

# True Images: Metaphor, Metonymy and Montage in Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* and Jean-Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*

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## Abstract:

This article compares the poetics of Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* and Jean-Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma* in order to realign our understanding of metaphor, metonymy and montage with the inter-formal dialogues that new media artworks increasingly demand of audiences. An analysis of Godard's 'quotation' of Proust's words and ideas from *Le Temps retrouvé* sets out an explicit rivalry between text and image. However, drawing on formalist and structuralist approaches to both literature and cinema, including Roman Jakobson and Gérard Genette, as well as more recent discussions developed by Gilles Deleuze and Lev Manovich, I will argue that the nature of the image manifested in both artworks corresponds to a shared aesthetic that exceeds distinctions between word and image, literature and video.

**Keywords:** Proust, Godard, image, montage, metaphor, metonymy

Composed between 1988 and 1998 for French television, Jean-Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma* re-projects works of visual art that map out the terrain of twentieth-century cinema.<sup>1</sup> Whilst the majority of its material originates from image archives, the project also contains a large number of references to diverse literary sources, including Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*.<sup>2</sup> In chapter 2b, the fourth of eight chapters in this video-essay, a conflict between literature and cinema is established. Provocative as always, Godard uses Proust's opening sentence from *A la recherche du temps perdu* as a counterexample for what he claims is the task of the filmmaker. It is Godard's voice we hear state the following: 'Et l'homme du cinéma? S'il fallait dire sans rien dire, par exemple, "je me suis réveillé de malheur"? Il nous faut le cinéma, et pour les mots qui restent dans la gorge, et pour désensevelir la vérité'.<sup>3</sup> (And the director? If we had to speak without saying anything;

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for example: “I woke up surly”? Cinema must exist for words stuck in the throat, and for the truth to be unearthed (2b).) Godard thus opposes cinema to literature, claiming that only cinema is able to ‘speak without saying anything’.<sup>4</sup> Such is the challenge that this article will address by suggesting that *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, contrary to the claims of Godard’s discourse, in fact instigates a dialogue between cinema and literature, and consequently between itself and *A la recherche du temps perdu*. Furthermore, by maintaining that the production of images is one of the fundamental processes that support this inter-formal dialogue, I will argue that the poetics of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* are, to a significant extent, Proustian.

Notwithstanding the material divergence of the chosen medium of each artist, here my interest lies in the kinds of image that might ‘unearth the truth’, and this has little to do with what we can actually see, or recall through memory. To explore the nature of this phenomenon I will consider not only the techniques that the narrators of *A la recherche du temps perdu* and *Histoire(s) du cinéma* claim to be crucial to the creative process, namely, metaphor and montage, respectively, but the missing metonymic link that is convincingly argued for in Genette’s seminal essay ‘Métonymie chez Proust, ou la naissance du Récit’.<sup>5</sup>

### *Metaphor*

In *Le Temps retrouvé* (*Time Regained*) Proust’s narrator discovers that the link between involuntary memory and art is found in the power of metaphor. A writer, Marcel tells us, must use metaphor to extract the common essence of two sensations, ‘in reuniting them to each other, liberated from the contingencies of time’ (246). The key is in the *beau style*; and literary style, as Barthes maintains, can only be revealed *through* its interaction with language.<sup>6</sup> This broad and somewhat imprecise conception of metaphor is worth comparing to the Godardian subject’s consideration of what it means to ‘film a miracle’. At the end of the section devoted to Hitchcock in chapter 4a, the intertitles refer to the director as ‘the only one besides Dreyer who could film a miracle’.<sup>7</sup> This statement introduces the closing images from Hitchcock’s *The Wrong Man* (1956), in which the guilty man’s face is superimposed onto that of the innocent protagonist. Images from *The Wrong Man* also appear at the very beginning of the Hitchcock section, which frames the entire episode with a critical,

pedagogical perspective, since both sequences recall a eulogizing article written by Godard in 1957.<sup>8</sup> In this article the young *Cahiers du cinéma* critic calls the 'transition' of images a miracle because it captures the 'mainspring of the drama whose theme it paraphrases'.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the very nature of a miracle is such that it cannot be logically explained, and thus cannot be part of a causal plot, which suggests that a miracle can only be represented outside that plot. For it is not the images themselves that silently inform us of Balestrero's liberation but the effect of their superimposition. Is it not the ability of the filmic image to express what it does not *actually* show that defines its metaphorical component? Just as literary truth can only be accessed *through* rather than *in* language, so cinematic truth is expressed through images and not in them. Thus, in order to unearth artistic truth, we need the same from cinema as we do from literature: the capacity to access that 'sweet miracle of our blind eyes',<sup>10</sup> which is invisible because it is outside time's contingencies, but made present through the movement instigated by metaphor.

*Metonymy: a community of singularities*

If, despite the narrator's claims in *Le Temps retrouvé*, metaphor is not the only key to transforming experience into art, then my observations require qualification. As Genette illustrates through his close analysis of Proust's sentences, it is the coexistence of metaphor and metonymy in *A la recherche du temps perdu* that defines its poetics. Following Genette's conjectures, when the narrator affirms in *Le Temps retrouvé* that the key to art lies in metaphor, this is a revelation not entirely in keeping with the form of the novel. As Jakobson did before him, Genette uses the terms metaphor and metonymy in a formalist sense, and aligns metaphor with poetry's vertical axis and metonymy with the horizontal axis native to prose writing. He claims that Proust's text is a 'tentative extrême de cet état mixte'<sup>11</sup> (a radical attempt at producing this dual state). This process corresponds in kind to that which Jacques Rancière terms the 'double travail' (double work) of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, where the self-sufficient image of pure presence is necessarily coupled with the manipulative force of montage.<sup>12</sup> Rancière claims that the 'pure presence' of the images is produced only by virtue of the work of its opposite: a movement between singularity and communalization.<sup>13</sup> This double process is reminiscent of the axis of selection and combination that Jakobson specifies and, by extension,

the interpenetration of metaphor and metonymy in Genette's analysis of *A la recherche du temps perdu*.

In conflating these sets of poetics that refer to different media we run the risk of overlooking the respective filmic and textual focus of Rancière's and Genette's work and, moreover, of invoking an essentialist aesthetics of media non-specificity. My aim, however, is to remain faithful to the compulsion that drives both Proust's novel and Godard's video-essay — which promotes the production of communality — by setting up a space for the two works to confront each other. And to produce a meaningful dialogue, the two works must, on some level, understand each other's signs. The setting for such a confrontation of forms takes us back to chapter 2b, where Godard explicitly elicits a comparison between Proust's novel and cinema. The sequence features a detail from Max Ernst's *Les Visiteurs du dimanche* (*The Sunday Visitors*), which depicts a woman's face devoid of features. This painting contains metaphors of its own, it stands on its own; but in selecting a part of the painting and placing it in combination with the screen-text 'ALBERTINE' and 'MARCEL' that overlay the frame, as well as Man Ray's photograph of Proust on his deathbed, which precedes and then cohabits the frame, Godard endows it with fresh metaphorical significations that correspond to Proustian themes. The face is deprived, here, of its individuality — an evocation of senseless anonymity. In conjunction with Albertine's and Marcel's names, the painting immediately connotes the facelessness that each of these characters portray, in their own way, in *A la recherche du temps perdu*. But the face is also stretched out like a blank surface, much like this 'screen that is nothing but a surface' that the voice-over (reciting Bresson) identifies, which equates cinema with *A la recherche du temps perdu*. The superimposition of Proust's photographic portrait onto this association between the blank face and the cinema screen transforms him momentarily into 'the filmmaker'. This transformation is then prolonged as the photo of Marcel Proust becomes that of Marcel Pagnol, linked via the word 'MARCEL', which figures as screen-text. The construction of this 'fraternity of metaphors' (3b), to use one of Godard's phrases, is made possible by the work of contiguity and combination. Whilst the metaphors are created by placing two seemingly distant images or words together, such as the Ernst face and the names of Marcel and Albertine, the sequence nevertheless depends equally on the metonymic links between Marcel Proust and Marcel Pagnol; between the blank face and the dead face of Proust, frozen in a photograph. In borrowing Proust's own themes, Godard

demonstrates what a filmmaker must do with pictures in the absence, he tells us, of the 'novelist who speaks'. Yet the paradox lies in the coherence of these ostensibly contrasting creative processes native to literature and film. Contrary to the verbal discourse that introduces the sequence, Godard's artistic method emphasizes this coherence by allowing metaphorically and metonymically inspired communications to unite the very elements that specify the distinction between these two media; that is between word and image. As a result we are obliged to read the passage as well as to view it.

Genette illustrates the role of metonymy *within metaphor* in Proust's novel by comparing the narrator's two metaphorical descriptions of the bell towers of Saint-André-des-Champs in *Du côté de chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) and Saint-Mars-le-Vêtu from *Sodom et Gomorrah* (*Sodom and Gomorrah*).<sup>14</sup> He argues that despite the two bell towers being objectively identical, the narrator uses different metaphors to evoke each one, due to the influence of the surrounding context of the two episodes. Following Genette's argument, the second bell tower is described in aquatic terms because the narrator was experiencing such hot weather that all he could think about was a refreshing dip in the sea. Genette renames these metonymically inspired metaphors 'diegetic metaphors', with a footnote indicating that the term derives from theoreticians of cinematographic language (161). The application of cinematic terminology to this rigorously textual examination suggests a removal of the dividing barrier between the text and the image. The image becomes necessarily implicated into the critic's discussion because vast quantities of localized metaphors derive from the narrator's *visual* experience of a particular scene or object, thus creating a metonymic link between a perceived experience within the narrative and the subsequent metaphor that unfurls.

The discord between the revelatory power of the metaphor professed by the narrator in *Le Temps retrouvé* and the novel's actual reliance on metonymically inspired images continues to produce varied responses amongst scholars. Genette claims that on account of this dissonance, 'the Proustian text (...) which set out to gain access to essences, in fact goes on to construct, or reconstruct, mirages'.<sup>15</sup> For Genette, the purpose of Proust's metaphor, and indeed of the narrator's entire search, is to reveal the essence of a given object, and the failure to do so instead succeeds in (inadvertently) revealing 'phantasmagorical' superimpositions that refute the narrator's declarations, but teach us instead about the tautological imperatives of language (46). Joshua Landy argues against Genette by insisting

that Proust's 'metonymorphs' serve to 'illuminate the subjectivity of the character he has created',<sup>16</sup> since it is the shifting viewpoint of the narrator that constitutes the novel's underlying perspectivist philosophy. However, as Deleuze and Guattari argue in *What is Philosophy?*, art exists as necessarily independent of any material object, as a 'being of sensation'.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, a literary metaphor, whether derivative of narrative contiguities or not, functions artistically not because of what truth it might tell us about a pre-existent object, or about the fictional character whose subjectivity determines the terms of the transferral, but because of how this transferral divulges the nature of the vision that defines the creation. The *essence* upon which this disagreement between Genette and Landy rests cannot be that of a fixed entity—be it an object or a subject position—but is instead that of an ephemeral image. This image is phantasmatic because it is not locatable, it is unattached to material things, yet it is an image, or a mirage, which is produced at the point where metaphor and metonymy, and text and image, meet and divide, that is to say the point where art is experienced.

An illustration of this dual interaction and phantasmagorical superimposition is found in the passage that introduces the portrait of Miss Sacripant in *A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs II (Within a Budding Grove)*. Elstir's Miss Sacripant is a figure steeped in metaphor, which fashions both our conception of the portrait's physical appearance and the implications regarding its circulation in the narrative. In building up to what one would expect to be a unified depiction of the portrait, one is led to imagine, on the contrary, a collection of non-homogeneous fragments of the painting. The initial sentences that describe the painting in the most detail depict clashing elements of the figure's clothing: the bowler hat, the gloved hands, the lit cigarette, the large straw sun hat, and the vase of carnations (494). These ill-matched props have, however, gender-specific connotations. Therefore, they behave within the portrait both metonymically in its rhetorical sense (for example, the bowler hat and the straw sun hat are items that distinctly correspond to the respective male and female attire of the era) and metaphorically, since they collectively imply the sexual ambiguity of the figure.

On the narrator's closer inspection, the unmatched objects in the frame are, however, associated through the use of natural imagery, such as the 'crumpled brightness' and furry texture of the carnations which are linked to the colour and texture of the model's clothing (495). Here, the reader experiences in Proust's text that which the narrator

experiences in Elstir's painting, which Marcel comments on in his subsequent analysis of the encounter. He tells us that Elstir's artistic genius lies in his ability to rearrange a woman's features following his own unique vision, in order to satisfy his 'pictorial ideal of femininity' (509). Whilst we may recognize this process of regrouping in Proust's textual translation, the molecular model which structures the re-formation does not follow a feminine ideal, but rather a natural paradigm characteristic of the young Marcel's sensibilities. (It is, after all, the natural world that first enchants Marcel during his long walks at Méséglise as he contemplates the beauty of the hawthorn bushes as though they were themselves works of art.)<sup>18</sup> What we have, then, are two imagined portraits of Miss Sacripant: one is the product of Marcel's discourse, a fictional painting whose metaphors fraternize under the aegis of Elstir's vision; the other is a textual translation of the painting, whose metaphors adhere to Marcel's sensibilities, thus knitting the picture into the fabric of his literary subjectivity, as a form of *diegetic metaphor*. The creation of these two simultaneously constructed images behaves like a superimposition of these two possible readings of the passage, which correspond to two metaphorically cultivated visions or view points. To follow Landy's argument, this indeed seems to tell us more about the perspective of the narrator than about any inherent objective truth concerning either the nature of painting or the figure it depicts.

It is crucial to recognize that this superimposition functions on another level distinct from questions of subjectivity, where Genette's notion of 'phantasmagorical superimposition' gains force. The two portraits are by no means absolutely distinct, for neither one is visible and neither one evokes a fully discernible and unified image; therefore, the superimposition is, in a sense, irreversible because there are no original images to refer back to. Furthermore, the fragments of the portrait cannot function as stable depictions because the pictorial metaphors are verbally and, therefore, linearly transferred. Equally, the text cannot operate without the reader's attempt to piece together a coherent image, since the *diegetic metaphor* is dependent on the existence of the fictional portrait. In the same way that Godard destabilizes the specificity of the processes through which the literary and filmic arts manifest themselves, Proust blurs the distinction between visual art and literature, or rather, between the act of writing and that of painting. His text paints invisible, unstable images, which write themselves into the literary vision of the young hero.

*Montage*

In a cinematic context, montage broadly refers to the technical process of splicing together sections of film resulting in a series of shots that presents an idea or group of ideas. Whilst the notion of stringing together shots suggests a horizontal combinatory movement reminiscent of Jakobson's metonymic pole, Jakobson considers cinema as a combination of both the metaphoric and the metonymic poles.<sup>19</sup> However, in placing montage within the broader category of metaphor, Jakobson fails to take into account the overarching function of montage, through which both metonymic and metaphorical associations may take place. David Lodge argues that, in the films of Eisenstein, to whom Jakobson explicitly refers, we have examples of both metaphorical and metonymic montage. The insertion of an image of a clock functions metonymically as it invites the viewer to imagine rituals connected to a specific time of day. Metaphorical montage takes place, Lodge suggests, when images of slaughtered cattle are placed next to soldiers firing on civilians in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*.<sup>20</sup>

Yet montage is not simply a filmic vehicle for metaphor and metonymy. In classical narrative cinema montage is used to convey passing time. It is this manipulation of real time by the movement of shots that defines Deleuze's cinema of the movement-image, in which the fluctuating states of the narrative present are put into a formative relationship with the 'whole' of (film) time (as immeasurable past and future time).<sup>21</sup> However, Deleuze insists that modern cinema moves away from the regime of the movement-image towards a system governed by the time-image, where real time takes stock of its own presence as the cinematic form turns back on itself to examine the terms of its own existence. It is not the invention of the time-image as such that constitutes this rupture, since, as Deleuze aptly states, the time-image is the 'phantom that has always haunted cinema'. Modern cinema was required, simply, to give flesh to this phantom.<sup>22</sup> Montage, therefore, begins to take on a more overt role as irrational cuts and deliberate fragmentation of narrative time work to allow temporal relationships to unveil themselves.

Still, we are not directly dealing with the cinematic medium, but with literature and video. It is the latter that takes montage to a new level which brings us closer to a literary manifestation of montage. As Lev Manovich points out in *The Language of New Media*, video editing involves a process called 'keying', which consists in combining

different image sources to produce effects like those we see on the weather forecast, where an individual and the meteorological graphics cohabit the same televisual image.<sup>23</sup> Montage, therefore, in the purely functional sense of the word, occurs within a single image. Video montage has the capacity to take this technique further using electronic mixing, which allows the editor to combine unlimited heterogeneous images within one shot. This creative process makes explicit something that cinema already implies — that montage occurs in the *mise-en-scène* as well as in the linking together of shots in a sequence. For, as Eisenstein explains in relation to his film *Old and New* (1929), the film-frame ‘must always remain a multiple-meaning ideogram’, which is to say that the ‘overtones’ and ‘undertones’ of the various elements of a shot (including sound as much as the visual parts) collide and combine in order to produce the overall effect or meaning or ‘peculiar “feeling”’ of the shot.<sup>24</sup> Godard’s video montage takes this notion to a new limit as he combines via electronic mixing, and in a single ‘shot’, images that derive from various sources along with other heterogeneous elements such as screen-text, voice, and musical fragments, thus implicating textual and sonic poetics into his montage.<sup>25</sup> By superimposing images onto other images of various forms and from different spatio-temporal contexts, Godard creates a kind of montage that blends diverse space-time continuums, which introduces the extension in time (usually reserved for temporal montage) to the single shot. Furthermore, this extension is not restricted to a unilinear temporal progression but is able to be refracted into various (simultaneous) space-time continuums, thus exceeding dimensional reality. As a result, Genette’s vertical and horizontal axes, whilst they might translate into structuralist approaches to classical cinema, are complicated by this multi-dimensional video montage of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Hence analytical methods belonging to new media have the capacity to offer us new perspectives on both Proust’s novel and Godard’s video-essay. In terms of the literary text, montage might refer, then, not only to the linking up of words in a sentence, and parts in a narrative, but to the combination of images or ‘mirages’ produced through the construction of *diegetic metaphors*. What is crucial in this approach is that montage engages necessarily and simultaneously with synchronic and diachronic states.

Let us return to Elstir’s portrait. Montage is present here in various ways. Regardless of how many times we re-read the two passages devoted to the portrait of Miss Sacripant, we fail to grasp an image of the portrait in its entirety, since it is described as a series of

shots, with each one focusing on a particular aspect of the painting. The glass of the vase, for example, is described as ‘cherished for its own sake’, and the figure’s clothes have an ‘independent, fraternal charm’ (494–5). The independence of each object in the portrait is transfigured textually, never lapsing into generalities. The only aspect of the figure’s face that we are informed of is ‘the dreamy sadness in the expression of the eyes’ (495). We are left with a feeling of looking at a painting whose elements are successively lit up, never shedding light on the whole canvas. Moreover, verbs such as ‘s’évanouissait’ (vanished) and ‘se retrouvait’ (reappeared) are used to describe the various aspects of the painting, which infuses it with a sense of unspecific, unfinished movement, reinforced by the use of the imperfect tense (495). This illusion of fluid movement depicts a particularly *cinematic* montage — rather than a saccadic series of photographic snapshots. By offering us limiting moving extracts of a fictional painting Proust succeeds in transposing the virtual portrait into actual text, only to evoke a cinematically visual virtual image.

The significance of this scene increases further once the link between the two descriptions of Miss Sacripant is revealed. This link consists in a piece of knowledge concerning the identity of Miss Sacripant’s model, who, we discover, is Odette de Crécy. This provides a catalyst for the alteration in our (and Marcel’s) understanding of the portrait, as well as our perception of the character of Odette and her function within the narrative. In conjunction with a figure whose sexual preferences, as we recall from ‘Un Amour de Swann’ (‘Swann in Love’), are uncertain, the ephemeral portrait transforms from a lesson in aesthetics, to a crystallization of Odette’s ambiguous sexuality and her role as social chameleon. Odette is, after all, one of the characters in the novel whose name and social ranking transform the most, from the socially inferior Odette de Crécy, to Mme Swann, to Mme de Forcheville, to M. de Guermantes’ mistress. The new information concerning the identity of the portrait’s model forms what Malcolm Bowie refers to as ‘retroactive inventions’, whereby the meaning of past events adjust according to revelations that occur in the present narrative;<sup>26</sup> the significations embedded in the fictional image adjust as it collides with new events and fresh contexts. Once the connection between Odette and Miss Sacripant has been made, we are revisited by memories of Odette’s behaviour in ‘Swann in Love’, whilst the narrator (unaware as yet of this pre-history) is preoccupied with engineering another meeting with Albertine and her gang of girls as they take a walk along the beach (493). The altering

aspects of the character of Odette, and the questionable authenticity of her love for Swann is rendered through the kind of textual montage adopted in this description, which depicts a total transience or trickery of both physical and psychological characteristics: the 'dreamy sadness' belonging to Miss Sacripant's eyes is 'feigned' rather than an authentic expression that may otherwise provide access to a 'deeper' understanding of the character herself (495).

The portrait of Miss Sacripant crops up on three more occasions, each time altered in its appearance, thus creating an effect of superimposition with large-scale implications. Bowie describes Miss Sacripant as a 'time-measuring device for use in the book as a whole', since it 'travels back and forth in both event-time and narrative-time' (47). We witness this textual voyage in *Le Côté de Guermantes I* (*The Guermantes Way*), where Miss Sacripant's portrait resurfaces, but this time as a photograph that Marcel comes across amongst those given to him by Charles Morel, the son of Marcel's uncle Adolphe's servant. The resurrection of the sexually ambiguous portrait at this particular point in the narrative silently prefigures the bisexuality of Morel (as it did Albertine in *A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs II* (*Within a Budding Grove*), yet also functions retroactively, as it is only at this point in the novel that the narrator makes the connection between Odette and the 'Dame en rose' (361). It also subtly alters the role of the painting in the novel, as it has now become a photographic replica of the original to be passed around as some kind of fetish object. This notion is reinforced in *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) as Miss Sacripant's portrait is mentioned once more, this time by Charlus. Speaking of Charles Swann's relationship with Odette, the Baron states, 'Why, it was through me that he came to know her. I had thought her charming in her boyish get-up one evening when she played Miss Sacripant' (339). He goes on to expand on the colourful sex life the young courtesan led, claiming that 'she used to force me to get up the most dreadful orgies for her, with five or six men' (340). The representation of Miss Sacripant goes through a regressive transformation from alluring enigmatic painting to photographic reprint, to subject of vilifying gossip, thus paradoxically performing a fall from high art to trivial *mondanités*—quite the opposite to the social transformation of Mme de Crécy into Mme Forcheville. The successive re-framings of Miss Sacripant serve to create a montage of phantom images that recall Deleuze's theorization of the time-image. It is the embodiment of this temporal bifurcation, yet one which simultaneously leans both towards the

future and back into the past of the by now labyrinthine narrative. Each time the name of Miss Sacripant is mentioned another layer of signification is superimposed onto the previous one, immediately skipping back a thousand pages and leaping forward another thousand, forming a vertiginous montage of phantom images that seem to *embody* the movement of time rather than provide an illusion of its passing.<sup>27</sup> On another level the narrative plays out the phantasmagoria internal to the metaphorical fraternities of the Miss Sacripant portrait.

The type of montage which manifests temporal relations is taken to the limit in Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. The scene from Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, in which Scottie swims to rescue a drowning Madeleine, is one such image resurrected by Godard in chapters 1b, 3b and 4a. Each time the image posits new significations resulting from its interaction with surrounding fragments. In chapter 1b, the image features in conjunction with screen-text citing St Paul's words from the Acts of the Apostles 16. 28, which translate as follows: 'Do thyself no harm for we are all still here'. As they confront the image of James Stewart, these biblical words seem to support the image sonically, speaking for the voiceless Scottie as if to comfort the apparently drowning Madeleine. Yet if we disregard the cited film's context, the words also seem to address the image itself, as though it yearns for the surrounding narrative from which it has been plucked.<sup>28</sup> In chapter 3b, the image is used in an altered way in reference to the French New Wave and its precursors. The sequence is connected by recurrent shots of Doinel from Truffaut's *The 400 Blows* (1959), which are then interspersed with images from Lang's *You Only Live Once* (1937) where the couple scramble through the forest in a final (unsuccessful) attempt to reach the border. This is followed by shots of a burning woman on the stake from Rossellini's *Joan at the Stake* (1954), and finally the drowning shots from *Vertigo*. The repeated images of Doinel from *The 400 Blows* function in this sequence as a kind of response to the other images that all derive from films whose *auteur*-directors were championed by the New Wave critics and filmmakers. Furthermore, each of the extracts features potentially imminent death (the struggling Joan from *You Only Live Once*, Rossellini's burning Jeanne, and the drowning Madeleine), which suggests that Doinel, as symbol of the New Wave, had the opportunity to rescue French cinema from its fateful decline.

The *Vertigo* image in 4a appears in the section devoted to Hitchcock, which was discussed above. Unlike the previous citations, this time

it is surrounded by images from the same film (Madeleine's hair style, Madeleine in the sequoia woods, her embrace with Scottie) as well as other images from several Hitchcock films. It forms part of a homage to the master himself, but is simultaneously resurrected through recontextualization as it is freed from its narrative shackles—a process made explicit by Godard's voice-over. This time, however, the image has become almost indistinguishable, as the slow motion close-up of the submerging figure (this time Scottie is outside the frame) resembles an abstract painting, encased by black screens and a silent soundtrack. The image, therefore, goes through a dramatic transformation over the course of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*: from a biblically loaded emblem of resurrection, to a historically significant symbol of classical Hollywood cinema, to an abstract form that challenges the ontological status of the film image itself. Like the reframing of Miss Sacripant, each time the image reappears in a new context, its significations change, but the recurrence of the sign prompts our memory to connect it with its previous appearances elsewhere in the work, therefore creating an imagined montage figured in the thought of the reader-viewer.

To return, then, to the founding paradox that inspired this analysis: why present Proust as a counterpart to cinema as well as the ideal filmmaker? Godard, like Proust before him, uses discourse as an element of a montage of forms rather than an explanatory guide for the respective image track and text. It is, after all, *through* the juxtaposition of forms rather than *in* the discourse itself that any kind of truth emerges. The combinatory poetics illuminated in this analysis highlights the same point: in order to experience the kind of 'time regained' to which only art holds the key, both *A la recherche du temps perdu* and *Histoire(s) du cinéma* look not to the materiality of the visible image, but to the virtuality of the invisible images produced through the coalescence of metaphor, metonymy and montage.

## NOTES

- 1 *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, directed by Jean-Luc Godard. DVD. Gaumont (1988–98). The DVD released in 2007 is divided into four discs with two parts per disc ('a' and 'b'). References to particular chapters will be given after quotations in the text.
- 2 All quotations from Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu* are from the English translation by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, *In Search of Lost Time* (London: Vintage, 1996), 6 volumes.

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- 3 The English translation of the misquoted line from *Du côté de chez Swann* is taken from the DVD subtitles, but the double entendre is more obscure in translation. The French misquotation parodies the original opening line: 'Longtemps, je me suis couché de bonne heure' (For a long time, I went to bed early).
- 4 Godard famously declared that 'images are life, and texts are death'. See Godard, 'Alfred Hitchcock est mort', in *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, edited by Alain Bergala, 2 volumes (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 1998), 1 (1950–84), 412–16 (416).
- 5 Gérard Genette, 'Métonymie chez Proust, ou la naissance du Récit', *Poétique* I (1970), 156–73.
- 6 Roland Barthes, *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), 16–17.
- 7 The reference to Dreyer alludes to his film *Ordet* (*The Word*) (1955), in which the female protagonist is brought back to life through the miracle of resurrection in the final scene.
- 8 For a fuller discussion of Godard's critical analysis and its place in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, see Jonathan Rosenbaum, 'Le Vrai coupable: Two Kinds of Criticism in Godard's Work', *Screen* 40:3 (1999), 316–22.
- 9 Godard, 'The Wrong Man', in *Godard on Godard*, edited and translated by Tom Milne (New York, London: Da Capo, 1972), 54.
- 10 In chapter 1a Godard rewrites Georges Bernanos's exclamatory phrase, 'sweet miracle of our empty hands', extracted from his novel *Journal d'un curé de campagne* (*Diary of a Country Priest*) (1936).
- 11 Genette, 'Métonymie chez Proust, ou la naissance du Récit', 171. All translations of Genette are my own.
- 12 Jacques Rancière, *La Fable cinématographique* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 231.
- 13 Rancière, *The Future of the Image*, translated by Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2007), 30–1.
- 14 Genette, 'Métonymie chez Proust, ou la naissance du Récit', 157.
- 15 Genette, 'Proust palimpseste', in *Figures: essais, I–II* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 39–67 (45).
- 16 Joshua Landy, *Philosophy as Fiction: Self, Deception, and Knowledge in Proust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 74.
- 17 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Birchill (London: Verso, 1994), 164.
- 18 Proust, *Swann's Way*, 166–7.
- 19 Roman Jakobson, 'The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles', in *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, edited by David Lodge and Nigel Wood, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 2000), 56–60 (58).
- 20 David Lodge, *The Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy and the Typology of Modern Literature* (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), 84–6.

- 21 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 1: l'image-mouvement* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1983), 82. All translations from the French are my own.
- 22 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 2: l'image-temps* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1985), 59.
- 23 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2002), 149–50.
- 24 Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, edited and translated by Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1949), 65–7.
- 25 For a fuller discussion on Godard's use of the term 'montage' and its theoretical heritage, see Michael Witt, 'Montage My Beautiful Care or Histories of the Cinematograph', in *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000*, edited by Michael Temple and James S. Williams (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), 33–50.
- 26 Malcolm Bowie, *Proust Among the Stars* (London: Harper Collins, 1998), 53.
- 27 Deleuze, *Cinéma 2*, 59.
- 28 For a detailed discussion of the use of this image in 1b see James S. Williams, 'Beyond the Cinematic Body: Human Emotion vs Digital Technology in Jean-Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*', in *Inhuman Reflections: Thinking the Limits of the Human*, edited by Scott Brewster, John J. Joughin, David Owen and Richard J. Walker (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 188–202 (194–5).

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