse of communication'; on the other, 'the plurality of the languages and the problem of translation emerge as a theme' that is to be explored. Stuart Kendall, 'Traces of Cinema: Introduction', in Jean-Luc Godard, *Phrases: Six Films*, trans. Stuart Kendall (New York: Contra Munda Press, 2016), xxxvii. For an exploration of issues of translation in relation to *Ici et ailleurs* and *Notre musique*, see Dyer and Mulot, 'Mahmoud Darwish in Film', 70–91.

62. Williams, *Encounters with Godard*, 60.

63. David Cunningham, 'Photography and the Literary Conditions of Surrealism', in *Photography and Literature in the Twentieth Century*, eds. David Cunningham, Andrew Fisher and Sas Mays (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005), 80.

64. Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London and New York: Verso, 1998), 186.

65. Walter Benjamin, 'Central Park', in *Selected Writings, Volume 4, 1938-1940*, ed. Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 190, 173. On the importance of Baudelaire and Baudelaire's notion of correspondences in Godard's late works, see Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 186.

66. See Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. Peter Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 31–32. For an account of the influence of early German Romanticism on Godard's work, both early and late, see Suchenski, *Projections of Memory*, 153–158. In the video essay, *Soft and Hard: Soft Talk on a Hard Subject Between Two Friends* (1985), made with Miéville, Godard notably connects the Romantic idea of 'projects' to the history of cinema by underlining the shared roots of the words 'projects' and 'projection'. For Godard, as Witt explains, what was distinct about the cinematic projection, in contrast to the small screen of television, was its capacity to afford spectators the opportunity 'to project, lose, and rediscover themselves through films in a way that nurtured the development of a sense of individual and collective identity'. See Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 64.

67. As Nicole Brenez has speculated, Godard may have taken his title from Apollinaire's essay 'The New Spirit and the Poets' (1917), which Brenez gave to Godard while he was in the process of making *The Image Book*, and in which Apollinaire describes the medium of cinema as a 'book of pictures'.

68. See Maurice Blanchot, 'The Absence of the Book', in *The Infinite Conversation*, trans. Susan Hanson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 422–34. On the importance of Blanchot's writings in Godard's late works, see Leslie Hill, "'A Form that Thinks": Godard, Blanchot, Citation', in *For Ever Godard*, eds. Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (London: Black Dog, 2004), 396–415.

69. Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Dam-*

aged Life, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005), 247. As Williams contends, the recurring reference to redemption in *Histoire(s)* seems to point in this direction indicated by Adorno. The portrayal of history in *Histoire(s)*, and later works, moreover, is closely aligned with Adorno's conception of the Holocaust 'as an end point of human civilisation', and history as one 'permanent catastrophe'. Williams, *Encounters with Godard*, 80.

70. On the origins of this phrase, see Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 25.

71. As Witt points out, Godard's definition of the image draws on Sergei Eisenstein's distinction between *obraz* [image] and *izobrazhenie* [depiction], wherein the former designates the product (mental or emotional) of the dynamic interplay between two or more elements. See Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 180. A key reference for Godard since the early 1980s is also Pierre Reverdy's short poem 'L'image' [The Image] (published in 1918 in the Dadaist and Surrealist journal *Nord-Sud*), which defines the image as 'the rapprochement of two more or less separate realities'. For an English translation of Reverdy's poem, which Godard reads in *King Lear*, see Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 180–181. This idea of the image as a poetic and cognitive creation is represented in *The Image Book* by a number of references to Anne-Marie Miéville's 2003 book, *Images en parole* [*Images in Words*].

72. Pavsek, *The Utopia of Film*, 48.

73. See Theodor W. Adorno, 'Parataxis: On Hölderlin's Late Poetry', in *Notes to Literature, Volume 2*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 136. In his much-cited reading *Ici et ailleurs*, Deleuze characterises Godard's paratactic and serial mode of construction as grounded in 'the method of AND', disrupting cinema's 'law' of '[f]alse continuity' in favour of a serial concatenation of 'this and then that'. See Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone, 1989), 180. In his reading of *Histoire(s)*, Rancière similarly theorises the 'sentence-image' grammar of Godard's videographic montage method in terms of what he calls 'the great parataxis' of modernity. Yet Rancière's comparisons of *Histoire(s)* with the use of paratactic description in Flaubert and Zola, or the 'subject-hopping' of pop culture and advertising, fail to bring out what is significant in Godard's paratactic montage practice. See Jacques Rancière, 'Sentence, Image, History', in *The Future of the Image*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London and New York: Verso, 2007), 33–67.

74. Williams, *Encounters with Godard*, 80. Weiss notes something similar about the intended difficulty of *The Aesthetics of Resistance*, the form and style of which was meant to confront the reader with a form of 'exertion': 'Nothing is made easy for them, just as things weren't made easy for the characters in the novel'. Weiss, Lindner and Rogowski, 'Between Pergamon and Plötzensee', 121.