



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

O PROCESSO DE OMISSÃO NA CONSTRUÇÃO DA NARRATIVA NO FILME

DOCUMENTÁRIO: ANÁLISE DE UM ESTUDO DE CASO

*THE OMISSION PROCESS DURING NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF A
DOCUMENTARY FILM: ANALYSIS OF A CASE STUDY*

**Tese apresentada à Universidade Católica Portuguesa
para obtenção do grau de doutor em Ciência e Tecnologia das Artes,
especialidade em Cinema e Audiovisuais**

*Thesis presented to the Universidade Católica Portuguesa
for the Degree of Doctor of Science and Technology of the Arts,
specialty in Cinema and Audiovisual*

Por/by

Carlos Ruiz Carmona

ESCOLA DAS ARTES

Setembro 2011/ September 2011



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To Laura Marques Ruiz.

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Abstract

This thesis presents original research with regard to narrative construction and event representation in documentary. The thesis incorporates selected bibliographical research and a case study of a documentary shot and edited by myself. The principal objective has been to research the process of narrative construction from the point of view of that who represents the event, the filmmaker: the only individual who has access to all the decisions and justifications involved in representing an event. The focus of the research lies on the concept of “omission” as a fundamental aspect in documentary making for representing the historical world. Omission refers to the process of removing visual or sound event information during the *act* of filming and during narrative construction in order to represent an event.

The case study incorporates the construction of two different narrative versions of the same event and from the same raw material so as to undertake a comparative research analysis on narrative construction, in terms of omission and structure, between both narrative versions. This case study was only possible to implement from the point of view of the filmmaker. This means having complete access to all the raw material and to all the decisions involved in constructing the narrative to represent the event as the filmmaker intended .

The research has established that documentary narratives, independently of the mode or strategy used by the filmmaker when representing the historical world, unlike in fiction, emerges from the process of omission. This process consists of organising the filmmaker's experience of the event into a narrative form. During the *act* of filming, the filmmaker must implement partial and total omission simultaneously from the historical event. This incorporates acquiring images and sounds which offer an indexical relationship with the event's past existence. During the *act* of narrative construction, filmmakers implement partial and total

omission from the raw material. Subsequently, they organised non-omitted raw material into a specific structure.

Through the research undertaken I have established that representing an event in documentary consists of organising, via partial and total omission, a limitless source of non-organised event information, the historical event, into an organised limited volume of images and sounds: an audiovisual narrative representing the filmmaker's personal experience.

The concept of partial and total omission outlines documentary's fundamental technical restrictions and creative possibilities for representing the historical world. Omission represents a crucial element in documentary making to understand, organise and communicate the filmmaker's experience of the historical event through narrative forms.

Key words: omission; documentary; cinema; film narrative; film analysis

Resume (Portuguese)

A narrativa tem sido ao longo dos tempos objeto de estudo e pesquisa a partir das teorias miméticas e diegéticas de Platão e Aristóteles; enquanto processo essencial para o ser humano de produção e comunicação de significados a narrativa exprime identidades culturais, individuais e experiências. A maioria das pesquisas e estudos sobre a narrativa fílmica tem sido centrada na perspectiva do espectador, daquele que vê e estuda a narrativa já finalizada, e não na do cineasta, aquele que toma as decisões que constituem a representação de um determinado evento.

A presente tese de investigação centra a pesquisa, utilizando um estudo de caso, no processo de construção da narrativa e representação do evento do ponto de vista do cineasta: o único indivíduo que tem acesso a todas as decisões e justificações que englobam a representação de um evento.

A investigação desenvolvida teve como objetivo principal a pesquisa e introdução do conceito de omissão no que diz respeito ao processo de representação de um evento em documentário a partir do ponto de vista do cineasta.

O objeto de pesquisa apresenta e identifica o conceito de omissão no documentário como um elemento fundamental na representação de um evento; entendendo-se por omissão o processo de remoção de informação visual ou sonora durante o ato de filmar e durante a construção narrativa com o objectivo de representar um evento. Essa informação do evento, durante a rodagem, engloba o conjunto de imagens ou sons que foram ou poderiam ter sido adquiridos ou produzidos a partir do denominado evento histórico; isto é, no contexto espacial, temporal e físico que o evento habita, no mundo histórico, durante o ato de filmar. O evento histórico representa assim uma fonte infinita

não-organizada de possível informação visual ou sonora. Já no processo de construção da narrativa entende-se como informação do evento o conjunto de imagens e sons adquiridos durante o ato de filmar, designando-se como matéria-prima; este volume representa uma fonte não-organizada e limitada de informação sobre o evento.

No decorrer do trabalho de investigação estabeleceu-se e definiu-se em primeiro lugar o conceito de omissão como uma característica essencial no documentário para representar um evento histórico, tendo-se focado a pesquisa no processo racional da construção narrativa, ou seja, nas justificações intelectuais que o cineasta implementa para tomar decisões de omissão e estrutura, com a finalidade de construir uma narrativa e representar um evento. Teve como objetivo principal a identificação e o estudo dos elementos ou aspectos que no cinema condicionam as decisões do realizador para satisfazer as intenções da narrativa relacionadas com o ato de omissão e organização da informação do evento. A investigação centrou-se ainda na análise do processo de omissão e organização da informação do evento, tendo tido como principal objetivo a identificação dos tipos de omissão e estrutura que um cineasta pode implementar para organizar a informação do evento de acordo com suas intenções de narrativa.

Para a realização desta pesquisa desenvolveu-se um estudo de caso simples, tendo sido para tal construídas duas versões distintas da narrativa do mesmo evento a partir da mesma matéria-prima. O conteúdo total de ambas as versões da narrativa representa a quase totalidade da matéria-prima disponível para a construção da mesma. A Versão narrativa A apresenta imagens e sons sobre o evento que foram omitidas na versão B e vice-versa. Pretendia-se que cada versão narrativa apresentasse uma representação diferente do evento de acordo com as respectivas intenções narrativas. Através da apresentação da matéria-prima na sua totalidade foi possível uma análise comparativa de pesquisa, em termos de omissão e estrutura, entre as duas versões da narrativa.

No desenvolvimento deste estudo estabeleceu-se que a representação de um evento histórico no documentário implica a omissão de informações sobre esse

mesmo evento. Este processo consiste em organizar a experiência do cineasta numa narrativa; durante o ato de filmar, o cineasta deve implementar omissão parcial e total, simultaneamente, a partir do evento histórico, adquirindo imagens e sons que ofereçam uma relação indexical com a existência passada do evento. Durante o ato da construção narrativa, o cineasta implementa omissão parcial e total da matéria-prima, posteriormente organiza a matéria-prima não-omitida numa estrutura específica. A narrativa resultante consiste num número organizado e específico de fragmentos visuais e sonoros descontínuos que representam a experiência do cineasta do evento.

A pesquisa concluiu que representar um evento no documentário, consiste em organizar, através de omissão parcial e total, uma fonte ilimitada não-organizada de informações sobre o evento histórico, num volume organizado e limitado de imagens e sons - uma narrativa audiovisual que representa uma experiência pessoal. O conceito de omissão parcial e total ilustra as restrições técnicas e possibilidades criativas que o cinema oferece ao realizador para representar o mundo que habitamos. Assim, o conceito de omissão revela-se no documentário como um elemento fundamental de representação do evento histórico, uma estratégia necessária para entender, organizar e comunicar a experiência do realizador através de formas narrativas.

A dissertação estrutura-se em três partes distintas:

A primeira parte corresponde ao contexto teórico, a pesquisa bibliográfica realizada e apresentada nos capítulos 1 a 4, inclui a introdução e discussão de grandes temas e tópicos acerca do processo de representação de um acontecimento histórico no documentário. O contexto teórico reflete e debate diferentes perspectivas históricas e teorias do cinema no que diz respeito à relação entre o discurso cinematográfico e a representação da realidade.

A segunda parte, corresponde aos capítulos 5 a 9 e apresenta a análise de um estudo de caso sobre a construção narrativa de um documentário filmado e editado pelo autor da investigação. Este estudo de caso, como já foi referido, implicou a construção de duas narrativas do mesmo evento a partir da mesma matéria-prima com o objectivo de pesquisar o conceito de omissão no que diz

respeito ao ato de representar um evento no documentário.

A terceira parte corresponde à conclusão final que integra os resultados da pesquisa realizada na primeira e segunda parte desta tese. Na conclusão final resume-se, discute-se e racionaliza-se o conceito de omissão no que diz respeito ao processo de representar o mundo histórico e em relação às perspectivas históricas e teorias do cinema introduzidas no contexto teórico.

A conclusão final estabelece que a omissão de informação sobre o evento condiciona todas as decisões na representação do mesmo.

Foi ainda possível durante a investigação desenhar e implementar o piloto de um estudo com públicos. Este estudo realizado por Joana Cunha e Costa, sob a minha orientação, abre novas linhas de investigação sobre o impacto da omissão de informação na representação do evento e na recepção dos públicos.

Palavras chave: omissão; documentário; cinema; narrativa cinematográfica; análise cinematográfico.

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Introduction

1. Motivation

Narrative has been object of study and research from Plato's and Aristotle's original mimetic and diegetic theories up to the present day as an essential process for human beings to produce and communicate meaning and to express experience and cultural or individual identity.

In terms of film narrative most film theory has been focused on the perspective of the audience, that who watches or studies the finished narrative film, and not from the point of view of the filmmaker, that who makes the decisions involved in representing an event. Research on film narrative has entitled many compelling contributions such as Sergei Eisenstein's *The Film Sense* (1942) and *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory* (1949), Noël Burch's *Theory of Film Practice* (1981), David Bordwell's *Narration in Fiction Film* (first edition in 1985) or Roberts, Graham's *The Man with the Movie Camera* (2001), amongst many other influential and outstanding contributions on film analysis. Certainly, the study of film narrative has also involved interviews or discussions with filmmakers and film editors such as Gabriella Oldham's *First Cut: Conversations with Film Editors* (1992) or Megan Cunningham's *The Art of the Documentary: Ten Conversations with Leading Directors, Cinematographers, Editors, and Producers* (2005).

Nevertheless, most research on film narrative has been centred on the analysis, study or discussion of finished film narratives. Furthermore, most film theory has been dedicated to the study of fiction film narrative and not documentary's. My perspective on this thesis is that of a documentary filmmaker and researcher. And the fact is also that I have been unable to identify in my bibliographical research film theory fully dedicated to the study of representing an event in documentary from the point of view of the director. This point of view would mean having access to all the decisions implemented by a filmmaker during the process of representing a historical event, from the original filming stage up to the final narrative presented to the audience.

It is also important to notice that most spectators, as well as film theorists, normally do not have complete knowledge of the reasons and processes involved in constructing a documentary narrative. For this reason their awareness and understanding of how a filmmaker represents the historical event is incomplete since audiences are only able to acknowledge and process the event information disclosed in the final narrative.

All these considerations and facts led me to conclude that film theory has neglected the study of film narrative, and specially documentary narrative, from the point of view of the filmmaker. My particular interest in this subject, as already mentioned, emerges from my own personal experience as a documentary filmmaker and it is in fact from this experience that arises the concept of omission, the concept in this dissertation that turned to be its hermeneutical key throughout and as a clear result of the research analysis.

Hence, I envisage representing an event in documentary as the result of omission, that is, the result of a process of removing visual or sound event information from the filming stage up to the final narrative. A research on omission can only be possible through an in depth analysis on narrative construction from the point of view of that who has complete access to all the raw material and makes all the decisions in representing an event, the filmmaker.

This in depth film analysis implies a detailed analysis, shot by shot, registering and reflecting all the decisions and intentions implemented by the documentary filmmaker in representing the event through the construction of a narrative. This represents a very different film analysis from that undertaken by the "spectator's" perspective, who normally can only analyse the representation of an event from the information available and disclosed in the final narrative. In fact, the filmmaker's analysis proportionates a privileged unique position for undertaking narrative construction analysis in documentary since it provides direct access to the process of representing an event. A film theorist may be very knowledgeable and able to produce compelling and revealing analysis on finished film narratives. Some researches may be very efficient on producing in

depth discussions or interviews with influential filmmakers about their finished work. However, they will never be able to share and experience the filmmaker's experience and point of view of representing the event.

The fact is that non-one but the filmmaker has access to the private inner process of representing and event. That is why after careful consideration and discussion with my thesis advisers I reached the conclusion that a case study of a documentary shot and edited by myself it would be the most appropriate method to undertake this research.¹

This case study incorporates the construction of two different narrative versions of the same event and from the same raw material which means using all the raw material available for constructing two different representations of the same event. Therefore, the originality of this case study lies in revealing, discussing and focussing the analysis not only on the reasons for the selection of the material included in the final narrative but specially on the filmmaker's justifications for the omission of most of the images and sounds available for representing the event.

It is important to notice here that this documentary – and for the reasons that will be explained later in the dissertation - was filmed and edited following the codes and conventions that correspond to Observational documentary.

2- Objectives and structure of dissertation

Given *omission* as the main subject of this dissertation the preliminary research objectives are as follow:

First, to establish how it is possible to understand the concept of omission with regard to the process of representing an event in a documentary narrative.

Second, to analyse under this perspective the rational process involved in

¹ Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. Cf: Yin, Robert. Case study research: Design and Methods. Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1984, p.23

narrative construction, meaning by this the intellectual justifications the filmmaker implements to undertake omission and structure decisions.

Third, to identify types of omission and related structural modes involved in this process.

In accordance to these objectives the research for this dissertation has been organised into two distinct parts and a conclusion:

The First Part corresponds to the Theoretical Context. This entitles the bibliographic research undertaken and submitted in chapters 1 to 4. The Theoretical Context introduces, debates and reflects different historical perspectives and film theories with regard to the relationship between the cinematographic discourse and representing reality, particularly in documentary.

The Second part, corresponds to chapters 5 to 9 and presents the case study on narrative construction and event representation of a short documentary filmed and edited by myself. The main object of the research has been focused on the concept of omission and with regard to the act of representing an event in documentary. The research shows how during the *act* of filming and during narrative construction, a filmmaker must implement different types omission for representing an event.

The Final Conclusion integrates the research results accomplished in the First and Second parts of this thesis. The conclusions discuss and compare the results obtained through the research analysis on omission with regard to the historical perspectives and film theories introduced in the Theoretical Context.

I have also included an Appendix with a complete storyboard of narrative Version A and B. This storyboard intends to support visually the understanding of the in depth research analysis in narrative construction and event representation presented in chapters 6 and 7. The reason for presenting this storyboard in a separate document is to facilitate the practical use of this document with regard to the mentioned research.

Even though this dissertation centres the research on narrative construction I am also aware that the aspect of reception by the audience is also necessary in the understanding of omission in narrative comprehension. This aspect would certainly need a further and wider specific research. Nevertheless, I could not leave behind some kind of approach to this dimension. It is for this reason that it has been designed and implemented a pilot case study with public reception which also appears included in the Appendix. This study, implemented by Joana Cunha e Costa under my guidance, opens up new lines of specific research with regard to the process of omission.

First Part

Theoretical Context

Chapter 1

Origins: towards a cinematic reality

1.1 Cinema and ability to represent a staged reality

Paris, March 1895. The Lumière brothers present to the world a magical invention, a perfect combination of lightweight portable camera and projector. This new invention was capable of representing one of the most essential features of the visible world that we inhabit: movement. From that very moment cinema appeared to be directly associated with the notion of reality.² During the projection of a one minute film, *L'Arrivée d'un train a la Ciotat* (1896), a train approaches growing bigger in size on the cinema screen. The spectators screamed in horror and dodged to avoid "being run over by the train coming towards them" - a very different experience from Edison's theatre Studio

² Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film, Documentary*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, p.7

Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *The First Films. Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992, p.20-21

Vaudeville performances. The astonished audience felt it was a “real- life” experience: reality in movement as they normally saw it through their own senses. It took only one year for the magical invention to spread throughout the world.³

After one of Lumière’s popular sessions Maxim Gorky wrote about his experience: “It is a world without sound, without colour. Everything there - the earth, the trees, the people, the water and the air – is dipped in monotonous grey”. Gorky continues: “Noiselessly, the locomotive disappears beyond the edge of the screen. The train comes to a stop, and grey figures silently emerge from the cars, soundlessly greet their friends, laugh, walk, run, bustle, and ... are gone. And here is another picture. Three men seated at the table, playing cards, their faces are tense, their hands move swiftly, the cupidity of the players is betrayed by the trembling fingers and by the twitching of their facial muscles. They play Suddenly, they break .. into laughter, and the waiter who has stopped at their table with beer laughs too. They laugh until their sides split but not a sound is heard. It seems as if these people have died and their shadows have been condemned to play cards in silence unto eternity . . . “.⁴

Gorky’s poignant description of his experience raises one essential question: how is it possible that a soundless grey two dimensional image provided a real experience of a colourful sonic three dimensional world? Especially if we consider that, at the time, audiences had none or little experience of watching cinema. According to David Bordwell perceiving and interpreting cinematic images is a learned activity that requires a wide repertoire of schemata.⁵ This

³ Lumière, Auguste; Lumière, Louis. L’Arrivée d’un Train em Gare de la Ciutat, 1895.

Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History, p.3, 25, 26

⁴ Gorky, Maxim. A review of the Lumière programme at the Nizhni-Novgorod Fair, as printed in the “Nizhegorodski listok “newspaper, 4 July 1896, and signed “I.M. Pacatus” a pseudonym for Maxim Gorky. This translation comes from Kino by Jay Leyda, Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1960, translated by Leda Swan in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality*, The Faber Book of Documentary. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1996, p.6-8.

⁵ Schemata: an arrangement of knowledge already possessed by the perceiver used to predict and classify new sensory data.

Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narrative in the Fiction Film*. London and New York: Routledge, 2008, p.31

means that audiences had to learn how to interpret the content of a two dimensional technical visual representation into a three dimensional historical world.

Robert Flaherty, in an interview about the making of his film *Nanook of the North* (1922), explained that Inuit culture could not comprehend the content of a still photograph. The Inuit could not relate the world they inhabited to the photograph's two dimensional visual representation for they had never seen a photograph beforehand. According to Flaherty They had to learn how to interpret the two dimensional representation of a three dimensional historical world. Once they had understood the connection between the technical format and the world that was familiar to them they were able to deduce subsequent representations accordingly. Flaherty, argued, that the same applied to moving images.⁶

As we know, films are made up of a series of individual images called frames. When these images are shown rapidly in succession, a viewer has the illusion that motion is occurring. The viewer cannot see the flickering between the frames. Cinema's illusion takes advantage of two deficiencies in our visual system. First, the retina is unable to adjust rapidly to changing light intensities. Second, the phenomenon known as apparent motion occurs when the eye sees a string of displays as a single moving one. Therefore, despite the fact that celluloid film comprises of still photographic images, when projected at a certain speed, they produce the illusion of moving images. This means that cinema presents a greater complexity in terms of interpretation and understanding than a still photograph. In fact, in order to watch and understand cinema we have to draw on schemata derived from our experiences with the world, with other art forms such as photographs, painting, theatre or novels, and, of course, with other films. Seeing and therefore watching films, is not a passive absorption of

Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*. Madrid: Cátedra, 1994, p.124-125.

⁶ Cf: Flaherty, Robert. Source: "The cinema, 1950," ed Roger Manvell, Penguin, London, 1950 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 39,40

stimuli. It is a constructive activity, involving very fast computations, stored concepts, and various purposes, expectations, and hypotheses.⁷

Francesco Casetti argues that, cinema is also, like painting, a language medium, through which we create and express meaning. Therefore, cinema is also an act of communication and a means for the exchange of information.⁸ But in order to communicate the spectator needs to understand how this complex medium produces meaning and represents the world we live in. Therefore, how is it possible that Lumière's audience experienced cinema as if it was reality?

George Méliès, a magician who became into a famous filmmaker, offered a poignant explanation. He resorted to three Lumière films to support his arguments. In the film *Le Déjeuner de Bébé*, Auguste Lumière and his wife appear feeding their baby. Méliès claimed that the audience was not overwhelmed by the moving figures themselves, but by the rustling foliage in the background plane of the composition. Moreover, in the film *A Boat Leaving a Harbour*, it was the random movement of the waves which attracted the public's attention, and in *Demolishing a Wall*, it was the floating dust. Méliès argued that audiences, at the time, were already prepared to receive illusions performed on a theatre stage and so they could easily accept cinema as another sort of trickery. Méliès himself was an experienced magician accustomed to performing magic tricks on a stage in front of an audience and so he understood the spectator's ability to accept illusion. However, brick dust, random waves or rustling leaves were overpowering since they offered evidence of an event's past existence.

⁷ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narrative in the Fiction Film*, p. 31,32

Cf: Plantinga, Carl R. *Rhetoric and Representation in Non-fiction Film*. Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 54-58

Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 114-115

Cf: Villafañe, Justo. *Introducción a la teoría de la imagen. Parte Primera. La conceptualización de la imagen. La naturaleza de la imagen: La modelización icónica de la realidad*. Madrid: Ediciones Pirámide, 1987, p. 30-36

Cf: Villafañe, Justo. *Introducción a la teoría de la imagen. Parte Segunda. La selección de la realidad. La falacia de las teorías perceptivas: Variables de estímulo para la vision*. Madrid: Ediciones Pirámide, 1987, p. 68-71

⁸ Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 67

Thus, Lumière's films were not just another illusion but a direct reflection of a past reality.⁹

Those details served as evidence to the audience that the image content referred to a past reality for they had confirmed one of the most essential features of the visible world that we inhabit: movement. This is why, Bazin and Tarkovskiy had argued that cinema, unlike painting or any previous art forms ever seen before, appears to be able to represent reality as we see it.¹⁰ Film becomes the most "realistic art" in respect to the fact that it is precisely on its identification with reality that differentiates cinema from other art forms.¹¹

It is particularly fascinating to watch Lumière's films even today. Filmmakers, students, and university lecturers still find it fascinating to see how life looked in the 1890s whether it's the streets, the buildings, the trams, clothing, people walking or solely the way Paris, Peking and Piccadilly were in those days.¹² Like Gorky had claimed, they present silent grey ghosts, shadows of the past for they are all dead and much of what we see in their films no longer exists.

Nevertheless, these two dimensional images offer evidence of their past three dimensional existence. Like Bill Nichols states: "film offers by itself a tangible "memory theatre" of the past: an external visible representation of what was said and done".¹³

Hence, Lumière's films confirmed through visual representation evidence of a past existence in the historical world. For this reason we can argue that it is first through documentary that cinema is revealed to the world. Nevertheless,

⁹ Cf: Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). 1. Introduction: "The Kingdom of Shadows" in *Imagining Reality. The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 4

¹⁰ Cf: Bazin, André. "The Ontology of the photographic Image" in *What is Cinema?. Essays selected and translated by Hugh Gray*. Berkeley: University of California Press, vol.1, 1971, p. 11-13

¹¹ Cf: Tarkovski, Andrei. *Esculpir o Tempo*. São Paulo: Editora Martins Fontes, 1990, p. 18-19

¹² Cf: Rollyson, Carl. "The Lumière Brother Student Comments" in *Documentary. Contexts and Criticism*. New York: Universe Inc, 2006, p. 8-14

¹³ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001, p. 58

Lumière's films were also the result of a technically staged reality.¹⁴ People in their films responded to signals coming from behind the camera. The subjects involved in *L'Arrivée d'un train a la Ciotat* were members of the Lumière family and not anonymous people arriving to a train platform. They followed cues and directions and they performed rehearsals so as to achieve the correct camera position.¹⁵

From the very birth of cinema we learned that we had to tamper with the medium in order to represent reality. The Lumière brothers were forced to stage their films due to technical restrictions such as depth of field, film-stock sensitivity, focal distance or aperture. Conversely, film offered great possibilities of technical manipulation and filmmakers quickly started experimenting and exploring its creative potential.

Soon after Lumière's invention, filmmakers, such as Georges Méliès learned to exploit and explore the technical possibilities of the medium. Méliès made a masterful use of double exposures, masks, lenses, camera angles, dissolves or fades to create his magical and overwhelming cinematic effects. In his famous film *Le Voyage dans la lune* (1902) characters appear suddenly on the frame from scratch and grow in size tremendously in front of the astonished spectator's eyes.¹⁶ As early as 1898, British producer James Williamson filmed *Attack on a Chinese Mission* in his back yard shooting some of his Boer War scenes on a golf course. This new medium opened a new door of infinite creative possibilities where everything seemed possible, and in just a few years, fakes and reconstitutions became a very popular genre. By 1900 fiction films, and not documentaries, dominated audience's attention and acquired most of the market.

Conversely, Lumière's *actualités* became a repetitive formula losing their initial popularity and failing to engage public attention. The Lumière brothers had

¹⁴ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 21-22

¹⁵ Cf: Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). Introduction: "The Kingdom of Shadows" in *Imagining Reality. The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 5

¹⁶ Méliès, George. *A Trip to the Moon/Le Voyage dans la lune*, 1902

began making fascinating reflections on French middle class life. However, their camera operators, who travelled from Europe as far as to Japan or India, across the world, began making films about Kings, Tsars, Kaisers, Emperors, Maharajahs and became some kind of agents of imperial public relations far from the social contents that had primarily thrilled their viewers.¹⁷ As a result, Lumière's films lost their public appeal and popularity since the authenticity and originality of their *actualités* became a repetitive marketing formula that failed to surprise and engage public interest.

It is Robert Flaherty that managed successfully to synthesise the captivating authenticity of *actualités* and the dramatic engaging procedure of fiction films.¹⁸ After serious distribution and exhibition difficulties in 1922 Flaherty presented *Nanook of the North* at the Capitol theatre in New York. Soon after the film became a complete international success and it became a landmark in film making until today. *Nanook of the North* is a film shot on location, with non-actors, about the Inuit way of life, stylistically a precursor of the later Italian Neorealism.¹⁹

In this film Flaherty decided to document past traditional ways of Inuit life. For that purpose he consciously omitted all references that could reveal their present culture at the time of filming. He asked Allakarialak, the protagonist, to re-enact his father's generation's experience and not his own contemporary Inuit lifestyle.²⁰ At the time Allakarialak did not hunt anymore with a harpoon but he used instead a rifle. He also did not live anymore in an igloo as his father did in the past. However, Flaherty chose to represent Allakarialak as if he actually did.²¹ In fact, Flaherty, at the time, due to technical reasons, was unable to film inside a

¹⁷ Cf: Barnouw. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 21-25

¹⁸ Cf: Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). 2. Introduction. "Going to Extremes" in *Imagining Reality. The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 18,19

¹⁹ Cf: Sherwood, Robert. "Robert Flaherty's Nanook of the North" in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1979, p.17-19

²⁰ Cf: Winston, Brian. "Ethics" in Rosenthal, Alan and Corner, John (Ed). *New Challenges for Documentary*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005, p. 188

²¹ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film, Documentary*, p. 32

real igloo. This was due to the fact that lighting conditions did not allow it. It was too dark and the film stock used at the time could not expose the image correctly. Consequently, he asked Allakarialak to construct a half oversized igloo which he used as background composition.²² This way Flaherty could film the characters as if in fact they were living inside a real igloo. He was able to achieve this through careful shot composition. He knew that by selecting a closer focal distance he could frame the igloo and the characters in one shot without revealing that the igloo was a fake. It was a question of technically omitting the surrounding area of the igloo from appearing in the frame. This way he was able to create the technical appearance that Allakarialak and his family lived inside a real igloo.

Conversely, the family members of *Nanook of the North* are not related. They are not a real family. They were chosen by Flaherty to represent what he considered to be an ideal Inuit family. This is a practice that he repeated in *Man of Aran* (1934) and *Louisiana Story* (1948) in order to represent what he considered to correspond to an ideal Irish or Cajun family.²³

Flaherty's practice demonstrates his knowledge and awareness of cinema's technical restrictions and creative possibilities for representing the world. On the one hand, he was not able to film inside a real igloo: this illustrates a specific technical restriction. On the other, he was able to overcome this constraint, via composition. This also exemplifies the medium's technical capabilities for representing the world. In fact, Flaherty was successful on representing traditional ways of living which no longer existed. He managed to do so, because cinema's technical characteristics, offered him the opportunity to omit all visual and sound information which could discredit his representation. Thus, cinema allowed him to omit technically all evidence of present Inuit lifestyle in order to represent the past.

²² Cf. Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 85

²³ Cf: Ruby, Jay. "The Ethics of Image Making; or, "They're Going to Put Me in the Movies. They're Going to Make a Big Star Out of Me" in Rosenthal, Alan and Corner, John (Ed). *New Challenges for Documentary*, p. 215.

Flaherty's successful results could raise issues regarding the authenticity of the event represented. Conversely, these results also suggest that representing an event is not just a question of the source authenticity but specially of the technical appearance we are able to achieve. When we watch *Nanook of the North* we cannot help but feel that these images breathe truthfulness and authenticity. Flaherty's staged representation seems strikingly real. This is due to the technical appearance that his creative and technical choices were able to accomplish. ²⁴

In Haskell Wexler's declarations in an interview about his documentary *Brazil: A Report on Torture*, (1971) similar "representations" are brought into question. Wexler explained that before editing his film he showed the rushes to some friends. One of his friends immediately pointed out that one of the testimonies did not seem sincere. Even though Wexler knew that that the character was telling the "truth" he was also aware that his friend was right. The way the camera had captured the testimony and therefore, the way cinema had technically represented that real event, did not seem technically authentic. The posture of the testimony, the facial expression, the sound of the voice, the chosen focal length for the shot, the angle, the lightning set-up, or the background in the composition were all elements, amongst many others, that combined resulted in the representation of the event. All these elements convey information about the event. However, something in that chosen combination by the filmmaker was not technically appropriate for representing it. This suggests that one or more of those elements may have signified event information which undermined the credibility of the testimony. This resulted on questioning its authenticity. ²⁵

²⁴ Peter Wintonick on his documentary *Cinéma Vérité, Defining the moment* (1999) interviewed Jean Rouch and asked him about his experience of watching Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*. Rouch claimed that he saw the film when he was a child. He was very impressed and asked his father if the story was real. Rouch's father answered that it was "real" but it had been "represented" in front of the camera.

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the moment*, 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

²⁵ Cf: Wexler, Haskell. "From an interview in *Take One*", July-Aug 1971 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 298

Haskell Wexler's *Brazil: A Report on Torture* is a case of a documentary with real people talking about their experiences of being tortured: real traumatic and tragic life experiences. However, Wexler and his friends were forced to evaluate the content of the rushes in terms of what they appear to represent technically and not in terms of the source authenticity at the time of filming. The same applied to Lumière's films, perhaps in a more unconscious way. However, they were also forced or simply intuitively felt that they had to stage and give directions to represent their vision of what a train arriving at a platform was like at the time. Filming and pointing the camera was not enough. Not even for a one-minute film with no cuts. Cinema's technical medium transforms event information from a three dimensional historical world into a two dimensional visual format. This raises issues regarding the credibility of the technical appearance of the event represented. However, technical verisimilitude, according to Seymour Chatman, is not just the result of what it is "real" but also of what it is "ideal". Representing is not just a question of what an event is but also of what the event should appear to be. Chatman is referring that the credibility of the technical appearance depends on satisfying the audience's expectations. Thus, in order for an event to appear technically credible it must satisfy certain cultural expectations. Chatman's arguments suggest that in different cultures there are different expectations, guidelines or references about what can be acceptable as technical credible or authentic. An event might appear to be technically believable in a European culture, however, in an Asian culture it may be the opposite. Hence, Haskell Wexler's credibility issues with regard to his testimony might only be applicable to his own culture. In other countries the same creditability issues may not arise or it may be that other issues become apparent. Therefore, the technical "authenticity" of representation varies in accordance to the cultural expectations where the film appears publicly presented.²⁶

Landau, Saul and Wexler, Haskell. *Brazil: A Report on Torture*, 1971

²⁶ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978, p. 48-51.

1.2 Dziga Vertov: the man and the camera

After the Russian Revolution of 1917 film making in Russia depended on government support. Lenin, who understood cinema's powerful transmission possibilities, supported the idea of producing newsreel and established the "Leninist film-proportion" doctrine which encouraged an equilibrium in programming fiction and documentary.²⁷ Like Constructivist art, Soviet cinema searched for new ways to satisfy the revolutionary needs of the time. The objective was to represent the values and culture of the new communist society, free from *bourgeois* tradition, transcending the old class tradition and parochial loyalties.²⁸

Lenin's doctrine was influenced by Dziga Vertov's manifests which rejected fiction film making arguing the superiority of documentary as a language and as a means of expression. Vertov claimed that fiction cinema was a *bourgeois* art form, a lying manipulative artifice and should be rejected. For Vertov cinema must be the outcome of real facts and situations and if possible filmed unaware. On his "Kino-Pravda" (Film-Truth) writings he epitomised his film making doctrine which insisted on a radical break with novels and plays and any kind of historical reconstructions against the cinema of Eisenstein, Pudovkin or Dovzhenko.²⁹

Vertov's intentions as filmmaker were to catch life barehanded without any staging interferences. He believed in the unpredictable nature of reality. In his

²⁷ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 54

Cf: Ellis, Jack. C. *A New History of Documentary Film*. New York and London: Continuum, 2005, p. 27-28

²⁸ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*. 2001, p. 142

Cf: A. Cook, David. *A History of Narrative Film*. New York: W.W.Norton and Company, Inc, 1996 p. 131-133

²⁹ Cf: Vertov, Dziga. "The Birth of Kino-Eye" in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*. Edited by Annette Michelson Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 40-42

Cf: Vertov, Dziga. "On Kinopravda" in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, p. 42-47

Cf: Hicks, Jeremy. *Dziga Vertov. Defining Documentary Film*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2007, p.11-21

films he experimented with the creative possibilities of the medium using all types of techniques: freeze frame, slow and fast motion, multi-frames, multiple-exposures or different lenses. For Vertov the camera in combination with editing, which he called “Kino-eye” (that which the eye does not see) was superior to the human eye, since cinema, through its technical capabilities, could reveal a deeper level of “truth” in the world which normally would not be perceivable to the human eye.³⁰ The fact is that a camera can present a subject in ways we could never achieve through our eyes. For example, we can use a macro lens to film the eyes of a very small spider which are normally invisible to the human eye. Conversely, we can also film the face of a person using a telephoto lens, from a distance of three hundred metres, giving the appearance that the subject is very close to us. Furthermore, during editing we can slow down the movement of an action and reveal details about the movement which are not perceptible by eyesight. These examples represent some of the technical possibilities which cinema offers to the filmmaker to represent the world. Vertov was very aware of cinema's potential and continuously experimented with its technical capabilities. This is why Vertov says: “I am kino-eye. I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine, show you the world as only I can see it” .³¹

Vertov's pioneer ideas and manifests are opposed to Flaherty's classic staged reality. He looked upon cinema not only as a medium to represent but also as a means to deepen our understanding of the world. According to Vertov, cinema's creative and technical restrictions allow us to search further and deeper into the world. There is a fundamental difference between that which is humanly visible

³⁰ Cf: Vertov, Dziga. “From Kino-Eye to Radio-Eye” in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, p. 85-92

³¹ Cf: Vertov, Dziga. “Kinoks: A Revolution” (From an Appeal at the Beginning of 1922) in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, p. 17

Roberts, Graham. *The Man with the Movie Camera*. London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2000, p.4-35.

Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, p.71-74

Cf: Feldman, Seth. “Peace between Man and Machine. Diziga Vertov's The Man with a Movie Camera” in Keith Grant, Barry and Sloniowski, Jeannette (Ed). *Documenting the Documentary. Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*. Detroit: Wyane State University Press, 1998, p.43-53

and that which is technically visible through the camera “eye”. The camera technically gives shape to our point of view of the world by forcing us to make technical selections and it is through these selections that we learn about the world. Thus, Vertov did not seek in his films to achieve the “false naturalistic” representation of Flaherty’s films. He chose instead to exploit cinema’s technical potential to represent and learn about the world.

Nevertheless, there is a contradiction between his manifests and his practice, since his films, such as *Kino-Eye* (1925) and *The Eleventh Year* (1928), present an idealised vision of the Soviet Union and served a clear propagandistic purpose of a rational and scientific Marxist society. From this perspective Vertov is not representing the “truth” but the political ideology of the regime in power.³² In fact, Vertov’s editing and filming style exploited the creative possibilities of cinema, just like fiction did, in order to force a representation of society that met the requirements of the regime in power and not necessarily the “truth” about the people or events involved in his films.

After Lenin’s death Stalin took control of film content with political objectives establishing that film financing was dependent on approvals of script and budgets. Vertov, who was completely against scripting and planning, responded to Stalin’s controlling doctrine with his best known and most visionary work: *Man with the Movie Camera*, (1929).³³

The film presents just like in his other films an idealised vision of the Soviet Union. However, in this film, and for the first time, he constantly draws our attention to the fact that we are watching a film. Vertov begins the film by showing us the empty cinema, the projector, the public arriving at the cinema and sitting. Then, the projection of the film on the screen begins. From this

³² Vertov, Dziga. *Kino-Eye*, 1925

Vertov, Dziga. *The Eleventh Year*, 1928

Cf: Blakeston, Oswald. “Two Vertov’s Films” in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.49-52

³³ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 61

Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, p.73-75

moment on, repeatedly, throughout the narrative, we will come back to the cinema to observe the public watching the film. By repeating these images of people watching his film in a cinema he is forcing us to reflect upon our own actions as public since we are also supposed to be watching his film in a cinema. Therefore, he is establishing a relationship between the cinema audience in his film and our actions as cinema spectators. This intends to draw our attention to the fact that we are watching a film and therefore not reality.

In the beginning of the film, Vertov shows us his brother, Mikhail Kaufman, the camera man, filming on top of a horse drawn carriage. Later and throughout the film, we will see Mikhail carrying the camera and filming in many other different locations and situations. Frequently, he will share with the spectator the cameraman's point-of-view of the subject. Sometimes, the person being filmed will look straight back at the camera and therefore to the spectator.³⁴

This intends to focus our attention on the *act* of filming. He first displays the camera operator, then he reveals the point-of-view of what the camera operator sees and films, and finally, the filming subject acknowledges the presence of the camera and of a possible implied audience.

This procedure illustrates and describes the act of film making by establishing a clear strong link between cameraman, the filming process, the subject being filmed and the audience watching the film. Nevertheless, Vertov is also pointing to us the fact that for filming these scenes he had to stage them just like Flaherty did on his films. He could not accomplish them otherwise. He could not capture the camera man filming if he did not set up the shot to do so. He had to prepare and arrange the scene in order to record it. And as we know, through his manifests, staging was not only rejected by Vertov but also one of the main reasons why he condemned fiction film making in the first place in how it represents social reality.³⁵ This outlines an obvious and conscious contradiction

³⁴ Cf: Dziga, Vertov. *Man with the Movie Camera*, 1929

³⁵Cf: Feldman, Seth. "Peace between Man and Machine. Diziga Vertov's The Man with a Movie Camera" in Keith Grant, Barry and Sloniowski, Jeannette (Ed). *Documenting the Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*, p.43-53

against his previous work and manifests. In fact, Vertov, repeatedly, throughout the film, will be showing different staged situations. He wants us to notice that he himself, who condemned scripting and enacting, is presenting now enacted situations. This seems to represent an attempt to make the audience aware of the manipulative nature of cinema to represent reality.

Furthermore, Vertov, in his film, also illustrates the process of editing by showing his wife and editor, Elizaveta Svilova, assembling film strips of a scene that we have apparently previously seen. This is another enacted scene due to the fact that the shots that appear also had to be planned and staged to be accomplished. He could not record those precise images illustrating the process of film editing without preparing them. Thus, he is also attempting to make us conscious of the manipulative nature of film narrative construction in representing the world .³⁶

Man with the Movie Camera presents the first cinematic reflection on the process by which the impression of reality is constructed through filming and editing. The crucial and visionary aspect of the film lies in that Vertov is asking us to question the credibility of the images we see. Therefore, he is warning us to judge and be aware of how, through cinema, we construct our knowledge of the world. And in doing so he is questioning the authenticity of cinema itself and its ability to represent reality.

Cinema's creative and manipulative power can be used to represent and to see further and learn about the world like Vertov had claimed. But also it can be used to fabricate and distort reality in favour of ideologies and regimes in power, like in fact his film making practice had also satisfied. For these reasons, how reality appears to be represented through cinema's technical and creative possibilities, defines one of the most crucial discussions amongst the different aesthetic and ideological tendencies: the relationship between cinematographic

³⁶ Cf:Dziga, Vertov. *Man with the Movie Camera*, 1929

Cf:Vaughan, Dai. "The Man with the Movie Camera" in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.53-59

discourse and reality, a central ethical and rhetorical issue in documentary making. Vertov opened this fundamental discussion in *Man with the Movie Camera*. Others will follow. Like Luis Buñuel's *Las Hurdes* (1933) questioning and raising awareness of misrepresentations or Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* (1983) questioning the assumptions of representing others in a politically, racially and culturally divided world.³⁷

1.3 Cinema and propaganda: an ideological struggle

By the end of the 1930s Vertov was largely forgotten by the West. It is ironic that only a few years after Vertov had opened up the debate about the representation of reality and cinema's technical manipulative potential, documentary and a great part of fiction cinema, became almost exclusively a propagandistic tool worldwide.³⁸

Following the humiliating German defeat in World War I the 1930's turned into a period of political extremism where a battle between two ideological tendencies, communism and fascism, took place. This ideological struggle ends up resulting first in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), followed immediately afterwards by War World II (1939-1945). Consequently, documentary, influenced by the success of Soviet film propaganda, turned almost exclusively into a highly manipulative propagandistic medium which constantly presented a distorted representation of reality. Each side of the political power used the medium to

³⁷ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p.126-128

³⁸It is important to notice that propaganda and faked and fabricated news was a phenomenon that existed long before cinema was born. Therefore, from its very birth cinema was also used for those purposes. During World War I The British government created a War Propaganda Bureau and in 1915 they made agreements between the War Office and leading representatives of the film industry. They agreed to make two types of war films. One for public consumption and other for historical record. During that period German, British and Allied films were composed of faked and re-enacted scenes defending "their side of the story". Many War films were produced during that time. Following the 1917 Revolution, The Russians adopted this propagandistic method with much more success than any other country had managed to achieve before. In Lenin's, and soon after Stalin's communist Soviet Union, political propaganda filtered through all forms of artistic expression becoming the very defining objective of any work of art.

Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, p.30-35

persuade, control and manipulate public's opinion in favour of their values and ideologies.³⁹

The Nazi regime was the first to make an effective use of propaganda with masterful pre-war documentaries such as Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph des Willens* (1934) and *Olympia* (1938). However, it is interesting to underline that Leni Riefenstahl, in her memoirs, insisted that *Triumph des Willens* was not propaganda but a factual historical documentary.⁴⁰ In fact, we can argue that her film presents Hitler as a national leader of great historical importance for Germany. From that perspective the film is a historical document and it is factual. Or we can also argue, like William K. Everson had claimed, that it is one of the best films of all time which has, ever since its conception, greatly influenced film making worldwide.⁴¹ Therefore, you may argue that because of its undeniable and remarkable artistic qualities the film transcends propaganda.

Nonetheless, she could have never made the film without the full cooperation of the Nazi party. It is also obvious what the purpose and objective of the film was and how Goebbels, Hitler's Minister for Popular Entertainment and Propaganda, used it. Someone who constantly ignored and distorted newsreels declaring that "propaganda has nothing to do with the "truth".⁴²

Whichever argument we find to defend either its historical or artistic qualities Leni Riefenstahl's film defended clear political ideals and was produced with

³⁹ Cf: Jacobs, Lewis. "The Military Experience and After" in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.182-186

Cf: Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin. *Film History: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2009, p. 261

⁴⁰ Cf: Dargis, Manohla. "A review of Leni Riefenstahl's memoir" (St.Martin's Press, 1994) by in the *Village Voice*, literary supplement, March 1994 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 130

⁴¹ Cf: Everson, William K. "The Triumph of the Will" in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.138-140

⁴² Cf: Tomasulo, Frank P. "The Mass Psychology of Fascist Cinema. Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will" in Keith Grant, Barry and Sloniowski, Jeannette (Ed). *Documenting the Documentary: Close readings of Documentary Film and Video*, p.101-104

Riefenstahl, Leni. *Triumph des Willens*, 1935

Riefenstahl, Leni. *Olympia*, 1938

unquestionable propagandistic objectives. It is unavoidably linked to some of the most horrific and tragic events in human history, a past that cannot be undone. It happened and you cannot deny it. The images of the film are eternally condemned to be associated to the promotion and adulation of the Nazi's ideals that led to the Second World War.

On the other side of the ideological struggle Frank Capra's scripted masterful series, *Why We Fight* (1942-1945), used patriotism to appeal, persuading young Americans to go to War, arguing the defence of American values and the ideals of democracy against the evil of Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito. These series were made in historical order illustrating Nazi aggression, major war battles and the impact of prewar and war efforts on American public opinion.⁴³

Capra's documentary practice falls under John Grierson's contribution to the politicising of documentary who had persuaded the British Government in the 1930s to do what the Soviets had done since 1918. From 1933 Grierson, influenced by Flaherty's drama of the mundane and Soviet's propagandistic cinema, institutionalised documentary practice through cultivating a community of filmmakers grouped under film units.⁴⁴ He developed a set up of rules and conventions for making documentaries with a didactic and social purpose claiming that cinema had to be useful and of benefit for society. Grierson said: "I look on cinema as a pulpit and use it as propagandist".⁴⁵

⁴³ Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, p.225-226

Cf: Jacobs, Lewis. "The Military Experience and After" in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.182-186

Capra, Frank. *Why We Fight*, 1942-1945

⁴⁴ Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, p.78-79

⁴⁵ Sussex, Elizabeth. "The British Movement" in *The Rise and Fall of British Documentary: The Story of the Film Movement Founded by John Grierson*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1996, p.93-95

Cf: Ellis, Jack. C. and McLane, Betsy A. "Institutionalization: Great Britain 1929-1939". *A New History of Documentary Film*, p.62-63;70-74

Cf: Grierson, John (1898-1972). "First Principles of Documentary (1932)" in Aitken, Ian (Ed). *The Documentary Film Movement: An Anthology*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998 p.81-93.

Grierson's doctrine became very influential and spread throughout many countries, including the United States, initially by individuals like Pare Lorentz, *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936) and *The River* (1937).⁴⁶ During War World II many established Hollywood filmmakers, such as William Wyler, John Ford, George Stevens, Frank Capra or John Huston, began making patriotic documentaries following also Grierson's documentary practice.⁴⁷

Grierson's documentary model served government interests, moving away from Flaherty's personal treatment and Vertov's poetic and visionary practice, in order to establish the role of documentary making as "orator". They were films that, through using an omnipotent voice-over, aimed at predisposing the spectator to have a particular view on the world in defence of the "nation's interest". Just like the Soviets and the Germans, the objective was to construct a sense of national identity based upon the government's policies, priorities and values.⁴⁸

Propaganda is a way of communication that presents specific information destined to influence people's opinions and attitudes towards a particular subject in order to further a political agenda. Fabricating fake truths or news in exchange for some sort of benefit is a phenomenon that existed long before cinema was born. A phenomenon that makes use of any artistic or any other means available to achieve its objectives. Cinema was not an exception.

⁴⁶Pare Lorentz defended a more dramatic and persuasive approach than Grierson's. In fact, he criticized the excessive didactic qualities of Grierson's films. Lorenz designated his films as "Films of Merit".

Cf: Seldes, Gilbert. "Pare Lorentz's *The River*" in Jacob, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, 1979, p.123-125

⁴⁷ Amongst the many films produced during the War we must underline: Wyler's *Memphis Belle* (1944) about a famous bomber plane. John Ford's and Gregg Toland's *December the 7th* (1943) about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and John Huston's *The Battle of San Pietro* (1945), about a battle between the americans an the nazis for the strategic control of Liri, in Italy.

Campos, Jorge. *A Lógica das Imagens. Viagem Pelo(s) Documentário(s)*. Universidade Santiago de Compostela. Departamento de Ciencias da Comunicação, 2008, (Tese Doutoral), p. 320,321

⁴⁸ Cf. Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 145, 148

Cf: Aitken, Ian. "Grierson's Theory of Documentary film" in Aitken, Ian (Ed). *The Documentary Film Movement: An Anthology*, p.39-43

Lorentz, Pare. *The Plow That Broke the Plains*, 1936

Lorentz, Pare. *The River*, 1938

Specially considering its powerful communication potential like Lenin had clearly understood after the Russian Revolution. In 1917 Lenin used cinema, as a way to celebrate the values and culture of the new communist society. Years later, thanks to Grierson and the communist-fascist ideological struggle, fiction cinema and specially documentary, spread throughout the world as an almost exclusive propagandistic instrument. World War II marks one of the highest peaks of cinema-propaganda in film history. It is a time when representing the world we inhabit served the interests of the regime's in power political agenda. In documentary an omnipotent and omniscient voice over narrator tells us what to think and believe about the world. In fact this voiceover becomes the central core of the narrative while images support and illustrate the voiceover's statements. This is how, through documentary-propaganda, audiences, at the time, formed their views and knowledge of the world they inhabited until the 1950s.

1.4 Conclusion

From its very invention, cinema, unlike any other art form, confirmed its ability to represent one of the most essential features of the historical world: movement. From that moment onwards cinema appears associated to the notion of reality. This new artistic medium astonished audiences worldwide by providing evidence of the existence of a past reality.

Even though audiences were prepared, at the time, for receiving the wonders of this magical invention, they had to learn to interpret the technical representation of this new format. Cinema transformed event information from a three dimensional sonic and colourful historical world into a two dimensional silent and grey visual representation: a technical appearance of an event's past existence.

The technical appearance of cinema has raised an ongoing discussion regarding its ability to represent reality. Haskell Wexler's issues with regard to his

testimony's credibility illustrates how representing is not just a question of source authenticity but also of satisfying certain cultural expectations. It is not just an issue of what the event "is" but also of what the event should "appear to be". Different publics from different cultures may have different guidelines for accepting as believable a concrete technical representation of an event.

Cinema's medium offers technical restrictions and creative possibilities for representing the world. Flaherty was unable to film inside a "real" igloo, however, he managed to overcome this technical constraint. In fact, Flaherty, in *Nanook of the North*, succeeded in representing something which did not exist anymore at the time of filming: representing past traditional ways of living. He accomplished that by omitting all references of Inuit's present lifestyle.

Vertov's manifests and reflections had illustrated how, cinema, on the one hand, is an unique technical medium which can further and deepen our understanding of the world. It can help us to perceive and comprehend numerous aspects about our existence in ways which we could not just achieve through our own senses. On the other, through his compelling cinematic reflection, *Man with the Movie Camera*, he has asked us to question cinema's ability to represent reality. He has warned us to judge and reflect upon, how through cinema, we learn and form our opinions of the world we inhabit. Propaganda cinema during the '30s and '40s has confirmed cinema's ability to transform event information into satisfying the interests and agenda of a regime's in power.

These reflections suggest that cinema's potential for learning about the world or for conditioning audiences' opinions depend upon the choices implemented by the filmmaker, not just to express a point of view, but to communicate or omit specific information about the world. Flaherty's decision on representing past traditional ways of living or propaganda films defending a concrete ideology resulted from the information disclosed in their narratives about the events they represented. This process of selecting, omitting and conveying event information to represent a particular point of view of the world was accomplished through cinema's technical and creative possibilities.

Chapter 2

Discussing film sense: some major film theories

2.1 Formalist film theory

In chapter 1 we have discussed cinema's technical and creative abilities to transform and represent a three dimensional historical world into a two dimensional technical appearance. This chapter intends to continue this discussion through introducing some fundamental film theories attempting to identify cinema's purpose and value.

From the very birth of cinema first film theories sought to define cinema and its function. The first arguments revolved around establishing whether cinema could be considered an art form or not. Some theorists considered cinema as a medium to express a tangible objective reality. Others, understood cinema as a medium for cultural, ideological and artistic expression.⁴⁹ This attempt to define cinema's purpose resulted in a direct attack to cinema's realist qualities. Many

⁴⁹ Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 19,20

filmmakers, like Lumière, defended that cinema's objective was to reproduce reality and that for this reason it could not be designated as an artistic medium.⁵⁰ Art was understood as a creative means through which artists could express themselves. Therefore, if cinema was assumed to reproduce reality it could not offer creative possibilities since reproducing implies copying and not creating. From that perspective it was accepted that cinema's reproduction qualities impeded artistic expression. On the other hand, French impressionist critics and avant-garde artists such as Louis Delluc, Germaine Dulac, Abel Gance or Jean Epstein established the concept of *photogénie* which defended and described the uniqueness of cinema as an artistic medium. These artists wrote articles illustrating different technical properties, such as editing, composition or aperture, which allowed the filmmaker to produce art through cinema. Their writings and statements focussed on cinema's exclusive qualities in transforming that which it represented: world and man. Many European avant-garde artists, at the time, from different areas like painting, theatre or poetry, started making films exploring the medium creatively and placing themselves at the centre of the film's expressionistic qualities. Classic examples would include Jean Epstein's *L'Affiche* (1925), Abel Gance's *La Roue* (1922), or Germaine Dulac's *The Smiling Madame Beudet* (1923).⁵¹

Early film theory, designated as Formalist film theory⁵², was born out of this

⁵⁰ Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, p. 28

⁵¹ Cf: Andrew, Dudley J. *The Major Film Theories. An Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976, p. 11,12aroll, Noël. *The Philosophy of Motion Pictures*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, p. 53-55

Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 89,90

⁵²Dudley Andrew, in *Major Film Theories. An Introduction (1976)*, has grouped the authors referred in this chapter, Hugo Münsterberg, Rudolph Arheim and Sergei Eisenstein, under "The Formative Tradition". This includes the Tradition of Formalism which he identified with hungarian theorist and filmmaker Béla Bálász.

Conversely, Ian Christie, has grouped the same authors under Russian Formalism: Christie, Ian. "Formalism and Neo-formalism" in Hill, John and Church, Pamela (Ed). *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 58-62.

Additionally, Anthony Easthope has also considered Arheim as formalist in Hill, John and Church, Pamela (Ed). *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 51-54.

Furthermore, James Monaco has also placed Eisenstein's theories in the formalist tradition in

discussion. Like the French impressionists they defended that cinema was an art form unable to reproduce reality. Formalists' theorists centred their arguments on film technique condemning the photographic realism of cinema. For the formalists, reality had to be transformed in order to be represented and montage, unlike photography, was the primary unifying element that made cinema an art. Until approximately the end of War World II Formalist film theory had been almost unopposed.

Hugo Münsterberg, a German-American pioneer in applied psychology, wrote the first major film theory: *The Photoplay. A Psychological Study* (1916). He argued that cinema was a powerful tool that could satisfy many important social functions such as education or providing information about the world. However, he saw its greater potential in narrative. He claimed that cinema had a natural affinity for constructing narratives. In fact, he considered that cinema without narrative was only an amusing gadget with no significance. For Münsterberg it was only through narrative that cinema could become an art form since narrative unifies all cinematic elements into producing meaning. He conceived the entire cinematic procedure as a mental process for he argued that it was the mind that conferred meaning and signification to the narrative. Cinema was not just a technical medium but specially a mental one since it was the mind of the spectator that allocated meaning to specific elements and contents presented in the film narrative. Thus, Münsterberg focussed much of his theory on the psychological processes undertaken by the spectator when watching a film narrative. According to Dudley Andrew he had little effect on subsequent film theory. However, much of his theory regarding the spectator's ability to produce meaning is also present in Sergei Eisenstein's later influential Formalist film theory.⁵³

opposition to Realist film theory in Monaco, James. *How to Read a Film. Movies, Media and Beyond*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 441- 448.

Since these last publications are more recent and updated than Dudley's *Major Film Theories. An Introduction*, we have decided to refer to the authors in this chapter as formalists.

⁵³ Cf: Andrew, Dudley J. *The Major Film Theories. An Introduction*, p.13-27,134, 143

Münsterberg preceded Rudolf Arnheim's Gestalist film theories by a few years. Arnheim focussed his arguments on defending that cinema was an art form. He claimed that no picture could ever faithfully copy nature in an empirical manner. All cinematic images were equally artificial for film was based on the manipulation of the technically visible and not of the humanly visible. A camera cannot reproduce our eyesight experience. It can only transform and acquire that which we see through the camera lens, and we can only capture two dimensional images. This is why he argued that a two dimensional image could only represent an illusion of a three dimensional reality. Arnheim went to the great extent of enumerating most technical aspects that could confirm that cinema was "unreal" such as depth of field, film-stock, lenses, aperture or editing. These elements for Arnheim represent technical restrictions in representing reality. The artist in order to represent the world can only manipulate the technical elements creatively and consciously but not to reproduce reality.⁵⁴

Hungarian filmmaker and formalist film theorist, Bela Balász, added a new dimension to this discussion by declaring that images by themselves were nothing but mere reality. He defended like Arnheim and Münsterberg that montage was the unifying element that made cinema an art form. The shot was a fact which had to be structured into an order to have meaning and was precisely montage that turned its content into truth or false. Balász's vision of film technique was completely based on the belief that films were not pictures of reality but rather the humanization of nature, since images and their context were the products of the culture we inhabit.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Cf: Arnheim, Rudolf. *Film and Reality. Film as Art*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957, p. 8-34

Cf: Carroll, Noël. *The Philosophy of Motion Pictures*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, p. 55-57

⁵⁵ Cf: Balász, Béla, *Theory of the Film*; Dennis Dobson Ltd, London 1952, First published Moscow 1945 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality. The Faber Book of Documentary*, p 128

Cf: Andrew, Dudley J. *Major Film Theories*, p 98

Amongst formalist film theorists Sergei Eisenstein's writings offered the most compelling and influential reflections. Eisenstein, just like Arnheim, claimed that reality could not be directly depicted by simply recording it with a camera. For Eisenstein the central issue lies on how an event should be transformed technically so it could become "truthful". On his essays "Montage" and "Word and Image"⁵⁶ he offers a concrete reflection on how reality should be represented through implementing a technical treatment. Eisenstein outlined that any event or story can be filmed in countless different ways. However, he believed that there was only one correct way for representing the event "truthfully". According to Eisenstein the filmmaker must appropriate the true form of the event by fragmenting the appearances of the event and then reconstructing it technically again according to a "reality principle".⁵⁷

For Eisenstein, nature and history, like montage, obey a principle of dialectical form. The filmmaker must identify the dialectical form of the event they want to represent. They must investigate the event and find its true nature which is disguised in the appearance of reality. In order to achieve that they must understand the essence of the event: what concept, meaning or idea defines and unifies the event as a whole? Only then, they will be able to identify and choose the right "theme" for its subject. The theme must be understood as the essence or "soul" which resumes the different elements that constitute the dialectical true form of the event. The theme, according to Eisenstein, lies in nature, and therefore in the event we want to represent, for man cannot imagine anything that they do not know and everything they know comes from nature.

⁵⁶ Cf: Eisenstein, Sergei. "Word and Image" in Eisenstein, Sergei. *The Film Sense*. Translated and edited by Jay Leyda. New York: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace and Company, 1975, p. 3-69

Cf: Eisenstein, Sergei. "Montage in 1938" in Eisenstein, Sergei. *Notes of a Film Director*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1970, p. 62-98

⁵⁷ Cf: Eisenstein, Sergei. *The Film Sense*, p. 30-31

Cf: Eisenstein, M. Sergei. "The Montage of Film Attractions" in Lehman, Peter. *Defining Cinema*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1997, p.18,24

Cf: Dancyger, Ken. *Técnicas de Edição para Cinema e Vídeo. História, Teoria e Prática*. Tradução de Angélica Coutinho, Adriana Araújo Kramer. Revisão técnica de Márcia Bessa. Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier: Campus, 2007, p.19-39

For instance, the theme of his first feature films *Strike* (1925) and *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) are the exploitation of the working class and collectivism in opposition to Western values of individualism. Therefore, all the technical choices implemented for constructing these two films are conditioned and unified by these two themes. This implies that choices in terms of composition, lighting or editing intend to signify and produce meaning with regard to collectivism and working class exploitation.⁵⁸ Hence, the theme penetrates all montage elements within the film so as to orientate the director to make the right technical and creative choices in representing truthfully the event. This means that the theme determines the director's choices on acting, lighting, composition, art direction or editing. Each one of these elements will have to represent and signify the theme. This way the theme unifies all cinematic elements under one purpose: representing the event in its "true" form.⁵⁹

Eisenstein also stated that audiences' narrative comprehension play a crucial active role in completing the representation and subsequent signification of the event. According to Eisenstein audiences, when watching a film, they will re-create the theme of the film by interpreting intellectually and emotionally its content. During the process of watching a film audiences receive fragmented ideas and feelings in the form of two dimensional images. The spectator must put these fragments together and re-construct the story according to its theme which appears diluted in the dialectical form of the film. Thus, the audience must identify the theme in the shot composition, acting, or lighting in order to understand the true form of the event. For this reason Eisenstein had argued that meaning in a film narrative is not complete until an audience interprets its intellectual and emotional content.⁶⁰ In fact, a film narrative is a two dimensional audiovisual format which presents an assemble of images in a particular order.

⁵⁸ Cf: Eisenstein, Sergei. *The Film Sense*, p. 32

⁵⁹ Cf: Eisenstein, Sergei. *Notes of a Film Director*, p. 64-67

Cf: Eisenstein, Sergei. *The Film Sense*, p. 11

⁶⁰ Cf: Eisenstein, Sergei. *Notes of a Film Director*, p. 68,69,77,78

Cf: Tudor, Andrew. *Teorias do Cinema e Audiovisual*. Lisboa: Edições 70, 2009, p.48

These images, like Eisenstein had stated, do not signify or represent the event unless an audience confer them meaning.

2.2 Neorealist film theory

Formalist's complex views on reality representation through transformation by cinematic technique, at the end of World War II, will be confronted and opposed by a "new way" of making cinema and representing reality: Italian Neorealism. A movement launched by Roberto Rosellini's *Roma, Città Aperta* (1945), Vittorio de Sica's *Siuscià* (1946) and Luchino Visconti's *A Terra Treme* (1948). This movement was partly influenced and motivated by World War II documentaries immortalizing evidence of war horrors, and a need to denounce the truth in post-war Italy. These films were reminiscent of Flaherty's practice in *Nanook of the North* (1922) and *Man of Aran* (1934). Neo-realist filmmakers did not use formalist's montage techniques or French impressionist's *photogenie* forms of representation. They used natural lighting, location shooting, untrained actors, they rejected close-ups and their stories stressed the problems confronting ordinary people in the present moment rather than the historical past or an imagined future. Their films presented an unadorned view of everyday life giving a vivid sense of post-war Italy through the hopes and anxieties of ordinary people, which generated a strong sense of empathy on its audience. These choices of style and content gave their narratives a sense of a highly psychological, emotional and photographic realism. In fact, at the time, these films were referred to as documentaries.⁶¹

Neorealist filmmakers, like Vertov had already defended, sought to capture life as it was, barehanded, without manipulations or preconceptions. Their technical

⁶¹ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 92,93

Cf: Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin. *Film History: An Introduction*, p.254,255, 331,332

Cf: Sadoul, Georges. *História do Cinema Mundial: das origens aos nossos dias*. Trad Manuel Ruas. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1983, p.369-373

treatment became a new tendency defining a new direction in film aesthetics and reality was the key aspect defining the artistic and technical choices involved in film making.⁶² Nevertheless, the neorealist's films were fictions and highly manipulative in their technical treatment when representing reality. However, given the previous fascist upper class studio Italian fiction dramas and the propagandistic contamination that characterised cinema worldwide during the '30s and '40s, neorealist films felt powerfully truthful in depicting post-war Italian reality.⁶³ In fact the celebration of Italian Neorealism achievements gave birth to a new film theory which opposed past formalist conceptions, claiming that photography, and not montage, was cinema's primary and most important feature. This new theory was termed Realist film theory. Just like Eisenstein with regard to Formalist film theory, André Bazin, offered its most important and influential reflections.⁶⁴

On his essay, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image", André Bazin opposed formalist film theory proclaiming the dependence of cinema on reality since it was through reality that cinema could achieve its full potential. He argued that photography was cinema's most important quality because it could affect us like a phenomenon in nature. Bazin stated that photography produced images, automatically and mechanically, leaving traces of existence like "fingerprints", without the need of man's creative intervention. For this reason he considered cinema the media of nature and not of man. ⁶⁵ "All the arts are based on the presence of man, only photography derives an advantage from his absence". ⁶⁶

⁶² Cf: Costa, António. *Compreender o Cinema*. São Paulo: Editora Globo, 1987, p.104,106

⁶³ Martin Scorsese, on his television series dedicated to Italian cinema, *My Voyage to Italy* (1999), passionately remembers the impact that those films had on him and his family during his childhood when watching them on television in the United States. Scorsese, on his documentary, explains how his family, and a whole Italian generation, felt completely identified with the reality described in those films. Scorsese describes how his family sitting in the living-room at his home were silent and with a tragic expression in their faces while watching with attention the neorealist films.

Scorsese, Martin. *Il mio viaggio in Italia/ My Voyage to Italy*, 1999

⁶⁴ Cf: Andrew, Dudley J. *Major Film Theories*, p. 134

⁶⁵ Cf: Bazin, André. "The Myth of Total Cinema" in *What is Cinema?* , p.17 -19

⁶⁶ Bazin, André. "The Ontology of the photographic Image" in *What is Cinema?*, p.13

André Bazin found on Italian Neorealism the perfect illustration for his arguments. Although the Italian films were fictional narratives, they demonstrated what Bazin considered a profound respect for reality by finding “a narrative 'voice' that was humble and modest but hardly silent”.⁶⁷

André Bazin was also against Soviet fragmented montage and Hollywood’s “invisible” realistic editing technique. He argued in favour of the long take and the concept he called “depth-of-field” which permitted an action to develop over a long period of time and on several spatial planes. Depth-of-field technique was based on the focus remaining sharp from the camera lens to infinity. This permitted the director to have the option of constructing dramatic interrelationships within the frame rather than between frames like in Soviet montage. This technique will be later termed “mise-en-scène”. Bazin argued that depth-of-field was far more realistic than montage for it confronted our normal psychological way of experiencing events, and so it confronted us with a reality we often failed to recognize.⁶⁸

According to Bazin the spatial realism of a shot was destroyed by the process of montage since it fragmented the event into several images instead of representing it in one continuous shot. This is why Bazin argued in favour of the long take for it preserved the continuum flow of space and time. Conversely, Eisenstein had considered the long take unintelligent and uncertain of meaning. Bazin agreed with Eisenstein on this point but stated that nature had many senses and was itself ambiguous. Therefore, in representing reality, such ambiguity is a value and cinema should preserve it, making us aware of its possibilities. Bazin is defending that the ambivalence of meaning in terms of, for example an actor's performance or the actions presented in a composition, adds depth to cinema and to the representation of reality. This is because, according to Bazin, reality doesn't have fixed meanings or values. It is always uncertain and unpredictable and cinema should maintain and cherish its

⁶⁷ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 92

Cf: Bazin, André. “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema” in *What is Cinema?*, p. 37,38

⁶⁸ Cf: Bazin, André. “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema” in *What is Cinema?*, p. 24-26

enigmatic qualities. Furthermore, Bazin also points out that Hollywood's invisible narrative, like Soviet montage, represents the antithesis of true realism for they take from the audience their freedom to choose their own interpretation of the event. He defended that depth-of-field technique granted the spectator freedom to interpret. He illustrated his point by referring to Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942). On these films, Welles made a masterful and historical use of the long take and depth-of-field. According to Bazin, Welles not only gave an interpretative choice to the audience but also, at the same time, made the spectator experience "the ambivalence of reality". The fact is that both films offered remarkable long takes with impressive depth of field compositions. According to Bazin, due to the information disclosed in the different planes of the composition (foreground, background and off-screen) the viewer was forced to focus on a specific action since they were unable to grasp the content available in the shot as a whole. This confers the image an "ambiguity" and "uncertainty" of meaning which reflects upon the nature of our existence .⁶⁹

2.3 Mitry, Metz and beyond

Realist film theory, according to Jean Mitry, seems to have ignored the economical, technical, professional and ideological aspects involved in representing reality through cinema. The representation of the world is not "natural" in cinema. It is the result of applying creative and technical choices. Jean Mitry has stated that it is naïve to defend that the long take is more truthful or less artificial in representing reality than fragmented Soviet montage. Both are equally manipulative and valid for representing the historical world. Mitry also

⁶⁹ Cf: Bazin, André. "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema" in *What is Cinema?*, p. 30-37

Cf: Bazin, André. "The Virtues and Limitations of Montage" in *What is Cinema?*, p. 50-52

Welles, Orson. *Citizen Kane*, 1941

Welles, Orson. *The Magnificent Ambersons*, 1942

argued that in Bazin's long take there is no free will of interpretation since the spectator's attention is also conditioned by the action and other cinematic elements such as lighting, wardrobe, art direction, music or sound design, that constitute the composition. The long take is orchestrated by the director in order to achieve certain dramatic qualities. This orchestration orientates the viewer's attention in the frame in a similar way to that accomplished by Soviet montage.⁷⁰

Cinema, according to Mitry, “replaces the homogenous reality of our continuum perception, with a series of discontinued fragments”⁷¹ A process through which the director reconstructs reality. Therefore, the portion of the world being represented is transformed through the means and choices involved in the act of representation. From this moment on reality is not longer seen to be objective. When transformed into cinema reality becomes something else. It is another time and another space and so it becomes another reality. Mitry in arguing against Bazin's theories claimed that, accepting the image as reality is surrendering to its emotional and psychological effect. Still, this does not mean that cinema does not reveal truths about the world or that neorealist films did not present truths on the screen about post-war Italy. However, it means that it is not the same reality. The representation in their films points to that reality as the origin of the image. Therefore, images work as a separate entity from reality while at the same time serve as indicator or evidence of its origin. And for this reason images can hardly be discussed outside their relation to the objects they are images of. Film image exists alongside the world it represents, since in fact the world that the image refers to continues to exist independently of the film.⁷² Mitry's arguments suggest that cinema only permits the filmmaker to capture fractions of information about reality. Cinema's technical qualities restricts filmmakers' possibilities to acquiring specific sections of event information. A shot size can only obtain a certain amount of visual or sound information about

⁷⁰ Cf: Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of Cinema*. Translated by Christopher King. London: Athlone Press, 1998, p.193-197

⁷¹ Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of Cinema*, p.168

⁷² Cf: Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of Cinema*, p.169-173

an event, for as Mitry had argued, the world continues to exist off-screen and independently of the choices implemented by the filmmaker in representing it. It is from that limited amount of event information that a filmmaker is able to represent the event.

A new approach, in understanding cinema's purpose and value, appears in 1964 when, according to Francesco Casetti, on the number four edition of French magazine *Communications*, Christian Metz published an essay with the question: "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" (that is: Cinema: language or language system?). Metz, with this question, opened into debate a fundamental question in the understanding of cinema by inquiring whether cinema could be understood as a language form. At the same time, Roland Barthes, on the same magazine edition, published *Eléments de Sémiologie*, (Elements of Semiology) a manifest of Metz's proposal questioning whether cinema could be the object of study through semiotics.⁷³

According to Casetti, film semiotics results of a dissatisfaction with past philosophical and ontological theories due to being considered too open-ended and general.⁷⁴ Semiology can be understood as the science of meaning. For this reason film semiotics sought to construct a comprehensive model capable of explaining how a film embodies meaning or signifies it to an audience.⁷⁵ Thus, film semiotics, for instance, aims to establish the general possibilities for producing meaning in a close-up-shot and then, at the same time, tries to determine and differentiate the specific of meaning of the close-up in the films of a particular director. However, in order to apply semiotics to cinema, film must be established as a language system with specific units of fixed meaning.

Metz in answering his own question concluded that cinema is not a true language system because you cannot divide cinema, like words, in units of

⁷³ Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 107.

Cf: Barthes, Roland. *Elements of Semiology*, translated by Anette Lavers and Colin Smith. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981

⁷⁴ Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 153

⁷⁵ Cf: Andrew, Dudley J. *Major Film Theories*, p. 214-216

minimum meaning. Cinema, has not fixed units of meaning, for each shot is always a case of its own, or units without meaning, since every shot has its own meaning. Thus, cinema does not possess a fixed system and it is not constituted by a set of signs. For this reason, cinema does not support itself by a vocabulary like a language. You produce meaning in cinema by combining its technical elements. On the other hand, cinema's images cannot be interpreted as signs, like words, since each shot is already an enunciation.⁷⁶

Even though Metz proved to himself that cinema was not a language system, and therefore not suitable for semiotics, he contradicted himself. He embarked on a scientific research to discover how films communicate by attempting to apply to the study of film communication the principles of structural linguistics on the assumption that film is a type of language. Later he turned to an approach which combined structural linguistics theory and psychoanalysis.⁷⁷ In the late '60s and '70s Roland Barthes, who contributed greatly to the settlement of semiotics, questioned and contradicted his own past claims by defending that any work of literature, reportage or film could not be reduced to a set of signs or codes.⁷⁸

Pier Paolo Pasolini, on his essay "Heretical Empiricism", according to Casetti, argued that images were not stable terms that could be grouped in a lexicon. There cannot be an image dictionary for there are not finished and prepared images ready for their use. Every time you make a film you have to create the signs before you can give them expression or meaning. Pasolini stated that films take advantage of a common patrimony of meaning: culture, gestures, words, music, painting or architecture. Therefore, cinema appropriates already existing signs from the world we inhabit in order to construct and produce its own signs

⁷⁶ Cf: Metz, Christian. "Language or Language System" in *Film Language. A Semiotics of Cinema*. Translated by Michael Taylor. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991, p.59, 65-67

Cf: Metz, Christian. "Problems of Denotation in the Fiction Film" in *Film Language. A Semiotics of Cinema*, p.114-116, 141,142

⁷⁷ Cf: Metz, Christian. *Psychoanalysis and Cinema. The imaginary Signifier*. London: The MacMillan Press LTD, 1983

⁷⁸ Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 235

and signification.⁷⁹

Jean Mitry also offered a poignant and compelling reflection on this subject. Mitry contested Metz's views by affirming that cinema is in fact a language but not with the logic of a linguistic system. Cinema cannot be called a language within the classic definition since film is something other than a sign and symbol system. Mitry argued that a language is a means of expression, a complex system of signs and symbols that convey information.⁸⁰ A linguistic sign is the outcome of the relationship between signifier and signified. For instance, the word car and the idea of a car. In cinema the image is analogous with the object it represents. However, it is not obvious in terms of signification for images not only show the object but also its characteristics: it does not refer just to the car but also to a type of car. An image represents an object and, at the same time, forces us to think about the object in the context of the narrative. The car denotes the idea of a car but also, in accordance with the narrative, it may denote other meanings. In a scene where two men are sitting in a bar having a drink and an attractive woman passes by, followed by the men looking at her body and smiling, may signify that these men are attracted to the woman. However, if one of the men looks tenderly to the other, holds the other's hand and kisses it, it will certainly signify other information about the characters and the story.⁸¹ Meanwhile verbal signification consists of a relationship of signs, film signification consists of a relationship of facts. However, words are already significant in their own terms but facts and images are not signs. In cinema the signifier is never one image but a relationship between images. Mitry claimed that the most important aspect of language lies in the fact that it signifies and therefore that it provides access to meaning. This is why cinema, from this perspective, is also a language. However, even though images assume the quality of a sign they are not one in itself. Cinema language is not based on fixed

⁷⁹ Cf: Paolo, Passolini. "Empirismo Eretico (1972)", Itália: Garzanti, 1988 quoted by Casetti, Francesco in *Teorías del Cine*, p.157-159

⁸⁰ Cf: Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p.15-17

⁸¹ Cf: Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p.123,124, 367-369

values with constant unvarying meaning like words. For this reason, Mitry stated that the idea of a film grammar is impossible since all grammars are based on fixed values and therefore on the unity and conventionality of signs. According to Mitry, any attempt to submit cinema to the laws of grammar is bound to fail.⁸²

Semiotics can contribute to the understanding of cinema and its purpose since images act like signs, and therefore represent events or people from the world we inhabit, and in doing so they signify and communicate with us. In fact, cinema first is perception which eventually becomes a language when you combine its elements in a particular way in order to communicate. Therefore, semiotics can be of help in understanding how images may communicate. It may be particularly useful to study genre cinema like westerns or horror films for these films fall into specific categories. These films could not be designated as such unless certain codes or conventions and signs were in place to confer that publicly recognized classification. However, a strict scientific approach to the understanding of cinema is bound to fail since attempting to classify cinema as a closed system of codes and signs represents a never-ending puzzle. The reason, as Pasolini had clearly pointed out, is that cinema takes advantage of a world full of different signs and codes, and that culturally, are always in evolution. As history evolves the meaning attributed to a sign might change. The colour red normally associated to passion, violence or danger in certain cultural contexts one hundred years forward in time might evolved to signify peace or productivity. The possibilities for the evolution and production of meaning through signs in society are also limitless.

Conversely, in every film, signs and codes, have to be organised by the filmmaker under certain rules and parameters, so that the audience can understand what they signify. These parameters might change from film to film or from filmmaker to filmmaker, and so will the signification and meaning of their signs. For instance, the colour red, a gun, a dog, a camera movement, a word or a melody, in a Bergman or Pasolini film, may have different meaning.

⁸² Cf: Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p. 367-372

Furthermore, these filmmakers, on each one of their films, might apply a different set of rules for these constituents. They may combine them in a different order and allocate a different signification to each one of them. This new combination will change the way we understand what these elements signify in their new narrative.

Signification in cinema does not exist by itself as a fixed norm but it must be created by the filmmaker through establishing links and associations amongst the different contents and elements that constitute the narrative. First, during the filming process, and after, during narrative construction. Cinema's technical and creative possibilities offer the filmmaker an endless source for producing meaning. Martin Scorsese stated in his documentary *My Voyage to Italy*, when describing the enigmatic ending of Antonioni's *Eclipse*, "cinema's possibilities are limitless".⁸³

We can find an alternative approach to semiotics and structuralism theories in the phenomenological film theory of Henri Agel, Amedee Ayfree, or Roger Munier. According to Andrew Dudley their work expands on Bazin's theories. They recognised the importance of semiotics and psychology in the understanding of cinema. However, they argued that cinema cannot be only understood rationally. We must also look upon cinema spiritually, intuitively and emotionally. Cinema, after all, is not just, like Münsterberg claimed an art of the mind, but also an art that results from our emotions, intuition and spiritual link with the world that surrounds us. Cinema is not a car or a computer that you can look into its physical pieces. Cinema, like art and life, is also an experience. Phenomenology film theory warns us that rationality is only one of the possibilities to understand and respond to reality. This is why Agel and Ayfree, according to Dudley, argued that semioticians tended to value only the cinema of signification whose greatest exponent was Eisenstein. His films, they argued, are based on a syntax of significant juxtapositions. However, there are other types of cinema, like that of Rosellini, Mizoguchi, Renoir or Dreyer, which refuses

⁸³ Scorsese, Martin. *Il mio viaggio in Italia/ My Voyage to Italy*, 1999

to force meaning onto the audience. It is a cinema of contemplation which allows a sense of the world to slowly appear in their narratives.⁸⁴

Phenomenologist's views on cinema seem to suggest that we should be careful not to “close all doors” with rules, manifests and theories in an unproductive attempt to impose our views on one another. Each theory and point of view has its own value, contribution and place in the understanding of cinema. Film can be seen as an experience and can be ontologically, historically, philosophically and scientifically studied and understood. All perspectives, when open minded, enrich our knowledge and experience of cinema.

In fact, when reading Eisenstein's poignant theories and reflections we can feel the presence of a distressing struggle between: the theorist, that who wanted to scrutinise and deconstruct cinema to its most infinite detail, and the artist, who would greatly suffer if some day the theorist managed to find all the answers. Since that day, Eisenstein knew, it would mean the end of cinema as an art form. If we uncover all signs, codes and systems, under which cinema's great mystery lies, it would mean that cinema will cease to surprise us and there will be no more use for it. Not as an art form through which we can learn and enrich our knowledge and experience of the world. For this reason Jean Mitry said: “Film forms owe their existence to what is represented and to it alone, to the reality which offers, in its image, the means of both of representing and transfiguring it. These forms are therefore as varied as life itself, and just as life can never be regulated, so it is with an art which is both subject and object. The fundamental mistake was in trying to force the cinema into the conventional norms of art, as though life could be turned into stone for the purpose of fixing it for all eternity”.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Cf: Andrew, Dudley J. *The Major Film Theories. An Introduction*, p. 244-246

⁸⁵ Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p. 369

2.4 Conclusion

Cinema has been established as an art form unable to “reproduce reality”. A medium which offers technical restrictions and creative possibilities for representing the world. Due to its technical qualities cinema can only acquire sections of information about the event we represent. A specific composition can only incorporate a limited volume of visual and sound information. It is from that concrete source of event information that filmmakers construct their narratives to represent the world. The creative and technical choices involved in representing it, like Arnheim, Münsterberg, Mitry or Eisenstein had argued, results from intellectual justifications. The artist-filmmaker must make conscious technical and creative options for representing the event. For Eisenstein nature and history, like montage, obey to a principle of intellectual dialectical form. However, cinema cannot be reduced to be the outcome of rational input for the choices involved in representing reality result also from our emotions, intuition and the spiritual link with the world that surrounds us. This is why phenomenologists have argued that cinema, like life, must also be understood and considered an experience. Not just the experience of watching the film but also the experience of making the film since cinema, when representing the historical world, displays the filmmaker's personal experience of the event represented.

In fact, the world we represent constantly reminds us, like Mitry had argued, that there are countless ways for representing it. Each filmmaker can produce a different representation and signification of the same event. It is for this reason that cinema cannot be considered a language in linguistic terms but a language, like Mitry poignantly claimed, in the sense that it produces meaning about the world that it represents. Mitry and Pasolini's persuasive arguments have confirmed that cinema cannot be reduced to fixed units of meaning for a film narrative cannot be subdivided into physical parts like a car. In order to produce meaning and signification the filmmaker must organise event information into a particular structure. This organisation attributes specific meaning to the

elements that constitute the narrative. Each film may allocate different meaning to different elements in accordance with the filmmaker's choices. Hence, in every film, signs and codes have to be organised by the filmmaker under certain rules and parameters, so that the audience can understand what they signify. And with each film or filmmaker, rules and parameters might change, and so will the signification and meaning of the visual and sound elements that constitute the narrative. It is for this reason that representing reality cannot be dependent on whether we use fragmented Soviet montage, Hollywood "invisible" technique or Bazin's long take and depth-of-field. They are all equally manipulative and suitable for representing the world.

Conversely, a film narrative organises fragments of visual and sound information. Like Eisenstein and Münsterberg had argued, meaning and signification does not exist by itself in the narrative "object" constructed by the filmmaker. Audiences play a crucial role in completing the narrative signification through undertaking narrative comprehension. The spectator must interpret the visual and sound content of these fragments and through this process they produce and confer specific meaning to the narrative elements. This suggests that event representation and its subsequent signification results from the audience's interpretation of the filmmaker's technical and creative treatment implemented for constructing the narrative.

Chapter 3

Documentary: a cinema about reality

3.1 Breaking with the past

The late '40s and early '50s represent a time of rupture with past values, specially those related to sensible subjects such as propaganda and censorship. It is the time of the birth of a new generation with new concepts about reality and a new cinema seeking free individual expression. A time of fundamental cultural, technical and conceptual changes that will change the way we make cinema and represent reality forever.

After War World II, Hollywood's worldwide film market dominance diminished considerably due to a shortage of film production, television competition and the fact that Europe re-established its film production industry and international commerce. This is time when a new exhibition cinema circuit appears: the "art house" cinema which resulted from the appearance of a new type of educated, middle class, *cinéphile* audience. These new audiences were interested in a new

type of film content related to contemporary ideas of modernism in art and literature which Hollywood at the time failed partly to supply.

As a result, rooted in opposition to Hollywood's classical narrative form, emerged Art Cinema narration, embracing a new multifaceted concept of reality, influenced by Italian neorealist's aesthetics and story-lines, and the new literary modernism of early-twentieth-century literature. The Hollywood classical version of the representation of reality was rooted in the popular short story novel of late nineteenth century drama, such as those of Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Dickens, where reality was assumed as a coherent and consistent event. Realistic motivation appeared structured in terms of cause and effect and driven by the objectives of a clearly defined protagonist.⁸⁶

Hollywood's classical narrative was the fruit and inheritance first of Edwin S. Porter's (*The Great Train Robbery*, 1903) and specially D.W. Griffith (*The Birth of a Nation*, 1915). Edwin S. Porter established the fluidity of continuity in narrative. D.W. Griffith, influenced by Charles Dickens' literature, set up the foundations for the actual common Hollywood dominant figures of style such as shot/reverse shot, the establishing shot, dramatic use of close-up, parallel editing and the concept of eye-line and shot matching. Griffith, at the time, sought to subvert style and technique to narrative. The objective was to create a narrative that seemed like a continuous flow of reality where technique was "invisible" to audiences.⁸⁷ Griffith intended for audiences to be unaware of the technical process involved in constructing a narrative. The lighting, composition, production design or the editing remained "invisible" for the spectator who was instead absorbed by the storyline and the character's psychological and

⁸⁶ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in the Fiction Film*, p. 206, 229,230

⁸⁷ Cf: Reisz, Karel; Miller, Gavin. *Técnicas del Montaje Cinematográfico*. Madrid: Plot Ediciones, 2007, p.16-19, 19-25

Cf: Cook, David. A. *A History of Narrative Film*. New York: W.W Norton and Company Inc,1996, p.22-25 63-70, p.81-85, 101

Cf: Fabe, Marilyn. *Closely Watched Films: An Introduction to the Art of Narrative Film Technique*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004, p. 2-7

Cf: António, Lauro. *Temas de Cinema: David Griffith, Orson Welles e Stanley Kubrick*. Lisboa: Dinalivro, 2010, p. 50-57

emotional motivations. This new form of “invisible” technical narrative reached its highest point during the '30s and '40s when Hollywood developed the genre cinema with westerns, musicals, horror or suspense films. Genre fiction films referred to the method similarities in terms of narrative content and forms.

According to David Bordwell, Art Cinema narration, influenced by literary modernism from authors such as Anton Chekhov, questioned classical views on reality presenting a new “subjective” version of reality, where the world may appear inconsistent or undefinable and personal psychology may become incoherent or indeterminate. The new general consensus was that life, as an experience, was much more complex than art could be. The only way to respect this complexity was to leave questions unanswered. Thus, cinema developed a new convention for representing an ambiguous reality through unclear character’s psychology and motivations and open-ended story-lines.⁸⁸

Art Cinema narration sought to capture the nature of ambiguous reality by following neorealist conventions in depicting real-life routine and special moments. Their films presented a multifaceted undefinable reality where subject matter was based on contemporary psychological problems such social alienation and lack of communication. Like in the case of Neorealism, Art Cinema filmmakers, shot their films on location without using Hollywood lighting set ups. They also used different narrative techniques that confronted Hollywood’s “invisibility” such as elliptical editing, flash forward or long takes. They did not use this narrative forms as fixed closed conventions but as a flexible means of individual expression. Unlike Hollywood’s comprehensible and coherent protagonists, Art Cinema films presented undefined character’s, without clear emotional or psychological motivations which passively shift from one situation to another without an obvious explanation. Filmmakers, such as Antonioni, Bergman, or Resnais, explored open-ended narratives based on chance and on an explained ambiguity. For instance, at the end of Antonioni’s

⁸⁸ Cf: Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin. *Film History: An Introduction*, p 206, 207, 210, 211, 230

Cf: Plantinga, Carl R. *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*, p 140

La Notte (1961) a woman in a party asks the writer Giovanni how a story could end. The writer answers: "In so many ways"⁸⁹

Art Cinema in France manifested itself through the *Nouvelle Vague*, a group of young critics and filmmakers who wrote for *Cahiers du Cinéma*⁹⁰. They defended a break with traditional past cinematic conventions. François Truffaut, in 1954, wrote a famous manifest on the *Cahiers*, "Une certaine tendance du cinema français", criticising an industry which did not value the work of the director and a cinema which he considered lost touch with reality: an evasive "bourgeois" cinema for a "bourgeois" class.

The same happened before with Italian Neorealism in relation to their "white telephone" romantic dramas. On the other hand, *Cahier's* manifest "politique des auteurs" marked a fundamental conceptual shift. The author-director becomes the central core of the cinematic expression. The focus of attention is not the content, "what you say", but the style, "how you say it". Thus, from now on, the value in cinema lies in the director's subjective artistic treatment of film subject and its subsequent statement about the world.

Other statements and movements reacting and breaking with past traditions, in the same way as the *Nouvelle Vague* and Italian Neorealism, appeared in other parts of the world like in the case of the New South American and North American cinema, or the *Neues Deutsches Kino* in Germany or the new cinema in East Europe and Japan. These movements, even though they all shared a rupture with past traditions, they also manifested some clear differences and objectives. In France there was a desire to manifest the "ambiguity of reality" through a subjective character and narrative treatment. In the United Kingdom there was a clear compromise to break with conformist politics and past traditions. In South America the novelty appears in national liberation movements that fought against colonialism and capitalism re-discovering and

⁸⁹ Antonioni, Michelangelo. *La Notte*, 1961

Cf: Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin. *Film History: An Introduction*, p 206, 207

⁹⁰ *Cahiers du Cinéma*: monthly film magazine founded in 1951 by André Bazin and Doniol-Valcroze

defending traditional native values. Meanwhile, North America established an avant-garde tradition contesting traditional classical Hollywood narrative forms thanks to the work and mediation of artists and filmmakers such as Maya Daren, Jonas Mekas, Stan Brakhage, Jackson Pollock and Andy Warhol.⁹¹

By early 1950s, television became an important support source for compilations films which initially had been produced by Hollywood studios. In many countries these compilation films represented their first documentary productions. Television camera crews spread throughout the world following Grierson's documentary film unit doctrine and documentary productions emerged in many countries such as Senegal, Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Indonesia or Vietnam. These television film units became a means for the expression of their national identity by producing short documentaries and features through which they informed their countries and cultures about the world. Their productions acted as a form of journalistic documentaries. They had industrial sponsors and their productions became specialised genres. For instance, the Shell film unit made martial arts, science, and historical films to a formula which fitted-in with a certain type of documentary genre, many of which achieved great success and recognition.⁹²

In the United States, the '50s, were particularly tragically marked by “the Cold War” and Senator McCarthy’s era, with his “black list” attack on mass media. This was a time when filmmakers, actors, producers and writers suffered from great censorship and oppression. Many lost their jobs. By the end of the '50s American television documentary production was tamed by the U.S Information Agency. They controlled all aspects of documentary film making. From the subject content to the production style. They even forced the use of an omniscient narrator voiceover in the tradition of Grierson's school. Filmmakers for years struggled to be free from this control impelled by the ideological considerations.⁹³

⁹¹ Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 92-100

⁹² Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p 200, 206, 207, 213, 215

⁹³ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p 222, 226, 227, 228

As a result, after World War II, there was an outburst of new filmmakers with a new approach to documentary making that raised new issues around the discourse between cinema and the concept of reality representation. It is a time when documentary, influenced by Italian Neorealism, Realist film theory and Art Cinema conceptions, turned into a movement seeking free expression in continue conflict with censorship and propaganda.

3.2 Building up new insights

In the mid-1950s Lindsay Anderson, Tony Richardson and Karel Reisz founded “Free Cinema” in the United Kingdom. Like the *Nouvelle Vague* in France, they criticised traditional British cinema. In 1956 Lindsay Anderson wrote an essay in the British film magazine *Sight and Sound* called “Stand Up! Stand Up!” which resumed the objectives of the movement. They defended a poetic but authentic representation of working class reality, free from the inheritance of Grierson’s propagandistic government doctrine. Their proposal was for filmmakers to turn into “observers” of society by rejecting Grierson's role of the promoter. They argued that filmmakers had to listen and watch what was happening at the time of filming without any intervention or direction of the events. Their objective, like Vertov's, was to catch life barehanded. They aimed at representing the world through narratives that did not predispose audiences to have a particular view or opinion about the events they represented.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Cf: Lambert, Gavin. Source: “Free Cinema” by Gavin Lambert in *Sight and Sound*, Spring 1956 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, 1996. p. 212

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 231, 233

Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, p. 249-251

Cf: Casetti, Francesco. *Teorías del Cine*, p. 94, 95, 105

Like in the case of Italian Neorealism, they believed in filming real people on real locations, frequently with a hand-held camera. Their film subjects revolved around issues ignored by society like poverty, marginal people or social injustice. Their films, like in fiction Art Cinema, represented an ambiguous reality leaving conclusions open-ended for the audience to interpret. Films such as *O Dreamland* (1953) by Lindsay Anderson and *Momma Didn't Allow* (1956) by Karel Reisz and Tony Richardson are representative of this movement. Soon after these filmmakers went on to make feature fiction films which maintained the spirit of Free Cinema. These films, such as Tony Richardson's *The Entertainer* (1959) or Karel Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), were known as "kitchen sink dramas", primarily about working class life in Britain.⁹⁵

Free Cinema breaks with the traditions of Grierson's documentary practice not only in conceptual terms when representing reality but also in terms of technique. Since sound invention in the 1930s documentaries had seldom used any direct sound with the exception of static shots.⁹⁶ A remarkable exception was *Housing Problems* (1935) by Ruby Grierson and John Taylor.⁹⁷

Up to this date sound was an element treated in post-production with hardly any direct sound. Normally, in accordance with Grierson's school codes, the visual narrative of a documentary was unified through an omniscient voice-over narrator. This meant that characters very rarely had the opportunity to speak a voice of their own.⁹⁸

New technical developments, after World War II, in Canada, Europe, and the United States culminated in an unprecedented autonomy for film making impossible until this date. By the end of the '50s and early '60s lightweight 16mm cameras replaced bulky 35mm cameras. Low sensitive film stock

⁹⁵ Cf: Ellis, Jack and C. McLane, Betsy A. *A New History of Documentary Film*, p.197- 206

⁹⁶ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 234

⁹⁷ Cf: Sussex, Elizabeth. "Tackling Social Problems" in *The Rise and Fall of British Documentary: The Story of the Film Movement Founded by John Grierson*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1996, p.122-125

⁹⁸ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 234

provided the opportunity of filming in low light conditions without the need of heavy lights. And portable sound recording machines provided direct synchronised sound recording without the use of large equipment or cables that restrained recorders and camera together. The camera and tape recorder could move freely about a scene and record whatever happened as it happened. From this moment on a small crew of two or three people could shoot an entire documentary with a very low budget.⁹⁹

The freedom achieved through this new portable sync-sound equipment gave birth to a new approach in documentary making and reality representation that spread almost simultaneously in several countries, specially Canada, United States and France. It became a new method for film making which had taken its influences from Italian Neorealism and British Free Cinema's manifests, defending filming real people in real locations, as observers, and without any intervention.

In Canada this new technique was pioneered by English and Québécoise filmmakers, who were working for the National Film Board founded by Grierson in 1939. Between 1958 and 1959 English directors such as Roman Kroiter and Wolf Koenig made films for the television "Candid Eye series". On the other hand, in Quebec, during the "Quiet Revolution", giving voice to their suppressed culture, Michel Brault made *Les Raquetteurs* (1958). In the United States independent filmmakers such as John Cassavetes, (*Shadows*, 1959), Lionel Rogosin, (*On the Bowery*, 1956) and Bert Stern, (*Jazz on a Summer's Day*, 1959-1960) experimented with this new portable equipment in fiction and documentary. However, this new technique in documentary making was consolidated by a group of young filmmakers organised by Robert Drew at *Time, Inc.*, in New York.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Cf: Keith Grant, Barry. *Voyages of Discovery. The Cinema of Frederick Wiseman*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992, p.10

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

Ellis, Jack. C. and McLane, Betsy A. *A New History of Documentary Film*, p.210

¹⁰⁰ Cf: Keith Grant, Barry. *Voyages of Discovery: The Cinema of Frederick Wiseman*, p .10

In 1958 Robert Drew persuaded *Time* magazine to transfer the traditional photography of *Life* magazine into cinema and founded Drew Associates with Richard Leacock, D.A. Pennebaker and Albert and David Maysless. He was especially influenced by Richard Leacock who had been Flaherty's cameraman in *Louisiana Story* (1948). Leacock was very impressed and influenced by Flaherty's qualities of observation. Flaherty taught him to never stop looking and responding to the world he was documenting. He showed him that he had to use his instinct and intuition for representing the world. For instance, Flaherty argued that if you went to film a subject but you encounter something else interesting on your way you should follow your heart and film the new event instead. Leacock, about his experience with Flaherty explained, how one day that they were supposed to film a specific scene, Flaherty found interesting a spider's web and so they ended up filming the spiderweb the whole day instead of filming the planned scene.¹⁰¹

Drew Associates made nineteen films for television. Their first film was *Primary* (1960). Drew and Leacock have persuaded Senators Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey to allow being filmed during their campaign in Wisconsin. In exchange they promised not to give directions or ask any questions or do any interventions during their campaign. They asked for complete access to all of their activities and agenda so that they could capture everything that happened during the campaign process. Their aim was to observe and film what happened

Cf: Ellis, Jack. C. and McLane, Betsy A. *A New History of Documentary Film*, p. 211

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

Cassavetes, John. *Shadows*, 1959

¹⁰¹ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 235, 236, 238

Cf: Keith Grant, Barry. *Voyages of Discovery. The Cinema of Frederick Wiseman*, p. 10-11

Cf: Reynolds, Charles. *Focus on Al Maysles in Jacobs, Lewis* (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p. 401-405

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

Cf: Maysless, Albert. "Being Present and Experiencing" in Cunningham, Megan. *The Art of the documentary: Ten Conversations with Leading Directors, Cinematographers, Editors, and Producers*. Berkeley: New Riders Press, 2005, p. 210-213

as it happened just like in the case of British Free Cinema. Even though this film had a poor television distribution ABC network was very impressed with the results and made a contract with these filmmakers establishing the Drew Associates unit. Other films will follow like *Yanki No!* (1960), *Eddie* (1961) (the first film to really solve the wireless issue between camera and sound) and *Showman* (1962).¹⁰²

After *Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment* (1963), a confrontation between Kennedy administration and Alabama Governor George C. Wallace over black admissions at the University of Alabama, Drew Associates began to scatter though some filmmakers continue to make films using the same technique. Leacock and Pennebaker made the emblematic *Don't Look Back* (1967) about musician Bob Dylan. Albert and David Maysles made *Meet Marlon Brando* (1965), *Salesman* (1969), and the polemical *Gimme Shelter* (1970).

This “invisible” observational filming technique, influenced by the British Free Cinema's manifesto, Flaherty's observational qualities of the mundane and Art Cinema's modernist conceptions of an ambiguous reality, was named by Albert Maysles as “Direct Cinema”. These filmmakers set up all the foundations for a new strategy to represent reality. A strategy that is still, nowadays, very present and influential for depicting the world we inhabit. This term, at the time, was adopted by many filmmakers even though nowadays we refer to this technique as Observational Cinema.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 235, 236, 238

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

Cf: Mamber, Stephen. *Cinema Verite in America: Studies in Uncontrolled Documentary*. Drew Associates. Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1974, p. 23-51

Maysles, Albert. *Showman*, 1962

¹⁰³ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 240, 241

Cf: Keith Grant, Barry. *Voyages of Discovery: The cCinema of Frederick Wiseman*, p. 10, 11

Pennebaker, D.A. *Don't Look Back*, 1966

Maysles, Albert and Maysles, David. *Salesman*, 1969

Maysles, Albert and Maysles, David. *Gimme Shelter*, 1970

By the end of the '60s and early '70s Public non-commercial Television became the principal financing source for one of most important actual exponents of Observational Cinema: Frederick Wiseman. A lawyer who became a filmmaker producing over the last few decades one of the most fascinating and powerful portrait of American life through their institutions. He began his career in 1967 with *Titicut Follies* (1967). An internationally acclaimed horrifying account of Massachusetts institution for the criminally insane which was banned for years in the United States.¹⁰⁴

Wiseman's film practice and technique has become the most important reference establishing the codes and conventions that define Observational Cinema. However, ironically, over the years, Wiseman has repeatedly rejected the term "Observational" claiming in his interviews: "I object to some extent to the term Observational Cinema or *Cinéma Vérité*, because Observational Cinema to me at least connotes just hanging around with one thing being as valuable as another and that is not true. At least that is not true for me and *Cinéma Vérité* is just a pompous French term that has absolutely no meaning as far as I'm concerned. The effort is to be selective about your observations and organise them into a dramatic structure."¹⁰⁵ Wiseman has complete access to his subjects and absolute editorial control. He does not use any interviews, voice over or narrator. He does not intervene or give any directions during filming. He normally films people in their work or life context without ever asking them to do anything.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 244,245

Wiseman, Frederick. *Titicut Follies*, 1967

Cf: Schickel, Richard. "Sorriest Spectacle: The Titicut Follies" in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.459-461

Cf: Mamber, Stephen. *Cinema Verite in America: Studies in Uncontrolled Documentary*. Drew Associates, p.216,217

¹⁰⁵ Cf: Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Aftab, Kaleem and Weltz, Alexandra. *Fred Wiseman in Film West*. Ireland's Film Quarterly. Edition n°40
<http://www.iol.ie/~galfilm/filmwest/40wiseman.htm>. (consulted in 15/03/2011)

¹⁰⁶ Cf: Atkins, Thomas R. "Frederick Wiseman's America: Titicut Follies to Primate" in Jacobs, Lewis (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.536-549

Observational films are reminiscent of Italian Neorealism. People and life appear represented with authenticity as if unaware of the filmmaker's presence. Like in fiction film the sequences reveal personal aspects of the individuality of their characters. As audiences, we are forced to interpret the narrative content for the filmmaker provides ambiguous open-ended narratives with no direct conclusions. Therefore, based upon the images content, actions, and character's behaviour, we make associations, inferences and reach our own conclusions.¹⁰⁷

Observational Cinema raised certain issues among filmmakers like Richard Leacock. He was concerned regarding the impact that camera and crew presence might had on representing an event. Others, like Wiseman and Maysless minimise it.¹⁰⁸ In France, an anthropologist, Jean Rouch came to contradict the observational technique by claiming that camera presence was not a problem but a powerful catalyst instrument that could be used to reveal the inner truths of the events being depicted.¹⁰⁹

Rouch came to this conclusion after experimenting on a fiction film he was working on in Africa which he began filming in 1954 and finished in 1967, *Jaguar*. At one point during this film he showed some of the rushes to a black African and recorded his reaction. He was very surprised by the spontaneous reaction and implemented it on his next film *Moi, um Noir* (1958), a documentary set on the Ivory Coast illustrating the difficulties of a rootless semi-employed Abidjan group. Rouch on this project took further his catalyst approach by asking his main characters to improvise for the camera their fantasy life.

¹⁰⁷ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 111

Cf: Barsam, M. Richard. *Non-Fiction Film. A Critical History*, 1992, p.337-339

¹⁰⁸ Cf: Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Goldsmith, Leo. *An Interview with Frederick Wiseman*. <http://www.notcoming.com/features/wiseman-interview/> 2008 (consulted in 06/03/2011)

Cf: The Maysless Brothers interviewed by Blue, James. Source: *Film Comment*. Autumn 1964, Vol. 2, No. 4 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 261

¹⁰⁹ Cf: Rouch, Jean interviewed by G.Roy-Leven in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 264,265

Rouch's views and ideas crystallised on the influential *Chronique d'un été* (1961). An anthropological study of a group of people living in Paris during the summer of 1960 made with the collaboration of sociologist Edgar Morin.¹¹⁰ In this film they asked people in the streets if they were happy. They also interviewed a group of people on personal issues and they organised group discussions encouraging participants to talk about their individuality. At the end of shooting they showed to the participants the final film and discussed the final results with them. This discussion with the filmmakers appears also in the final film. In fact, the filmmakers themselves appear in the film as other characters, sometimes interviewing, others simply participating in the group discussions.¹¹¹

This new approach was termed by Rouch and Morin as *Cinéma Vérité* in homage to Vertov's "Kino Pravda" and his "Kino-Eye" theories. Rouch believed, like Vertov, that the camera could see further and deeper than the human eye and that it had the power to ignite truth from the encounter with the other.¹¹² *Cinéma Vérité* is the result of the encounter between filmmaker and subject. A cinema that, unlike observational technique, could not have happened without the camera intervention, assuming its presence and the presence of the filmmakers themselves. In *Cinéma Vérité* you do not wait for something to happen but you make it happen.¹¹³

Thus, Observational Cinema attempts to give a sense of what it is like to be in a particular situation. Filmmakers waited, observed, listened and filmed, uninvolved and without participating in the events that occurred in front of the camera. While *Cinéma Vérité* gives us a sense of what it is like for the filmmaker

¹¹⁰ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 253-254

¹¹¹ Rouch, Jean. *Chronique d'un Été*. 1961

Cf: Winston, Brian. *Claiming the Real. Documentary: Grierson and Beyond*. London: British Film Institute, 2008, p.181-183

Cf: Freyer, Ellen. "Chronicle of a Summer – Ten Years After" in Jacobs, Lewis. *The Documentary Tradition*, p. 441-443

¹¹² Cf: Keith Grant, Barry. *Voyages of discovery: the cinema of Frederick Wiseman*, p. 11

Cf: Ellis, Jack. C. and McLane, Betsy A. *A New History of Documentary Film*, p. 212-215

¹¹³ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 117-118

to be in a filming situation and how that situation can be altered as a result. Filmmakers provoked a catalyst reaction believing that the resulting artificial situations could bring out the hidden truth.¹¹⁴

It is particularly significant to underline that for the first time each character's speech, whether through interviews or not, played an essential role in documentary and in representing reality. From now on people were not only able to see themselves as others saw them but also to 'hear' themselves how others heard them. This marks a real breakthrough from the idea of film as propaganda and Grierson's "role of the promoter" where characters had no voice of their own. In that sense *Cinéma Vérité* and Observational Cinema brought some kind of democracy to the medium by presenting the individuality of the characters as they were and reflecting the stresses of society on the individual.¹¹⁵ Conversely, both strategies sought to find and register "truthful" moments of life during the recording of the event. They also shared the same narrative strategy by arguing that editing was the unifying element through which they constructed their story-lines. This means that they did not set-out to film with a list of pre-planned objectives that they wanted to fulfil: an already established and particular vision of reality, like it was the case of Grierson's doctrine. Instead, they filmed many hours of the event without defining concrete narrative objectives. They went filming with little or no research on the subject so as to "discover" the event during the filming stage. In fact, the act of filming became their research, and only after, during editing, they shaped the material into a narrative. Therefore, they defined their script or story-line after they had concluded the filming stage. It is during the process of narrative construction that they established the structure of the representation of the event. ¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 255

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinéma Vérité: Defining the Moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

Cf: Ellis, Jack. C. and McLane, Betsy A. *A New History of Documentary Film*, p. 215-218

¹¹⁵ Cf: Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Non-Fiction Film*, p. 246-248

¹¹⁶ Frederick Wiseman: "Instead, all footage is based on chance. It's like a dice game, and you expect to hit the jackpot. The lightweight and mobile equipment, the flexibility of the film means

Thus, from now on, partly influenced by the new synch-sound technology, the process of constructing a narrative to represent an event changed dramatically. On the one hand, editing becomes, like for the formalists, the unifying element in constructing the narrative and therefore in representing the event. On the other, there is fundamental difference between editing a “silent” film from a voiceover than editing a film with synch-sound and dialogue. Voiceover narrative films used images to support and illustrate the narrator’s argument. Thus, a filmmaker normally would have previously scripted a voice-over narration which would determine the filming choices, and therefore the visual representation of the event. However, when sound and image appeared bound together, editing choices were greatly determined by what people said and did during the filming stage, since the filmmaker could not change in post-production the content of their character's dialogue or actions. This meant that they had to structure the narrative, partly in accordance to the content implicit in their character's speech and actions. From this perspective, what people said, thought, felt and did, within a particular context, during the filming stage, became the central core moving forward the narrative.¹¹⁷

that you are always prepared, ready to begin, and the whole idea is to take advantage of chance. You do not just shoot things you predicted, but you expect shooting the unexpected. These are the best scenes ". "In advance, I have no idea how to structure the film or the ideas that I will have."

Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Markun, Paulo. Programa Roda Viva, Television program transmitted in Cultural Television, issued in April 2001 on the occasion of Frederick Wiseman's Retrospective at the 6th Edition of the International Documentary Film Festival *It's All True*. Sao Paulo. Brazil)

http://www.rodaviva.fapesp.br/materiabusca/244/federick%20wiseman/entrevistados/frederick_wiseman_2001.htm. 2001 (consulted in 03/01/2011)

Cf: The Maysless Brothers interviewed by Blue, James. Source: Film Comment. Autumn 1964, Vol. 2, No. 4 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 261

Cf: Rouch, Jean interviewed by G.Roy-Leven in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 264, 265

Cf: Leacock, Richard interviewed by Shivas, Mark in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 254-257

¹¹⁷ Cf: Keil, Charlie. “American Documentary Finds Its Voice. Persuasion and Expression in the The Plow That Broke the Plains and The City” in Keith Grant, Barry and Sloniowski, Jeannette (Ed). *Documenting the Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*, p.133

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the Moment* (documentary), 1999.

3.3 Representing reality

Whichever strategy filmmakers implement to make their films the resulting representation of the world we inhabit is bound to be personal, biased and subjective. This is what Observational Cinema or *Cinéma Vérité* filmmakers came to conclude since they argued that each filmmaker is able to represent the same event in a different way and therefore, from a different perspective. These multiple endless possibilities to represent an event result from the technical and creative options undertaken by the individual-filmmaker. Each decision is personal and subjective for each filmmaker has a different view on the world. Resorting to a specific shot size or recording a concrete sound or dialogue implies a personal subjective choice when representing an event. Since we are all individuals filmmakers can only represent their personal point-of-view of the world. Rouch, Wiseman, Leacock or Maysless had defended that their objective as filmmakers was to represent the event as close as possible as they experienced it. Objectivity was not possible to achieve through cinema. Instead these filmmakers often referred to concepts such as “fair” or “just”. They argued that their role in representing was to be “fair” with the characters and events they represented in their films. This meant to respect the individuality of the characters or events they represented. However, “fair” and “just” are very ambiguous terms and as subjective as the choices involved in film making since each filmmaker has their own guidelines for respecting the “other”. There are no clear references or parameters for representing the world with “justice”. It depends on the subjective opinion and judgment of the filmmaker.¹¹⁸

<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

¹¹⁸ Frederick Wiseman: "it would be presumptuous for me or anyone else to say that a particular claim is true. Like you said, is a version of the truth. It's your truth. That's why the French cinéma vérité [cinema verite] is ridiculously pompous. "... ... "In addition there is a strong sense of obligation so the film is a fair account of what I saw, trying to be fair to those who allowed me into their lives."

Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Markun, Paulo. Programa Roda Viva, Television program transmitted in Cultural Television, issued in April 2001 on the occasion of Frederick Wiseman's Retrospective at the 6th Edition of the International Documentary Film Festival *It's All True*. Sao Paulo. Brazil)

<http://www.rodaviva.fapesp.br/materiabusca/244/frederick>

Trinh T. Minh-ha's essay, "The Totalizing Quest of Meaning", reflects great reservations and scepticism against the socially accepted claim of documentary as a means for representing reality. Since in fact, according to Minh-ha, the word "documentary" unavoidably implies some kind of "truth" claim about the subject which is being represented. Minh-ha argues that documentary, through out history, has become a privileged medium with the power to capture and represent reality. She argues that it must be questioned on political and philosophical grounds. for representation is partly subjected to historical and socio-political contexts and "truth" can be the result of the interest or agenda of institutions or regime's in power.¹¹⁹

Trinh T. Minh-ha's arguments suggest that if a documentary can be partly the result of the politics or values of a particular culture, then, so can be the filmmaker's point of view of the world, and therefore the choices involved in representing it. Roland Barthes, in the *Empire of Signs*, when reflecting about his writings of Japan, he argued that, when writing, he was unable to step aside from his Westerner's point of view. He stated that his writing of Japan is always conditioned by the experience of being a foreigner. That point of view is always present. This means that he cannot undo the presence of the Western culture on his views of the world. This is why he argued that his writings can only be a reflection process on the experience rather than on the "truth" of the content of

%20wiseman/entrevistados/frederick_wiseman_2001.htm. 2001 (consulted in 03/01/2011)

Cf: Bruzzi, Stella. *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p.73-75

Cf: The Maysless Brothers interviewed by Blue, James. Source: Film Comment. Autumn 1964, Vol. 2, No. 4 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 261

Cf: Rouch, Jean interviewed by G.Roy-Leven in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 264,265

Cf: Leacock, Richard interviewed by Shivas, Mark in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 254-257

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the Moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

¹¹⁹ Cf: Minh-ha's. Trinh. "The Totalizing Quest of Meaning" in Renov, Michael (Ed). *Theorizing Documentary*. New York and London: Routledge. 1993, p.90-106.

his writings.¹²⁰

Barthes' and Minh-ha's reflections attempt to raise awareness of the fact that we are all individuals, partly the product of the culture we inhabit, and partly the product of our experiences, education and social context of our upbringing. This social, political and cultural context shapes up to a certain extent our views and knowledge of the world and therefore, our subjective choices in the act of representing. The same world we represent conditions the way we represent it and therefore it conditions the personal subjectivity involved in film making.

However much Observational filmmakers like Leacock, Maysless or Wiseman claimed that they went unprepared to film their subjects with little or no research, so as to avoid expectations before filming, the fact is that every filmmaker has a predisposed view on any subject before starting to film. Some expectations, like Wiseman has claimed, always spring to mind at the very moment you conceive a topic and especially just before you go filming. It is unavoidable.¹²¹

It is almost impossible not to have any preconceived ideas for just the act of thinking about filming an event provokes automatically certain expectations, inferences, associations or reflections on the filming subject you are thinking about. From this perspective, this seems to indicate that the representation of reality is not only the outcome of the director's personal vision but also the result of a variety of social-political and cultural values that contextualise the event we want to represent and the decisions we made in representing it.

From Trinh T. Minh-ha's perspective, terms such as "fair", "honest" and "just", seem much more questionable and ambiguous, if not impossible objectives to achieve in film making. This is why it does not come as a surprise when Wiseman in 1974 referred to his films not as Observational documentaries but

¹²⁰ Cf: Barthes, Roland. *Empire of Signs*, Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982, p. 4, 14-18

¹²¹ Cf: Wiseman, Frederick in Doc's Kingdom, 13-18th June. International Seminar on Documentary Film. Discussion with Frederick Wiseman about his work from his film *Belfast, Maine* 1999.

as “reality fictions”. According to Thomas Benson, Wiseman has used this term at times to illustrate the unavoidable constructive nature of documentary making. At other times, according to Benson, Wiseman used the term to defend that his films do not reflect an accurate reality but his experience of that reality.¹²²

On the other hand, as Michael Renov and Arthur Schlesinger have argued, documentary, in representing reality, shares many of the methods and devices used in fiction and cannot be considered as something picked up from the everyday world we inhabit, but rather as something we made-up and created for the screen. Documentary like any other discourse form, has to resort to rhetorical figures when representing the world. In doing so it must recourse to a number of choices, such as lenses, angles or aperture, which imply a deviation from reality. Therefore, according to Renov, documentary as a term referring to itself as being non-fictional might be disregarding its inevitable fictional elements.¹²³

Fiction and documentary have inhabited one another from the very moment the Lumière brothers made their invention. They have used and shared rhetorical figures and sometimes exploited each other domains. In fact, sometimes, fiction

¹²² Frederick Wiseman: "For example, my documentaries have fictional aspects to them. For example, the structure. You could argue hypothetically that instead of showing ... For example, Belfast lasts 4 hours. But I had 115 hours of film. To really know something about Belfast, you should see the 115 hours of film but people would be totally bored. In order not to make the movie boring, one must find structure. The job of giving a shape to a story is like in a fiction film, because I have to build a dramatic structure that works "... .." There are elements in the editing of a documentary that is similar to writing a fiction film. In particular the construction of its formal aspects. In terms of themes, how to read, for example, metaphors or abstract ideas is in terms of image and relationship with images, like. "

Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Markun, Paulo. Programa Roda Viva, Television program transmitted in Cultural Television, issued in April 2001 on the occasion of Frederick Wiseman's Retrospective at the 6th Edition of the International Documentary Film Festival *It's All True*. Sao Paulo. Brazil)

http://www.rodaviva.fapesp.br/materiabusca/244/frederick%20wiseman/entrevistados/frederick_wiseman_2001.htm. 2001 (consulted in 03/01/2011)

Cf: Benson, Thomas W. and Anderson, Carolyn. *Reality Fictions. The Films of Frederick Wiseman*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002, p 1-2

¹²³ Cf: Renov, Michael. Introduction: “The Truth About Non-Fiction”. in Renov, Michael (ed.). *Theorizing Documentary*. New York and London: Routledge. 1993, p. 3, 7, 11

Cf: Schlesinger, Arthur. “The Fiction of Fact – and the Fact of Fiction” in Jacobs, Lewis. *The Documentary Tradition*, p.383-385

films had been referred to as documentaries like in the case of Flaherty's *Moana* (1926), Alexander Dovzhenko's *Earth* (1930) or most Italian Neorealist's films.¹²⁴ Then again, some documentaries had also been "mistaken" for fiction films like in the case of Mercedes Álvarez's *El Cielo Gira* (2004) or Errol Morris's *The Thin Blue Line* (1988).

In the case of *El Cielo Gira* I had the opportunity to witness how Mercedes Álvarez, on her film's preview at the International Documentary Festival of Lisbon in 2005, received several congratulations from some public members with regard to the "realistic and authentic performances of her social actors". Some members of the audience assumed that her film was fiction and that the characters in her film were actors. But they were not, they were "real" people. However, Álvarez's technical and creative treatment shaped the narrative content in a "fictional" manner "misleading" some spectators to believe that they were watching fiction.¹²⁵

Conversely, *The Thin Blue Line*, a documentary which dramatically re-enacts the crime scene and investigation of a police officer's murder in Dallas, was rejected by the Oscars for Best Documentary category in 1989 because it was considered to be fictional due to its scripted content. The selection jury interpreted the dramatised and performed scenes as fiction. Errol Morris, through visual re-enacting, presents different visual representations in the narrative of the events in accordance to several witnesses' testimonies. As a whole these scripted scenes represent a visual "investigation" of the evidence which led to convict the wrong person for murder. The film subsequently played a crucial role in confirming the innocence of the convicted man and condemning the true criminal. However, these visually enacted situations were, at the time, considered to be fictional by an expert jury.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Cf: Grierson, John (1932-34), "First principles of documentary" in Hardy, Forsyth (ed). *Grierson on Documentary*, Revisited Edition. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966, p.144-147

¹²⁵ Álvarez, Mercedes. *El Cielo Gira*. 2004 at the International Documentary Festival of Lisbon. LisbonDocs. Portugal, 2005

¹²⁶ Morris, Errol. *The Thin Blue Line*, 1988

Cf: Morris, Errol. "Revealing Unexpected Realities" in Cunningham, Megan. *The Art of the*

In the last few years, due to the development of new technologies, initially with video and recently with digital technology, there has been an outburst of new forms for exploiting a sense of documentary authenticity. Reality Television with highly popular docu-soaps such as *Cops*, *Big Brother*, *What if ...* or *Can You Live Without It*, brought a new edge to the concept of reality representation. These programmes combine dramatic reconstruction, authoritative professional commentary, eye witness testimony and an observational filming strategy. Their narratives are presented like drama series using the already popular and established fictional “soap opera” television format.¹²⁷ Conversely, the commercial success of fiction films such as *Blair Witch Project* (1999), and more recently, *Paranormal Activity* (2007) and *Paranormal Activity 2* (2010), has been based on achieving a new sense of realism in their narratives, by combining documentary conventions with the use of camcorder technology. Furthermore, filmmakers have also taken advantage of various internet channels for promoting their films through providing storyline background information and creating expectations amongst audiences. In the case of *Blair Witch Project* the market strategy was not based on claiming to be a documentary but on the following underlying premise of the film: “in October 1994, three student filmmakers disappeared in the woods near Burkittsville, Maryland, while shooting a documentary. A year later their footage was found”. In the last few years the effect caused by out-of-focus images, shaky camera movements and pixellated poor quality images, have come to convince audiences of the authenticity of what they see by creating a new sense of film realism. They have set new standards for the representation of reality blurring even further the invisible imaginary line between fiction and documentary.¹²⁸

Documentary: Ten Conversations with Leading Directors, Cinematographers, Editors, and Producers, p. 50, 51, 57, 58

¹²⁷ Cf: Steve, Thomas. “Whatever happened to the Social Documentary?” in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1996, p. 419-423

Cf: Ellis, Jack. C. and McLane, Betsy A. *A New History of Documentary Film*, p. 332-334

Cf: Bruzzi, Stella. *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction*, p.120-126

¹²⁸Cf: Nichols, Bill, *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 12

Subjectivity in representing reality begins with acknowledging the fact that our choices and views of the world are inevitably conditioned by the culture we inhabit. We are educated to “think” and to “see” from a particular perspective according to our culture, upbringing and life experience. As referred by Barthes we cannot undo the cultural-being for it is part who we are as individuals. However, we can interrogate the reasons for the choices we implement to represent the other. It is through questioning and reflection that we may become aware of the cultural influences in our decisions as filmmakers.

Furthermore, however conscious we are regarding who we are as culture-beings, representing reality is always the result of a number of subjective and personal choices. It is inevitable. Therefore, if documentary, like Renov stated, contains obvious fictional elements, does this mean that documentary is fiction? Or do we consider that documentary fictionalises reality for being subjective like fiction? Does it mean that we do not reveal reality through cinema? However, the words fiction and documentary exist and we often refer to them to differentiate content and form. So where or how do we draw the “invisible” imaginary line between fiction and documentary when representing reality?

3.4 An indexical relationship with reality

According to Brian Winston, the word “documentary” as an adjective appeared in English language by 1802. Originally, we can trace it back to the year 1450 as *documentum* (lesson), and later to the year 1772 as “document”, meaning something written which provides information or evidence. Nowadays, we still refer to the word “document” as evidence. Photography from the very beginning adopted also the status of evidence, and according to Winston, documentary

Sanchez, Eduardo and Myrick, Daniel. *Blair Witch Project*, 1999

Peli, Oren. *Paranormal Activity*, 2007

Williams, Todd. *Paranormal Activity 2*, 2010

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

inherited this status as a source of its ideological power in representing the world.¹²⁹

As early as 1914 Edward S. Curtis used the terms “documentary material” and “documentary works” to define non-fiction moving images. However, it was John Grierson, in 1926, the first to use the term “documentary” in English language when referring to Flaherty’s film *Moana* (1926). In the '30s, the term appeared in English language to specify the content of non-fiction cinema, and in that sense, it was used to differentiate documentary contents from fictional ones.¹³⁰

Probably the most famous definition of documentary is that of Grierson's “creative treatment of actuality”¹³¹ According to Nichols, Grierson's definition implies that documentary is not the “truth” for in assuming that a documentary results from a “creative treatment” inevitably undermines the traditional documentary claim of inspiring believe or authenticity.¹³² Furthermore, Grierson's definition can equally be applicable to fiction films since fiction can also be considered a “creative treatment of actuality” when representing re-enacted historical or factual events. According to Lewis Jacobs, “documentary” emerges as a concept between 1894-1922 to define a special type of film content, with a social purpose, which dealt with real people and events, and therefore different from the re-enacted fictional stories.¹³³ Some theorists such as David Bordwell, Frank Beaver or Keith Grant, have defended that documentary is the outcome of the world we inhabit. A world that exists outside and independently of the representation provided by the narrative film. While fiction is the product of the

¹²⁹ Cf: Winston, Brian. *Claiming the Real II. Documentary: Grierson and Beyond*, p.14

¹³⁰ Cf: Plantinga, Carl R. *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*, p. 26,27

Cf: Grierson, John. “Robert Flaherty’s Poetic Moana” in Jacobs, Lewis. (Ed). *The Documentary Tradition*, p.25-26

¹³¹ Cf: Grierson, John quoted by Rabigger, Michael. *Directing the Documentary*, Oxford: Focal Press, 1998 p. 3

¹³² Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 24

¹³³ Cf: Jacobs, Lewis. *The Documentary Tradition*, 1979, p.2

director's imaginary world. A world created for and through cinema.¹³⁴ Others, like Michael Renov, Llorenç Soler, Michael Chanan or Javier Rioyo have claimed that documentary makes use of form and technique in the same way as fiction. They argued that choices involved in making documentaries are just as manipulative and subjective as fiction. For this reason they argued that documentary is fiction constructed from the elements extracted from reality.¹³⁵

Christian Metz, on his essay "On the Impression of Reality in Cinema", came to strengthen this view by claiming, that the spectator, when watching a film, is absorbed by an impression of a reality as if "it is happening" in front of their eyes at the time of viewing, instead of assuming that in fact, it is a reality that "has already been", and therefore a past reality. The portion of reality presented in the film, according to Metz, belongs to another time which is not the time of watching the film. The event only existed in front of the camera at the time of filming but it ceased its existence after being acquired by the camera. Thus, according to Metz, cinema presents us with an illusion of the reality existence of a past event. What cinema shows us is not reality anymore. It is just an impression of reality presented in the form of a narrative. This is why cinema is an art of fiction and narration for in creating the illusion of reality "the movie spectator is absorbed not by a "has been there" but by a sense of "there it is".¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Cf: Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin. *Film Production, Distribution and Exhibition. Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2003, p. 42

Cf: Beaver, Frank Eugene. *Dictionary of Film Terms. The Aesthetic Companion to Film Art*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc, 2007, p. 119

Cf: Blandford, Steve; Grant, Barry Keith; Hillier, Jim. *The Film Studies Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 739

¹³⁵ Cf: Renov, Michael (ed.). *Theorizing Documentary*, p. 3,7,11

Cf: Soler, Llorenç. "Masterclass, From *Homo Sapiens* to *Homo Zapiens*". Odisseia das Imagens. International Festival of Documentary and New Media. Porto, Portugal, 2001, p. 66-78

Cf: Chanan, Michael. *The Documentary in the Revolution. Cuban Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003, p. 188.

Cf: Rioyo, Javier. "Masterclass. A Mentira da Verdade". Odisseia nas imagens, International Festival of Documentary and New Media. Porto, 2001, p. 62

¹³⁶ Metz, Christian. "On the Impression of Reality in Cinema" in *Film Language. A Semiotics of the Cinema*, p.6

Several filmmakers like Frederick Wiseman, Haskell Wexler, Albert Maysless, Errol Morris or William Klein have indirectly supported Metz's views by arguing that the subjectivity involved in film making to a certain extent fictionalise their work. For instance, they have claimed that selecting a section of a character's dialogue or action to be inserted in the narrative is a highly subjective process. A process that cannot guarantee the "truth" of the event but only present a personal point of view about the subject they represent. This process transforms their raw original material into a form of fiction, or like Wexler claims, into the "reality of the filmmaker".¹³⁷

However, it seems to be a mistake to associate manipulation or subjectivity with fiction for implies that only non-subjective films which do not transform reality can qualify as documentary or non-fiction. From this perspective everything can be regarded as fiction since manipulation and subjectivity in film making is unavoidable.

Bill Nichols offered an opposite view on the discussion. He claimed that all films are documentary for any fiction film "gives evidence of the culture that produced it and reproduces the likenesses of the people who perform within it". Nichols describes "documentaries of wish-fulfilment" as fictions and "documentaries of social representation" as non-fiction. He argued that fiction films give expression to what we feel, wish or fear reality might be or become. While documentary or non-fiction represents aspects of the world we already occupy and they present a particular view or interpretation of that world. Both fiction and documentary can convey "truths" if audiences choose that they do. In fact, according to

¹³⁷ Cf: Pennebaker, D.A; Hegedus, Chris. "Capturing Character. A conversation with Haxkell Wexler" in Cunningham, Megan. *The Art of the Documentary: Ten Conversations with Leading Directors, Cinematographers and Producers*, p. 88, 89.

Cf: Cunningham, Megan. *The Art of Documentary. Ten Conversations with Leading Directors, Cinematographers, Editors and Producers*, p.57,58. *resentation in Nonfiction film*, p. 26, 27, 39

Cf: Wiseman, Frederick in Doc's Kingdom, 13-18 June of 2006. International Seminar on Documentary Film. Municipal Auditorium Serpa. Portugal. Close Readings. 16th June 16.00 p:m. *Analytical approach of his recent work, from excerpts provided by the author.*

Cf: Klein, William. *Masterclass, Odisseia das Imagens, International Festival of Documentary and New Media*. Porto, 2001.

Nichols, audiences act out as judges of documentaries' arguments and perspectives about the world. They decide whether or not to believe in their claims.¹³⁸

Even though we can understand, and to a certain extent agree with both Metz's and Nichols' views, it is very unlikely to accept that all films can be considered documentary or fiction. Especially in relation to how reality is represented. Fiction and documentary are viewed by spectators with reference to a different set of expectations and conventions. In fact, fiction and documentary are terms, commonly used, by public and professionals alike, to identify and differentiate content in film making. This distinction exists in the very cultural and historical contexts where films are made and viewed.

Noël Carroll in *Theorizing the Moving Image* (Chapter XV: "From Reel to Reel: Entangled in Non-Fiction") offered a poignant reflection with regard to the problematic relationship between fiction and non-fiction. He confronts the above referred theoretical positions arguing that they are both unconvincing and insufficient. Documentary cannot be considered fiction or vice versa. He considers inadequate the argument that non-fiction films are fiction due to its subjectivity or because they share common rhetorical figures when depicting the world we inhabit. The fact is that this argument, according to Carroll, denies the possibility of the existence of the concept of non-fiction in any type of discourse or debate with regard to representing reality.¹³⁹

In fact, however much film theorists have argued to defend either position, we are unable to discuss cinema's relationship with reality without resorting to this differentiating terms: fiction and non-fiction or documentary. They are absolutely necessary on this ongoing debate and, as Carroll has stated, denying the existence of one of these terms unavoidably also implies eradicating the existence of the other.

¹³⁸ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 1

¹³⁹ Cf: Carroll, Noël. *Theorizing the Moving Image*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 224-249

During his compelling reflection Carroll argues that we classify non-fiction films with regard to their knowledge claims. This concept underlines a fundamental issue on this discussion. According to Carroll, audiences, by indexing, identify what is fiction or documentary. Producers, distributors or directors make claims about their films' content and technical treatment. Subsequently, audiences, according to certain cultural and personal expectations, receive and interpret the film's content accordingly, and they identify the film as fiction or documentary. He argues, in fact, that a spectator do go to see a film without knowing how it has been indexed and therefore without establishing whether it is documentary or fiction.¹⁴⁰ Indexing a film is a way of establishing, automatically, what the film claims refer to: "the actual world or segments of possible worlds, and indexing tells us the kind of responses and expectations it is legitimate for us to bring to the film. In short, insofar as indexing fixes the attempted reference of a given film, indexing is constitutive of whether the given film is an instance of fiction or non-fiction, which amounts to whether it is to be construed as fiction or non-fiction."¹⁴¹

Furthermore, indexing does not only depend on the producer's, distributor's or exhibitor's information for this would mean that they would be deciding what should be regarded as documentary or fiction. And they do not. They simply provide information, according to a set of pre-established indexing codes and conventions, so their films appear identified by the audience as one or the other. In fact, it is these pre-established codes and conventions that cues spectators to index films as fiction or documentary and prepares audiences to have a specific position for making decisions about the film content. Therefore, indexing is more of a social and cultural phenomenon than an individual domain for it is delineated by its historical context.¹⁴²

Indexing plays a fundamental role in defining and differentiating cinema's relationship with representing reality. Both, documentary and fiction, make

¹⁴⁰Cf: Carroll, Noël. *Theorizing the Moving Image*, p.237-238

¹⁴¹ Carroll, Noël. *Theorizing the Moving Image*, p.238

¹⁴² Cf: Plantinga, Carl R. *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*, p. 19

claims about reality but their indexical relationship with the historical world we inhabit is substantially different. It is this indexical difference, like Carroll has argued, that cues audiences to have a different position with regard to a film's content. For example, *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) presents a horrifying, shocking and "realistic" account of the Normandy Landings in World War II. Witnesses to that tragic event may corroborate the powerful authenticity of its representation. However, an interview with a survivor, with no special effects, revealing his personal experience of the event, predisposes audiences with a complete different perspective with regard to the film content. The survivor's account and experience did happen in the historical world we live in. He may refer to friends that really died during the event. He will never see them again. They ceased to exist. Families lost their sons for ever. His testimony describes a personal experience that cannot be undone for he did survive the horrifying experience of war. There is no fiction narrative that can substitute that. In fact, the fiction narrative draws from that original source to recreate the survivor's real tragic experience.

Spielberg's film might be much more poignant and illustrative in depicting the event than the interviewer's speech. However, the audience knows, by indexing, that it is fiction. People in Spielberg's film did not die. They pretended to die during the *act* of filming. They performed a character's role which bears no direct relation to the event experience. In fact, they pretended to be someone else during the filming. Their lives were never at risk and the process of making the film did not have consequences in their lives like in the case of the survivor or the families that lost their sons or fathers for ever. However much based on facts, *Saving Private Ryan* was the product of Spielberg's and other artists' imagination. Spielberg's film does not offer or indicate a direct reflection of a past reality but the survivor's testimony does through his own life experience, and the audience recognises that by indexing his testimony to his past reality.¹⁴³

This does not mean that fiction films cannot reveal inner "truths" about the

¹⁴³ Spielberg, Steven. *Saving Private Ryan*, 1998

world. In fact, like Manuela Penafria has claimed both fiction and documentary are equally suited to represent and make claims about reality. Documentary and fiction are, first of all, cinema meaning that they use the same rhetorical means to represent reality. In some cases, fiction can be more appropriate or accurate for uncovering hidden “truths” like Penafria points out in relation to Morris' *The Thin Blue Line*. According to Penafria Morris's re-enacted sequences illustrate how each scene can be equally “truthful” or “untruthful” when depicting the past events. In fact, these enacted scenes present a perspective about the murder event which we he could not had achieved otherwise. Errol Morris, through re-enacting the murder of Dallas police officer Robert Wood, “investigates” what could or not had happened at the time of the murder. This is why she states that the act of documenting or registering an event is always present in all type cinema independent of its genre. From this perspective she is defending, like Nichols, that all cinema, regardless of genre, is a form of documenting the historical world. For this reason she claims that, any film, when representing historical facts, whether fiction or documentary, must be regarded individually in relation to the choices that the the filmmaker has implemented for representing the event. Thus, it is a question of what the content of the film reveals about the world we inhabit and not just whether the film can be considered documentary or fiction. However, a fiction film is not always somehow linked to a past reality while, documentary, by indexing, is. For this reason she argues that fiction may play a different social role with regard to how we question or look upon a concrete factual subject. Documentary, since it is inevitably linked to our experience, instead predisposes us to a different approach with relation to its claims about the world that is familiar to us. ¹⁴⁴In fact, fiction films, when arguing about the historical world, only need to be plausible or believable to engage audiences' attention. They bare no great responsibilities about their claims for they are “fiction”. Documentaries must inspire belief and be credible since they speak of or about “others” that live in our reality: institutions, cultures or individuals alike. How their subjects appear represented, through cinema's

¹⁴⁴ Penafria, Manuela, *O Documentarismo do Cinema*. Universidade Beira do Interior, 2003.

technical qualities, may therefore raise issues and provoke important debates with regard to the responsibilities of the authors.¹⁴⁵

3.5 Some ethical questions

We have seen that documentary, unlike in fiction, like Bill Nichols has stated, must inspire credibility when representing the world we inhabit. Audiences must believe in the claims and arguments presented in the narrative. Representing reality in documentary inevitably results from the filmmaker's mediation with the event and characters they represent in their films. Whichever strategy a filmmaker implements to represent the world they must technically and creatively interact and mediate with the subjects of their films. Any decision involved in representing results from a specific interaction between the filmmaker and the event. The choices applied are highly subjective and manipulative in terms of technique and content. Filmmaker's through their films present audiences with their personal point of view of the world. That is what filmmakers like Wiseman or Rouch have argued. They are only able to translate their experience and point of view of the events they represent.

Conversely, cinema has been established as a creative and artistic medium and therefore a documentary not only represents the world but also a work of art. Hence, representing reality through documentary involves a number of subjective, artistic and creative choices that as a whole delineate the personal point of view of the filmmaker about the subject being represented. Due to this unavoidable subjectivity in the act of representation filmmakers have argued about being "fair" and "just" with the characters and events they represent through their narratives. However, "fair" and "just" are terms that seem as ambiguous and subjective as the choices involved in film making for each filmmaker has their own personal guidelines to implement "fairness" in their creative decisions. This is why representing reality raises a number of complex

¹⁴⁵ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 2,13

ethical questions. Since representing the world we inhabit always results from the tension between the filmmaker's needs for personal artistic expression and the subsequent signification of the event. Therefore, a number of ethical issues can be raised by the filmmaker's mediation with reality when representing an event.¹⁴⁶

If we assume that documentaries transform reality into an art form we could also question whether filmmakers exploit people and events as aesthetic objects for satisfying their artistic needs. If that is the case, maybe we should be asking for the spectator to question and judge the value of the films' artistic choices in relation to the subsequent event representation. The key question on debate is whether filmmakers do have the right to manipulate reality so that it fits their personal views of the world. Are filmmakers, for being artists, outside the ethical constraints of transforming people and events into aesthetic objects?

We also have take into account that viewers partly form their knowledge and opinions about the event represented not only, through the content and information revealed in the narrative, but also by the artistic form implemented to represent it. Therefore, we may also question whether a filmmaker's artistic choices may condition audiences' conclusions about a subject like in the case of Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph des Willens* (1934) and *Olympia* (1938).¹⁴⁷

Brian Winston, for instance, questions filmmakers' justifications for mediation with reality. He argues that Grierson's romantic view on British working class denied the worker a voice of their own. The filmmaker was in complete control and went about representing others in accordance to their own ethical codes and their own institutional objectives as government sponsored propagandists. Meanwhile the worker appeared represented without an individual identity and as an impotent pathetic victim.¹⁴⁸ Winston to reinforce his arguments refers and

¹⁴⁶ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 10-13

¹⁴⁷ Cf: Ruby, Jay. "The Ethics of Image Making; or, "They're Going to Put Me in the Movies. They're Going to Make a Big Star Out of Me . . ." in Rosenthal, Alan and Corner, John. *New Challenges for Documentary*, p. 212-215.

¹⁴⁸ Cf: Winston, Brian. "The Tradition of the Victim in Grierson in Documentary" in Rosenthal, Alan and Corner, John. *New Challenges for Documentary*, p. 269-287

illustrates several specific cases. He states that Humphrey Jennings and not the Luftwaffe, burned down St Katherine's Dock in 1942 as a dramatic backdrop for his film *Fires Were Started*. It was in fact the case that Jennings had set fire to St Katherine's Dock to make the film. According to Brian Winston, the result of the film, ironically, provided some of the "best archive footage" of the London Blitz. Joris Ivens's in *Misère au Borinage* (1934) dressed up as policemen two miners and asked them to re-enact the incident that had occurred during the strike.¹⁴⁹ Were these filmmakers mediations justifiable in order to represent their personal views of the events? Who is to say and decide how much mediation can be justified in representing others? Is it up to the filmmakers, producers, distributors, participants or the audience? On the other hand, how is it possible to represent reality and particularly our personal points of view of the world without artistic mediation?

In *Gimme Shelter* (1970), a documentary by the Maysles brothers and Charlotte Zwerin about the Rolling Stone's 1969 tour of America which culminated in a free concert at Altamont, near San Francisco, a man was killed by the Hell's Angels. The concert had been organised in a hasty and reckless way hiring the Hell's Angels, who were famous for their violence, to provide security in exchange for beer. The concert ended-up with the Hell's Angels killing a man in a fight. Pauline Kael, reviewing the film at the *New Yorker*, accused the filmmakers for their complicity in the tragic event.¹⁵⁰ The murder was not arranged by the filmmakers, however, their mediation in the careless organisation for filming the concert had tragic consequences. Should the filmmakers had intervened and stopped the concert so as to avoid the violence? Should the filmmakers bare

¹⁴⁹ Cf: Winston, Brian. "Ethics" in Rosenthal, Alan and Corner, John (Ed). *New Challenges for Documentary*, p.181-187

Wright's, Basil. *Night Mail*, 1936

Jennings, Humphrey. *Fires Were Started*, 1943

Ivens, Joris and Storck, Henri. *Misère au Borinage/ Misery in Borinage*, 1933

¹⁵⁰ Cf: Kael, Pauline. "Gimme Shelter" a review on the *New Yorker*, 19 December 1970 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality, The Faber Book of Documentary*. London:Faber and Faber Limited, 1996, p. 273

any responsibilities for the events like Pauline Kael claimed? Did they have the right to make and exhibit the film given the circumstances?¹⁵¹

Jean Rouch severely criticized Direct Cinema for considering it too ambiguous due to their open-ended narrative structures. He defended that, a filmmaker in documentary, must present a clear argument and point of view on the subject. Instead he valued Flaherty's film practice in *Nanook of the North* (1921). Rouch argued that Flaherty showed the film to the participants and therefore he shared with them the process of making the film. This is a practice that Rouch also followed in some of his films like in the *Chronique d'un été* (1960). He considered this practice more honest to represent reality. Conversely, Wiseman, the Maysles and Leacock implemented an opposite strategy in their films.¹⁵² They did not share any of the film making process with their characters. However, we have to take into account, like William Rothman states, that Flaherty asked the protagonist of *Nanook of the North* to pretend to live in an igloo, when in reality he didn't, and to re-enact his father's generation's past way of life, when he himself had a contemporary Inuit life style. Flaherty's manipulative choices may be questionable at the time of arguing about intervention and representation. Who's interest was Flaherty's film representing? Are his choices as filmmaker justifiable like Rouch claimed? If so, under which grounds or parameters? Why is it different in the case of Wiseman or Leacock? Who is to decide that?¹⁵³

All previous arguments and examples, on the one hand, illustrate a number of complex ethical issues regarding the mediation involved in representing reality. On the other, they intend to confirm that representing reality is always the result of the tension between the need for personal artistic expression and the ethical issues involved in representing the "other". Like formalists theorists had claimed

¹⁵¹ Maysles, Albert and Maysles, David. *Gimme Shelter*, 1970

¹⁵² Cf: Rouch, Jean interviewed by Blue, James. Source: *Film Comment*, Vol. n, No.2, Spring 1964 in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevi (Ed). *Imagining Reality, Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 268-270

¹⁵³ Cf: Rothman, William. "The Filmmaker as Hunter. Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*" in Keith Grant, Barry and Sloniowski, Jeannette (Ed). *Documenting the Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*, 1998, p.23-26

beforehand, transforming reality is inevitable in order to represent it. This tension between that which I represent and how I represent it, like Nichols has argued, is unavoidable, for event representation appears always translated into a number of personal and subjective choices. Each filmmaker can produce a different representation of the same event and implement a different number of creative options in the process. The fact is that filmmakers in order to represent must mediate with the world and mediation always involves a certain amount of technical and creative manipulation of the event information available to construct the narrative.

Another fundamental ethical issue regarding event representation lies within the term of informed consent. Filmmakers, such as Flaherty, Ivens, Rouch or Wiseman, asked their participants for their consent and collaboration to make their films. Therefore, informed consent means that filmmakers, before filming, inform their characters about their film making intentions. It also means that, before filming, they ask for permission to film their participants. Thus, we may assume that characters, when they appear in a documentary, were previously informed by the filmmaker about the film's purpose and objectives and they consented to it.¹⁵⁴

However, are filmmakers, when asking for consent, clearly informing their participants of the possible hazards that might outcome as a result of their collaboration in their films?. Calvin Pryluck claims that films such as *The Things I Cannot Change* (1967) and *September 5 at Saint-Henri* (1962) had serious damaging effects on the personal lives of their participants who felt humiliated and ended up being mocked by their own neighbours. The fact is that, however much a filmmaker informs their characters, it is very difficult for people to understand what might be the final result. For those who do not understand clearly cinema's technical restrictions and creative possibilities is very hard to realise that what they do or say in front of the camera may affect their own representation in the narrative.¹⁵⁵ Their behaviour in front of the camera might

¹⁵⁴Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 10

¹⁵⁵ Cf: Pryluck, Calvin. "Ultimately We Are All Outsiders: The Ethics of Documentary Filming" in

damage their personal image or make them look stupid or silly. This is the case of Michael Moore's *Roger and Me* (1989) when filming his fellow countryman from Flint, Michigan and Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March* (1985) when filming the flirtatious Southern women that appeared in his film. Should these filmmakers had informed their participants on their comical and ironic treatment? Was it exploitative their artistic choices? Were in fact their participants informed of this artistic treatment and intentions? Did they consent to be undermined?¹⁵⁶

Informing participants of possible consequences of representation is a central ethical issue and as complex as mediation. If filmmakers informed their participants of all the possible hazards that may result from narrative representation their characters' would most likely not consent to the filmmakers' objectives. Filmmakers do have an obligation to inform people about their intentions in making a film. However, in documentary, during filming, much of the outcome accomplished, maybe spontaneous or unpredictable. Filmmaker's cannot always predict what people might say or do during the filming process. They may also be unable to confirm or imagine how their characters might appear represented in their final narratives until they actually construct the narrative. However, they are very aware and conscious of how their decisions, during narrative construction, may affect characters and the representation of real-life events and their subsequent signification. It is a very complex and subjective issue to achieve a "socially acceptable balance" between satisfying the filmmaker's desire for artistic expression and at the same time to satisfy the

Rosenthal, Alan and Corner, John (Ed). *New Challenges for Documentary*, p. 195-198

Cf: Winston, Brian. *Lies, Damn Lies and Documentaries*. London: British film Institute, 2000, p. 143-149

¹⁵⁶Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 9-11

Moore, Michael. *Roger and Me*, 1989

McElwee, Ross. *Sherman's March*, 1986

Cf: Fisher, Lucy. "Ross McElwee's Sherman's March. Documentary Film and the Discourse of Hysterical/Historical Narrative" in Keith Grant, Barry (editor) and Sloniowski, Jeannette(editor). *Documenting the Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*, p.337-339

Cf: Bernstein, Mathew. "Documentaphobia and Mixed Modes. Michael Moore's Roger and Me." in Keith Grant, Barry and Sloniowski, Jeannette (Ed). *Documenting the Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*, p.397- 415

ethical issues that may arise from representing the “other”. There are no clear boundaries or set of parameters that can regulate this relationship completely since, in fact, every member of an audience, the filmmaker or the character may have a different point of view about how the event appears represented.

Conversely, we also have to consider that documentaries play a very important role in society. Through documentaries, like Vertov had passionately defended, we can further our understanding and knowledge of a vast and diverse number of issues about the world we inhabit. Whichever narrative techniques filmmakers use, however manipulative and exploitative we can argue, documentaries offer different points of view of the world which can enrich our experience of life. Through non-fiction films we can learn to have a different view or opinion on different subjects like the Holocaust, death row, public institutions, poverty, immigration or living in a metropolis.¹⁵⁷

Documentaries can enrich our experience of life by interrogating our beliefs, by questioning our opinions or views on different subjects, through presenting alternative ways of “seeing”. From this perspective, we can argue that documentaries fulfil an essential role in society for, in fact, on many occasions, it is mostly through a documentary that an audience may become aware of certain social, economical, political or cultural issues. This is the case in Wiseman's outstanding portrait of the Massachusetts' institution for the criminally insane in his internationally acclaimed film, *Titicut Follies* (1967). However, documentary, as we have established, is a subjective work of art and it is through applying subjective artistic choices that the filmmaker can create or present a different view on the world we inhabit. This is why, terms and concepts such as “fairness”, “impartiality”, “balance” or “justice” are crucial on this debate. Even though they may be ambiguous and each filmmaker may have their own personal interpretation of their meaning, they also serve as an essential reference and guideline in representing reality.¹⁵⁸ If the profound meaning that

¹⁵⁷ Cf: Williams, Linda. “Mirrors Without Memories: Truth, History, and the New Documentary” in Rosenthal, Alan and Corner, John (Ed). *New Challenges for Documentary*, p. 65-73

¹⁵⁸ Cf: Cunningham, Megan. *The Art of the documentary: Ten Conversations with Leading*

these terms embodied did not exist we would probably not be having this discussion. However difficult or impossible it might seem to accomplish or apply their meaning in representing the world, like Carl Plantinga has argued, it is fundamental that we have the objective to achieve them. There must be a continuous debate between artistic representation and ethical issues. And on this debate we must encourage filmmakers to attempt relatively workable versions of “fairness, justice or balance” that might be beneficial in the representation and discussion of reality.¹⁵⁹

3.6 Conclusion

During the '50s and '60s documentary became a movement seeking free expression in continuous conflict with past censorship and propaganda. British Free Cinema, Cinema Direct and Cinema Verité consolidated a new “voice” in representing reality. Influenced by new modernist conceptions of reality and film auteur theories filmmakers became individual authors. Representing reality resulted from the personal point of view of the filmmaker who now submits ambiguous representations of reality through open-ended narrative structures. The public, subsequently, must interpret the narrative content by themselves and reach their own conclusions. No omnipotent voiceover narrator conditions or predisposes audiences to have a concrete view on the world.

Conversely, like Barnouw has stated, new technical developments provided an unprecedented autonomy for filmmakers to represent the world we inhabit. The camera and tape recorder are now able to move freely about a scene and record

Directors, Cinematographers, Editors, and Producers, p. 215

Cf: Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Aftab, Kaleem; Weltz, Alexandra. *Fred Wiseman in Film West*. Ireland's Film Quarterly. Edition n°40 <http://www.iol.ie/~galfilm/filmwest/40wiseman.htm>. (consulted in 15/03/2011)

Cf: Leacock, Richard interviewed by Shivas, Mark in Cousins, Mark and MacDonald, Kevin (Ed). *Imagining Reality. The Faber Book of Documentary*, p. 254-257

¹⁵⁹ Cf: Plantinga, Carl R. *Rhetoric and Representation in Non-fiction Film*, p. 200-213

events as they happen. Sound and image are bound together in synchronism. As a result the voice of the documentary characters are not impotent to express their concerns like in the case of Grierson's past doctrine. This meant that filmmaker's had to undertake narrative construction, partly, in accordance to the content implicit in their character's speech and actions. From that moment on, what people said, thought, felt and did, within a particular context, played an essential role in narrative construction and representing reality.

According to Wiseman, Rouch or Maysles and many other influential filmmakers, making a film unavoidably implies undertaking a subjective technical and creative treatment. The choices involved result from the filmmaker's subjective experience of the event. Arguing subjectively, film theorists have defended the accusation that documentary fictionalises reality. In fact, from the very birth of cinema, documentary and fiction have inhabited each other's domains.

However, documentary and fiction differ from each other in their indexical relationship with reality. Fiction only needs to be plausible to engage the audience's attention when representing or re-enacting historical events. Documentary, instead, must inspire belief and credibility when arguing about the world as well as indicate the existence of a past reality.

Furthermore, like Nichols or Winston have argued, representing reality results from the filmmaker's mediation with reality. Mediation refers to how a filmmaker represents an event or character through implementing artistic, subjective and personal choices. This implies that representing reality results from the tension between the filmmaker's needs for personal artistic expression and the subsequent ethical issues that may emerge from representing the event. Mediation can raise complex ethical issues for a documentary is not only the result of representing the world but also of representing a personal subjective work of art. This may suggest that filmmakers, when representing an event or character, could exploit or manipulate the event as an aesthetic object in order to satisfy their artistic needs. The fact is that filmmakers in order to represent must mediate with the world and mediation might implicate a certain amount of

manipulation of event information. Alternatively, documentaries also play an essential social role by interrogating life and presenting alternative perspectives about a diverse number of subjects. From this perspective, the filmmaker's artistic subjective choices may enrich and deepen our understanding and knowledge of the world.

Thus, from the '50s onwards representing reality results from a tense relationship between the filmmaker's subjective point of view of the world and the ethical issues involved in representing it. It is important to underline that subjectivity in representing the "other" not only results from the individual personal choices but also from their cultural context. We are all individuals, partly the product of the culture we inhabit and partly the product of our experiences, education and social context of our upbringing. This social, political and cultural context shapes our views and knowledge of the world and therefore, our subjective choices in the act of film making. This suggests that the same world that filmmakers' represent in their narratives conditions the subjective choices they implement in representing it. Conversely, filmmakers, such as Wexler, Rouch, Leacock or Wiseman, have constantly stated that, due to the subjectivity involved in film making, they are only able to represent their experience of the event. In fact, they have argued that they have a responsibility to represent the event as close as possible to the way they experienced it. From their perspective that represents an attempt to be "just" or "fair" with the character's or events they represent. This process is very manipulative because it not only implies omitting most of the event information available to construct the narrative but also means, most commonly, to re-organise that information in a different order to how it happened or was recorded.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰Frederick Wiseman: "I edit the movies. I shoot between 80 and 120 hours, and I end up using 3% of the material. Films are very edited. A movie like *Belfast, Maine* (1999), which is exhibited in this festival, has 3,600 cuts, which is a huge number of cuts in a documentary. There is a scene with 11 minutes with 270 cuts. The films are very edited."

"For example, a scene in real time can last an hour. I might shoot 58 minutes of that hour. From those 58 minutes I could use 5, sometimes I use 5 consecutive minutes, but it is very rare. Usually I take 37 seconds from here, one and half minutes from there, 40 seconds there ... And with the use of images of people who are not speaking, I edit so it looks like it happened in the way you see it. And I try to edit it in a way that it is fair to the spirit and intent of the original

This outlines an essential issue with regard to event representation: the experience of the filmmaker appears translated on the processing of event information. First, during the filming stage, and after, during narrative construction. Subjective choices require acquiring and organising event information to communicate the filmmaker's experience of the event. Most importantly the representation of the event and its subsequent signification results from the omission of most of the material available for constructing the narrative. On the other hand, it is only the filmmaker who has complete knowledge and access to the reasons or justifications involved in the processing of event information: the omitted material and the organisation of the selected material into a particular structure. This suggests that, in the first place, it is the processing of event information that conditions event representation and its subsequent signification.

conversation.”

Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Markun, Paulo. Programa Roda Viva, Television program transmitted in Cultural Television, issued in April 2001 on the occasion of Frederick Wiseman's Retrospective at the *6th Edition of the International Documentary Film Festival It's All True*. Sao Paulo, Brazil) http://www.rodaviva.fapesp.br/materiabusca/244/frederick%20wiseman/entrevistados/frederick_wiseman_2001.htm. 2001 (consulted in 03/01/2011)

Chapter 4

Narrative construction: organising the filmmaker's experience

4.1 Introduction

Throughout history we can identify a great number of authors discussing and reflecting the nature and concept of narrative. From Plato's and Aristotle's original mimetic and diegetic influential theories to Gérard Genette's, or Roland Barthes' essential contribution to structuralism,¹⁶¹ narrative has been researched studied and discussed, as an essential process for the human mind in terms of

¹⁶¹ Cf: Plato originally developed the concept of Mimesis (Book III) and Diegesis (Book X). Mimesis would refer to a perfect imitation. Diegesis would refer to an imperfect imitation. *Plato. The Republic of Plato*. Translated by Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1991

Cf: Aristotle in Poetic retakes Plato's Mimesis and Diegesis to define the aesthetics of Tragedy. Aristotle, *Poetica*, Ed. Eudoro de Sousa. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional - Casa da moeda, 2000

Cf: Barthes, Roland. An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative. Translated by Lionel Duisit. *New Literary History Vol. 6. N° 2. On Narrative and Narratives*. www.jstor.org/stable/468419:The Johns Hopkins University Press Stable, 1975, p. 237–272 (consulted 21/06/2011) and Genette, Gérard. *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* Translated by Jane Lewin. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1988 or Genette Gérard, *Figures III. Poétique*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1972

producing and communicating meaning and expressing experience and cultural or individual identity.

However, for the purpose of the research analysis of this thesis, which I present from chapters five to eight, I have focused the content of this chapter on introducing and identifying some key issues with regard to the process of representing an event in documentary. The bibliographic research undertaken seems to indicate that most narrative film theory has been dedicated to the study of fiction narrative. For this reason, I have attempted to approximate fiction narrative theory to the process of narrative construction in documentary.

Conversely, I have also dedicated the content in chapter 4.4 to introducing Bill Nichols's modes since it is the only bibliography that my research has identified which discloses a classification of documentary narrative forms. Nichols has identified an important number of strategies, as a set of codes or conventions that, filmmakers', throughout history, have implemented to communicate their subjective experience of the historical world. For this reason I have found Nichols's modes particularly useful to approximate fiction narrative theory to documentary narrative as a process for organising the filmmaker's experience of the event. My intention in this chapter is in fact to establish that narrative construction, in documentary, entails translating and communicating the filmmaker's experience of the event represented. As referred in chapter 3, many influential filmmakers such as Wiseman, Leacock or Rouch, had defended that, due to the subjectivity involved in film making, they can only present in their narratives their experience of the event. For this reason I have mainly dedicated this chapter to defend how representing an event, in documentary, results from the processing of event information. First, during the filming stage, and second, during narrative construction. This results from the filmmaker's experience and mediation with the event. Event information refers to images and sounds acquired during the *act* of filming in order to construct a narrative and represent an event. These images and sounds are therefore designated as visual and sound information and able to provide an indexical relationship with the event's past existence.

4.2 Knowing and telling

Narrative seems to appear in almost all human discourse as a means for knowing, acquiring and organising information, and telling, communicating information to others, and therefore as an instrument for obtaining knowledge and expressing it. From this perspective, narrative is a means for the transmission of information which implies organising thoughts and data into a structure. H. Porter Abbott has argued that this process of transmission consists of representing an event or group of events. Without events there can not be a narrative. Something must happen in order to create a narrative. Therefore, narrative as a means of transmission of information becomes a process of arranging events which, according to Abbott, illustrates our need for order.¹⁶²

In fact, Seymour Chatman, had already established that in order to perceive and communicate, our minds seek structure. Structure is unavoidable since in order to understand the information of a particular event we need to organise the information into a particular comprehensible order. Otherwise, we are unable to understand its meaning. Chatman goes further by arguing that if the information disclosed in a particular narrative is unclear or confusing our minds may seek or produce an explanation. This implies that an audience may assume or infer different causality relationships between the events in the narrative in order to understand the content of the storyline. Thus, Chatman defends that if we do not comprehend a particular event, due to lack of information or structure, we may invent or create the information we need to make it understandable. This suggests that our mind seeks comprehension through organising event information into a structure.¹⁶³

Christian Metz agreed in defining narrative as a sum of events that must be organised into a sequence. He argued that a narrative is a closed sequence of

¹⁶² Cf: Abbott, H. Porter. *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 1, 10-13, 42,43

¹⁶³ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, 1978, p. 45-46.

events where the event becomes the basic unit of the narrative. For Metz, a narrative is always a discourse because events imply subject statements made by an author. In speaking of cinema Metz also draws our attention to the fact that a narrative is always the result of a selected group of images presented in a particular order. They could be different images presented in a different order. Therefore, he points out that each author may choose to present an event or group of events differently, and therefore in doing so they will imply different subject statements of the same event. This is why Metz argues that the spectator do not control the perception of the event for they did not choose the images or the order in which they appear structured and so they do not control the argument presented as a result.¹⁶⁴

For this reason, according to Mieke Bal, the narrator becomes the central concept in the analysis of narrative texts. Bal argued that it is the identity of the narrator, the level and manner in which that identity appears indicated in the text, and the choices involved in this process, that delineates the specific character of the text. According to Bal, this issue is related directly to the notion of focalisation: the relation between the “vision”, and therefore the agent that sees, and that which is “seen”, and therefore, perceived. Hence, focalisation refers to the perspective from which narrative elements are viewed. It can be a character in the story or an outsider, a third person narrator. Bal stated that narrative perception depends on the perceiving position and that the narrator and the focalisation process are the elements that determine the narrative situation. Focalisation in terms of visual arts, like cinema, according to Bal, depends on the content of the photography, composition, acting, and other elements that constitute the cinematic creation.¹⁶⁵

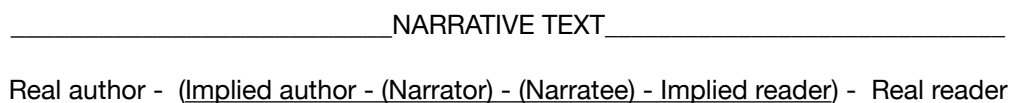
¹⁶⁴ Cf: Metz, Christian. “Notes toward a Phenomenology of the Narrative”. *Film Language. A Semiotics of the Cinema*, p. 20-26

¹⁶⁵ Cf: Bal, Mieke. *Narratology. Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009, p. 18, 145-149, 166.

Focalization is a concept already introduced by Gérard Genette to describe the perspective or point of view through which a narrative might be disclosed to a reader or an audience. Genette, Gérard. *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*. p. 72-79

Seymour Chatman has claimed that every narrative is a structure which results of a content plane, the story, and an expression plane, the discourse. The story consists of events, which may be actions or happenings, and existents, which refer to characters and settings. Seymour Chatman, like Christian Metz, sees narrative discourse as a sequence of narrative statements. However for Chatman, a discourse is a set of narrative statements, where statement is the basic component of the form of the expression, independent of any manifestation, and not the event in itself like Metz claimed. A statement, for Chatman, can be a ballet posture, a word, an image or a character's expression. Chatman differentiates between two types of statements: mode of existence (IS) and actions of existence (DOES).¹⁶⁶ For Chatman, story as discourse is the plot and therefore the arranging of the events that constitute the story. Telling or showing a narrative consists of communication from an author to an audience. The author, creates the story content, and transmits that content to the audience via discourse.¹⁶⁷

In order to illustrate this process Chatman presents the following communication model diagram:



¹⁶⁸

In every narrative, according to Chatman, there must be an author, who creates the story, but not necessarily a narrator or narratee which are means and devices for telling the story, like for instance a voice-over narration.¹⁶⁹ However, in order to communicate the narrative, Chatman claimed that there is always an implied author and his counterpart, an implied reader. The implied author is the

¹⁶⁶ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, p. 19,23,31,146,147.

¹⁶⁷ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, p. 31, 43,46

¹⁶⁸ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, p. 151

¹⁶⁹ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, p.33, 34

real author's second self-implied version of themselves. It serves the purpose of instructing the narrative. Thus, the real author is "implied" by the reader. This means that the author is reconstructed and imagined by the reader from the narrative since the reader assumes, feels and knows that someone wrote and is telling the story. He is not the narrator but his creator and therefore the responsible for all the elements in the narrative. On the other hand, the implied reader is the counterpart of the implied author. Not the real audience, that who reads the story, but the implied "audience" and therefore the audience presupposed by the narrative itself.

In communicating the story, according to Chatman, the implied author, imagined by the audience through the narrative, directs the story discourse to an implied reader, which the narrative itself implies as a second-self to the reader. The narrator and narratee remain as mere devices, that can be used by the implied author or not, in the process of communicating the story from author to audience.¹⁷⁰

Metz agrees with Chatman's views about the implied reader. However, he adds that, in a given narrative, there might not be a single real author as the creator and responsible for the story. Metz illustrated his point by arguing that the authorship of a film narrative might be the outcome of a committee or group of people, like in the case of genre formula narrative films made by Hollywood studios.¹⁷¹

4.3 Cuing the audience's comprehension

David Bordwell, in his very influential comprehensive study of fiction narrative, *Narration in Fiction Film*, offered a new perspective on how we should understand film narrative. He focussed his main arguments in defending that the principal role of narration is to cue the audience's storyline comprehension. For

¹⁷⁰ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, p. 147,152

¹⁷¹ Cf: Metz, Christian. *Film Language. A Semiotics of the Cinema*, p. 20

this reason he summarised narrative to be: “the activity of selecting, arranging, and rendering story material in order to achieve specific time-bound effects on a perceiver”.¹⁷² He also argued against Aristotle’s and Plato’s influential mimetic and diegetic theories by claiming that: “mimetic theories assign few mental properties to the spectator” “diegetic theories, for all their apparent concern with narrational effects, also downplay the viewer's role”.¹⁷³ According to Bordwell, these theories take the audience as a passive receiver. This is why he also criticises Metz’s views on the spectator's passive role since as, referred above, Metz argued that the audience have no control over the perception of the narrative for they do not choose the images and the order in which the information appears disclosed or presented. As far as Bordwell is concerned only Eisenstein’s film theories (already referred in chapter 2) allow the viewer an active participation in the construction of the narrative. Bordwell affirms that: “The passivity of the spectator in diegetic theories generally is suggested not only by the extensive borrowing of mimetic concepts of narration but also by the use of terms like the “position” or the “place” of the subject. Such metaphors lead us to conceive of the perceiver as backed into a corner by the conventions of perspective, editing, narrative point of view and psychic unity”.¹⁷⁴

Bordwell believes that film theory had underestimated the important role that audiences play during narrative comprehension. He defends that a film does not position the spectator to do anything. A film cues the spectator to fulfil a number of comprehension operations. The most important objective of a narrative is to make sure that the audience understands the story. According to Bordwell, film narrative offers structures of information which appear divided in a narrative system and a stylistic system. These systems present the audience with cues, patterns, and gaps of information that shape and orientate the comprehension activity undertaken by the spectator. The audience at attempting to comprehend the narrative resorts to schemata, an organised cluster of knowledge and

¹⁷² Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. XI

¹⁷³ Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 29

¹⁷⁴ Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 29

experience, that guides our assumptions, inferences, associations and hypothesis making involved in the process of executing story-constructing activities.¹⁷⁵

Bordwell also argues against Chatman's theories for supporting his arguments on the classical communication model where narrative appears as a communication process from sender to receiver. According to Bordwell, this has focussed theorist's interests in searching for non-character narrators, implied authors, implied readers and narratees which in his opinion are very difficult to find in narrative texts. He claims that, even though you can sometimes identify these elements, they normally tend to be diluted in the overall narrative process.¹⁷⁶ Bordwell suggests instead that "narration is better understood as the organisation of a set of cues for the construction of a story. This presupposes a perceiver, but not any sender, of a message".¹⁷⁷ In fact, we have to take into account that all the technical and creative choices implemented during the filming stage have a single purpose: to construct a narrative. We record sounds and images so that we can combine them into an structure in order to tell a story. Furthermore, most of the choices involved during narrative construction aim at communicating the representation of the event to an audience. Filmmakers do not make films for themselves but to show them publicly through a diverse number of exhibition channels.

On his principles of narration Bordwell distinguishes three elements: Fabula, Syuzhet and Style. The fabula, can be understood as the story and incorporates the action as a chronological cause and effect sequence of events that occur within a particular time and space. The syuzhet, can be understood as the plot and refers to the arranging and organisation of the events that constitute the fabula. Therefore, the syuzhet is a dramaturgical process which consists of particular patterns of actions, scenes, turning points and plot twists. Furthermore, the style refers to the technical process involved in making a film

¹⁷⁵ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 29-37

¹⁷⁶ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 61, 62

¹⁷⁷ Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 62

and therefore it represents the use of cinematic elements such as composition, cinematography, editing or sound. For Bordwell, narration, in fiction film, results from the interaction between syuzhet and style. A process that consists of cuing and channelling the viewer's construction of the story.¹⁷⁸

Bordwell has identified four principal ways of syuzhet-style interaction. First he referred to the case of Hollywood classical canonic narration. In this case, style becomes "invisible" for the classical narration uses cinematic technique as means for the syuzhet's transmission of fabula events and content. The objective is that audiences are not aware of the technical elements involved in the making of the film so as to favour narrative content instead. Thus, style in classical Hollywood films becomes "invisible" and subordinated to syuzhet's narrational needs.¹⁷⁹

Secondly, Bordwell refers to Art Cinema narration as a mode that defines itself by opposition or deviation from Hollywood's classical mode. Art Cinema presents, unlike Hollywood, an ambiguous and subjective representation of reality taking its cue from Realist theory and literary modernism. In Art Cinema the actual narrative construction becomes an object of study. The spectator will question and try to answer the reasons for the film's syuzhet and style options. Thus, syuzhet and style will alternate their dominant positions to create ambiguous open-ended narratives and psychologically incoherent or unclear characters. Sometimes, the style will be put into evidence by disrupting narrative compression through jump cuts or elliptical editing, or simply by interrupting happenings or dialogues. This kind of narrative appeared in the films of Bergman, Antonioni, Truffaut, Buñuel, Fellini or Resnais.¹⁸⁰

Bordwell also identifies early Soviet Cinema as a rhetorical form of narration which also used narrative principles and devices opposed to Hollywood classical norms. According to Bordwell, in Soviet Cinema, the resort to poetic

¹⁷⁸ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 53

¹⁷⁹ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 157-163

¹⁸⁰ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 206-232

and rhetoric means shapes the narrational strategies of these kind films. The tendency is to use syuzhet as both narrative and argument. Characters become social prototypes defined by their jobs, social position and actions and political views. These films presented a structure of confrontation. As self-conscious and didactic narrative addressed directly to the audience. The fabula is propaganda and therefore predictable but the style is not. The style does not respect continuity of space and time. Eye lines and shots will not match and editing becomes the unifying principal element. Like in Art Cinema, due to Soviet's Cinema deviation from classical norms, style becomes more prominent than syuzhet.¹⁸¹

Bordwell also identifies a fourth type of narration which he called Parametric Narration in reference to Noël Burch's *Theory of Film Practice*. Burch's book is a collection of a group of film articles written for *Cahiers du cinema*. The book as a whole offer a compelling and systematic study of film technique describing in detail the potential combination of cinematic elements to construct film narratives. To illustrate his arguments Burch resorts to close readings on specific films from several authors such Antonioni, Renoir, Godard, Marcel Hanoun or Bresson. Overall, Noël Burch's *Theory of Film Practice* represents a powerful argument for a serialist film theory which constitutes the basics to Bordwell's arguments on Parametric Narration. Burch on several occasions, in his book, establishes parallels between potential film structures and those used in serial music. Not with an analogical intention but as an illustrative and comparative one. The underlining argument of Burch's analysis is that *decoupage*, the elements that constitute cinematic technique, can become in themselves a narrative system. This can be accomplish by establishing dialectical structures between cinematic elements. Something that to a certain extend Eisenstein, as noticed by Burch himself, had already stated in his film theories. The general premise is that stylistic structure can be organised as a form of narrative structure.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 234-247

¹⁸² Cf: Burch, Noël. *Theory of Film Practice*. Translated by Helen R. Lane. New Jersey: Princeton

In Parametric Narration, according to Bordwell, film's stylistic devices do not satisfy syuzhet needs, and unlike Art Cinema narration, style does not appeal or satisfy thematic considerations. Instead, style appears organised according to a limited number of stylistic options, creating a coherent stylistic pattern by repetition and organised as a narrative structure. The spectator's role becomes to recognise the stylistic pattern that characterises the film. There is a dominant or subordinate shift between syuzhet and style that can frustrate the spectator's construction of the fabula.¹⁸³ Bordwell illustrates his arguments through a gripping analysis of Bresson's *Pickpocket* (1959).¹⁸⁴

Thus, according to Bordwell, we can divide film narrative into two main forms: the canonic classical narrative implemented in Hollywood, which is and has been the most dominant narrative film form worldwide, and the "others". Even though, Art Cinema, Soviet Cinema and Parametric Narration have their own individual characteristics that differ from each other, all three forms of narration find their identity in their deviation and/or opposition from its Hollywood counterpart. Bordwell's arguments are very persuasive in demonstrating that, narration results from syuzhet-style interaction cueing the audience's narrative comprehension, and therefore, in defending his argument that there is no apparent narrator in film narrative sending a message but only a perceiver.

Seymour Chatman responds to Bordwell's theories by defending that narration nevertheless inhabits the film. For Chatman it makes no difference whether narration results or not from syuzhet and style interaction, or whether the audience participates actively or not in the narrative construction. There is bound to be a responsible agent for the interaction between the film and the spectator. The film is not organised by itself without a sender for in order for a film to communicate a particular perspective or point of view there must be some kind of sender. Chatman, in fact argued, that it makes more sense to say

University Press, 1981, p. 9, 50-52, 106-108, 143-145

¹⁸³ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 283-289

¹⁸⁴ Cf: Bordwell, David. *Narration in Fiction Film*, p. 291-310

Bresson, Rober. *Pickpocket*, 1959

that the public reconstructs the narrative rather than the audience constructs it since after all the narrative will be the result of the interaction between the film cues and the audience interpretation. This is something that Eisenstein had also defended in relation to his “theme” theory.

Conversely, this obviously does not mean that every viewer is going to reconstruct the narrative in the same way, and according to the filmmaker's intentions, since in fact, it is possible that each spectator may produce a different reconstruction of the event. However, for Chatman in a film narrative there is always a sender for he argues that the film narrator becomes the filmmaker's communicative instrument. His argument points to what Bal's had described as focalisation in visual arts: the cinematic elements, such as audio, music, composition, photography, or actors involved in the construction of the narrative. Chatman, hence, identifies the film narrator as being the sum of all these elements available for constructing the narrative.¹⁸⁵

4.4 Organising and communicating experience

Edward Branigan does not agree with Chatman's narrative views supported by the classical “sender to receiver” communication model. He also does not seem to be convinced by Bordwell's narrative film theory.¹⁸⁶ Branigan says that: “If a text is sometimes a “communication,” it is almost certainly operating in other ways as well... When the narrative object is narrowed to the acts of comprehension by which it is known, then I believe it is possible to conceive of an “author” as merely another reader with no ‘a priori’ message to deliver. Narration becomes the labour through which a reader generates any warranted description of sensory data - any admissible way of segmenting which yields perceptual boundaries, the collection of which becomes “the text.” “Narrator,”

¹⁸⁵ Cf: Chatman, Seymour. *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990, p. 126-135

¹⁸⁶ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992, p. 109-111

"actor," and "focaliser" are then merely convenient labels which allow the reader to fashion his or her own re-description, or transformation, of one perception of the "here-and-now" context into a new perception of it. All three types of agent are in the text according to a differential hierarchy. The complexity of the preposition "in" and its relationship to embedding and being embedded points to a dynamic and basic quality of narration: the transformation of one epistemological context into another, a movement from (embedded) level to (embedding) level".¹⁸⁷

This is why Branigan argues that terms such as "author" or "reader" are not pertinent for narration is a process of transforming data: "the central activity of narration is the re-description of data under epistemological constraint". Furthermore, he also states that narrative's comprehension cannot depend only on a cuing system which in fact can be organised and combined, by addition and subtraction in countless ways.¹⁸⁸ According to Branigan: "A text is composed of a hierarchical series of levels of narration, each defining an epistemological context within which to describe data. A particular text may define any number of levels to any degree of precision along a continuum from the internal dynamics of a character to a representation of the historical conditions governing the manufacture of the artefact itself."¹⁸⁹

Branigan believes that this notion of levels brings a different system, from that of subtraction and addition, to understand human cognition. Cuing serves as a reference guide for the spectator's comprehension process, however, it does not determine how audiences select, organise, and process the information contained in the narrative. For instance, a person watching a film a second or third time might feel the same emotions once and again like fear, excitement or embarrassment. Since that person had already seen the film and knows the outcome of the story we could expect a different reaction from the spectator. However, according to Branigan, the person can feel and experience the same

¹⁸⁷ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 110, 111

¹⁸⁸ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 112

¹⁸⁹ Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 87

emotions even though they already know the narrative outcome. For this reason, he argues that cuing does not control how an audience may experience or undertakes comprehension during watching a film. It involves much more complex subtleties since a given spectator may react to narrative content and form in multiple ways.¹⁹⁰

A film narrative is always organised temporally taking into account that the spectator has only one way to watch it. From beginning to end. Non-stop. So we cannot skip around or go back and re-watch a portion. Therefore, we cannot control the order or how long the narration takes to unfold. This is of capital importance for filmic construction and comprehension since a film narrative is constructed bearing that in mind. However, this does not mean that narrative comprehension happens in the same order as narrative unfolds. Branigan argued that it had been demonstrated that as spectators we do not spread our attention equally throughout the narrative text but we work our way through the text back and forward in an uneven manner.

On the other hand, we have to take into account, like Chatman and Abbott had claimed, that as audiences, when we read a text, we are always seeking structure. It is in our nature to do so. However, our perception capability has clear limitations. In order to process the narrative information we use a combination of short and long term memory which determines decisively the mental operations involved in comprehending the narrative content. Branigan argues that what we remember or forget from a narrative is not random but the result of a concrete method used to search and organise information.

Like Bordwell had claimed, our knowledge is organised thanks to schemata: an arrangement of knowledge already possessed by the perceiver used to predict and classify new sensory data. The fact that a person can identify immediately what they know or don't know illustrates the structured nature of our knowledge. According to Branigan, spectators tend to remember the content of a narrative in terms of sections of information which can be classified as propositions,

¹⁹⁰ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 113

interpretations, and summaries. We do not remember how the story is told. It requires a great deal of skill and effort to remember how a scene is shot or the lighting set-ups used throughout the film or how the sound design is applied in specific moments in the narrative.¹⁹¹

In order to understand the story the audience judges and selects what elements shall be grouped with other elements and in which context. The spectator may choose to link two elements even though these elements may not appear together in the narrative. At the same time, elements that appear linked in the story through editing may not belong together according to the audience's comprehension method. Thus, schemata becomes important at directing our search for pertinent information since we discover and justify connections among narrative elements with respect to schematic functions such as objectives, reactions, resolutions, epilogue, and narration. However, schema does not proportionate all the answers. We need to certify the authenticity of the evidence presented in the narrative with other knowledge sources. We may confirm with friends, in the library, or use the internet to confirm our conclusions or to satisfy our doubts.¹⁹²

In understanding how the spectator receives information through the narrative Branigan divides the story into two different sources: diegetic and non-diegetic. Diegetic corresponds to information accessible to the characters in the story. This means information available in the time, space and casualty of the narrative. However, diegetic information does not only correspond to what we see or hear in the composition. The diegetic world extends beyond the composition and the film for we do not imagine that the life of a character is solely reduced to what we see on the screen. Therefore, sounds and conversations off-screen also belong to this diegetic world. The audience can imagine the character going to work or doing something else in their lives that we do not witness in the film but we assume that they did or will do. For instance, they may assume that the characters sleep but we do not normally watch them sleeping in films, and

¹⁹¹ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 13-16.

¹⁹² Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 28-29.

certainly not for eight consecutive hours. We may also accept that they eat or study but the narrative might not reveal this information or even refer to it. However, audiences will take it for granted. In a sense, these missing aspects of the diegetic world correspond to gaps of information that as audiences we fill in with our own imagination.

On the other hand, non-diegetic corresponds to information addressed directly only to the audience. It could be a dialogue, a happening, an action, music, sound moods or a voice-over narration. The key aspect is that non-diegetic information is only available for the audience and therefore the characters in the narrative do not have access to it.

The spectator's organisation of information into diegetic and non-diegetic story worlds is a critical step in the comprehension of a narrative and in understanding the relationship of story events to our everyday world experience. In fact Branigan claims that narrative is the principle by which data from the screen is translated into a diegesis world that presents a particular storyline in that world. At the same time, narrative is the principle by which information is converted from the story onto the screen.¹⁹³This is why according to Branigan: "Film narrative is a way of understanding data under the illusion of occurrence".¹⁹⁴ This means that narrative is a perceptual procedure used by the audience to organise narrative information as if it was happening in a temporal, spatial, and causal frame. Thus, narrative becomes a fundamental instrument to understand space, time, and causality.¹⁹⁵

For this reason Branigan argues that narrative is not just in books or films or text but in life experience itself. Narrative is a strategy for making our individual life experience understood by others and therefore a tool for perceiving and processing experience. For instance, walking around a park and deciding where to sit or what to talk about are small narratives that we use to organise and

¹⁹³ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 35,36

¹⁹⁴ Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 115

¹⁹⁵ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 115,116

process our experiences.¹⁹⁶ Thus, like Branigan states: “narrative becomes perceptual activity that organises data into a special pattern which represents and explains experience”¹⁹⁷ It is in fact explaining experience that makes understanding narrative itself so complex. We have tried to study and understand narrative through plot, style, discourse and reception theories, however, for narrative theory to exist it must impose certain boundaries, categories and laws to human experience. Otherwise, it would be impossible to study scientifically how narrative translates our experience of the world.¹⁹⁸ But in doing so we are trying to set boundaries to our nature, and therefore, like Branigan concludes: “a given theory is responding to some of our deepest beliefs about human beings and the nature of society, and reveals not only a narrative artefact, but also how we are thinking about the working of the human mind”.¹⁹⁹

4.5 Documentary: searching for new ways to represent reality

As I have stated in the introduction to this chapter, during my bibliographic research, I have not identified a film theory dedicated to establishing documentary narrative forms apart from that of Nichols's modes. However, it is appropriate to highlight Paul Rotha's *Documentary Film* which in 1935 established four different documentary tendencies even though Rotha's referred to them as documentary traditions.²⁰⁰ There is a certain relationship between

¹⁹⁶ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 1-3

¹⁹⁷ Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 3

¹⁹⁸ Cf: Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p. 118-124

¹⁹⁹ Branigan, Edward. *Narrative Comprehension and Film*, p 124

²⁰⁰ Paul Rotha established: The naturalist tradition associated to Robert Flaherty's films like *Nanook of the North* (1922). The realist tradition associated to avant garde films such as *The Bridge* (1928) by Joris Ivens or *Berlin* (1927) by Walter Ruttmann. The third tradition corresponds to newsreels. In this group stands out *Vertov's Kino-Pravda* (1922). The fourth tradition integrates propaganda and cinema. Rotha incorporates in this group as an example British and Soviet cinema in the 30s and 40s. Rotha, Paul. *Documentary Film*, New York: Communication Arts book, Hasting House, Publishers, 1970, p.75-101 in Campos, Jorge. *Tesis Doutoral: A Lógica das Imagens. Viagem Pelo(s) Documentário(s)*. Universidade Santiago de Compostela. Departamento

Rotha's documentary traditions and Nichols's modes. Even though *Documentary Film* had subsequent re-editions we can appreciate that Nichols's modes present a more complete and updated account of how filmmakers, throughout history, had searched for new ways to represent reality. However, like Stella Bruzzi has noticed, documentary has not developed in such a rigid chronological way as Nichols's modes seem to suggest.²⁰¹ Nonetheless, from my perspective, Nichols's descriptions of documentary modes are not to be taken as a fixed account on documentary history or narrative forms. They should be considered as an useful loose reference in understanding and establishing how filmmaker's have explored cinema's technical and creative possibilities to represent their experience of the world. This is the only reason for disclosing Nichols's modes in this chapter. My intention is not to support any fixed views on how filmmakers implement cinema to represent an event. As stated in the introduction to this chapter I find Nichols's modes particularly useful to approximate fiction narrative theory to documentary narrative forms as a process for organising the filmmaker's experience of the world.

Nichols's modes, in my opinion, exemplify a number of Bordwell's syuzhet and style interactions that filmmakers have implemented to represent the historical world. In this case, the syuzhet-style interaction refers to content which offers evidence of an event's past existence. Most of Nichols' modes, like in the case of Art Cinema narration, Soviet cinema or Parametric narration find their identity in their deviation and/or opposition from Hollywood's classical narrative form. Therefore, by doing so, these modes or strategies establish also their narrative identity in relation to the concepts that define and differentiate Bordwell's fiction narrative forms.

As for Bill Nichols he has identified six modes of documentary (poetic; expository; observational; participatory; reflexive and performative) as a set of conventions that any documentary may adopt or not to represent an event and which may satisfy certain public expectations in terms of content and form.

de Ciencias da Comunicación, 2008, p. 79-82

²⁰¹ Cf: Bruzzi, Stella. *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction*, p.1,2

According to Nichols, these modes result, on the one hand, from filmmakers' dissatisfactions with previous forms of representation. This was the case of British Free cinema in relation to Grierson's doctrine. Similarly, like in the case of Direct Cinema and *Cinéma Vérité*, they had also been the result of new technological developments. However, on the whole, Nichols claims that each mode is the result of the filmmaker's desire and need to discover and create new rhetorical forms that fit their vision of reality. Therefore, the creation of each mode is an attempt of translating into technical treatment their personal point of view of the world. This is why Nichols argues that establishing new documentary narrative forms have been the outcome of a continuous search for subjective expression: an attempt to shape cinema technical means into communicating the filmmaker's experience.²⁰²

Nichols's Poetic mode shares common ground with modernist avant-garde theories transforming the historical world into subjective, puzzling and ambiguous impressions of reality. It opens new possibilities of knowing about the world by sacrificing classic canonical narrative continuity conventions in order to explore associations and patterns, rhythms, tones and spatial juxtapositions. This is the case of Joris Iven's *Rain* (1929) where we are not presented with any concrete characters or events but with an impression of a summer shower passing through Amsterdam. Or like in the case of Luis Bunuel's *L'Age D'Or* (1930) where he represents a reality populated by people subjugated by uncontrollable urges and unexplainable abrupt spatial and time shifts.²⁰³ These characteristics seem to suggest that the Poetic mode falls under Parametric or Art Cinema narration categories since style adopts a more prominent role than syuzhet by opposing Hollywood's classical narrative doctrine. Thus style becomes apparent to the viewer as an essential object of the narrative form.

²⁰² Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 99-101

Wintonick, Peter. *Cinema Vérité: Defining the Moment* (documentary), 1999.
<http://www.mefedia.com/watch/29319512> (consulted June 2011)

²⁰³ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 102-105

The Expository mode can be traced back to the already referred to Grierson's school of British documentary. This mode normally directly addresses the audience via voice over through a logical commentary which represents the perspective or argument of the film. In this mode images serve the purpose of supporting the spoken argument as evidence. For instance, in Pare Lorentz's *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936) images of arid plains landscapes were used to illustrate the assertion of widespread damage to the land.²⁰⁴

This mode favours the narrator's speech content instead of style. Images and sounds serve to illustrate the syuzhet's arguments. This implies that style plays a secondary supporting role in relation to the syuzhet: the persuasive omnipotent argument which intends to condition public opinion. This mode falls under Hollywood's canonic form of representation where style remains fluid and invisible to audiences so as to benefit the narration content, unlike in the Poetic mode.

The Observational Mode, already referred to and which can be traced back to British Free Cinema, sacrificed all forms of control that a poetic or expository mode might use in favour of taking the role of the observer and capturing events spontaneously. The camera records what happens as it happens with no intervention. The resulting narrative, because of its lack of argumentative voice-over, interviews or any obvious direction of meaning, calls upon the public to take an active role on interpreting the content of the film like in the case of Wiseman's *High School* (1968). A portrait of ordinary experience at Northeast High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.²⁰⁵

The Participatory mode, which can be traced back to Jean Rouch's and Edgar Morin's provocative *Cinéma Vérité*, results from the encounter between

²⁰⁴ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 105-109

Lorentz, Pare. *The Plow That Broke the Plains*, 1936

²⁰⁵ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 109-115

Cf: Pov. HighSchool Interview with Frederick Wiseman, <http://www.pbs.org/pov/highschool/interview.php>. August 28, 2001. (consulted in /01/2011)

Wiseman, Frederick. *High School*, 1968

filmmaker and event or character documented. Here, the filmmakers move away from behind the camera, from poetic meditation, voice-over commentaries and observational techniques to become another character in the film. It is, unlike observational, a cinema of intervention. A cinema which through interviews the filmmaker addresses the people that appear in the film rather than address the audience via voice-over like in the case of Jon Alpert's *Hard Metal Disease* (1987) and Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March* (1985).²⁰⁶

Observational and Participatory modes implement almost opposing strategies to acquire event information during the *act* of filming. The former does not intervene in the event but records the event when and as it happens. The latter not only intervenes in the event and becomes another character but uses the camera to provoke a catalyst reaction amongst the characters so as to reveal moments of "truth". However, even though we can identify clear differences in terms of strategy, Observational and Participatory modes share common ground in terms of syuzhet and style interaction. Style is not the object of their narrative forms like in the Poetic mode or in Parametric narration. They preserve a sense of invisible canonic continuity in how they film their subjects and structure their sequences. Style appears subverted to syuzhet for their narratives privilege character's speech content and actions instead of focussing the attention on how a scene is filmed or edited. Conversely, their narratives are open-ended. Unlike in the Expository mode they present an ambiguous representation of reality. Audiences must interpret the narrative content and reach their own conclusions. Open-ended narratives and ambiguous representations of reality fall under Art Cinema narration conceptions. Therefore, Observational and Participatory modes share a common syuzhet and style interaction by combining Art Cinema narration conceptions with Hollywood's invisible use of film style.

²⁰⁶ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 115-125

Alpert, Jon; Ranucci, Karen; DeLeo, Maryabb; Uberman, Lillian. *Hard Metal's Disease*, 1987
McElwee, Ross. *Sherman's March*, 1986

The Reflexive mode is a self-conscious and self-questioning form of representation which constantly asks us to see documentary as a constructed representation. In that sense it draws our attention towards our assumptions and expectations on the world we inhabit making us aware of society's codes and conventions that we may take for granted. The Reflexive mode seeks to engage with the spectator, focusing its interest on establishing a relationship between filmmaker and audience rather than, like in the participatory mode, with other social actors. In *Reassemblage* (1982) Trinh Minh-ha declares that she wants to speak "nearby" instead of "about" Africa. This statement clearly directs our attention not only towards how we represent the world but also at what we select from the world to represent it. Thus, in this way, Trinh Minh-ha attempts to raise the audience's awareness of the relationship between documentary and what it represents.²⁰⁷ Just like Vertov did with *Man with the Movie Camera* (1929), Buñuel with *Las Hurdes* (1933) and Chris Marker with *Sans Soleil* (1983).²⁰⁸ This mode finds its identity in opposition to Hollywood's invisible technique since its first objective is to raise public awareness on the process of filmic construction and reality representation. Style becomes evident and apparent like in Soviet, Parametric or Art Cinema narration drawing attention to itself, to the technical form of representation, in order to question the way we form our knowledge and opinions of the world through cinema's diverse forms of representation.

The Performative mode asserts that meaning is subjective for a television set, a holiday or a cat can mean different things to different people. From this perspective it is questioning what is knowledge and understanding and in doing so it questions what besides factual information contributes to our understanding of the world. In fact knowledge is not just factual but the outcome of memory, experience, emotional involvement, belief, questions of

²⁰⁷ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 125-130

Minh-ha, Trinh. *Reassemblage: From the Firelight to the Screen*, 1983

²⁰⁸ Vertov, Dziga. *Man with the Movie Camera*. 1929

Marker, Chris. *Sans Soleil*, 1983

value and principles. Therefore, the Performative mode is addressing the complexity of our knowledge of the world by highlighting the subjective and affective dimensions which can into play. Films such as *Tongues Untied* (1989) by Marlon Riggs used enacted scenes to illustrate the difficult personal issues involving black gay identity. In Performative mode certain concrete aspects of reality are amplified by imagined ones and therefore by addressing the audience emotionally and expressively rather than factually. In *Tongues Untied* we are invited to experience what it is like to be black male and gay, attesting to the complexities of racial and sexual relation within gay subculture.²⁰⁹

The Performative mode, as the word implies, inhabits a fiction domain which in this case it is applied to communicate emotional qualities of our experience. The abstraction and complex ambiguity involved in the process of communication provokes a fluctuation of syuzhet and style interaction. However, style adopts a more prominent role in the narration process by becoming always evident. In fact, it is through the evidence of the style, like in parametric narration, that audiences are invited to share the emotional qualities which are object of the narrative. On the other hand, this mode also tends to address the audience directly in a similar way to that implemented by Soviet cinema's self-conscious rhetorical narration form.

The reflections presented with relation to Nichols' modes do not intend to defend a close perspective on how filmmakers implement syuzhet and style interaction to represent the world. As stated, the intention is to approximate established fiction narrative theories to a documentary context so as to confirm that representing the historical world in cinema, whether through fiction or documentary, consists of applying Bordwell's syuzhet and style interaction. This represents a limitless source for the filmmaker to undertake creative and technical choices in representing an event.

Both documentary and fiction are cinema and inhabit each other domains to

²⁰⁹ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 130-139

Riggs, Marlon. *Tongues Untied*, 1989

represent the imagined or experienced world. There are no rules or set of conventions which can determine the way we represent the world for the possibilities are endless since modes or strategies vary in accordance to the individual filmmaker who applies them. Nichols's modes, confirm that the concept that fits or not to the documentary term is in continuous evolution. In fact, its evolution depends on the filmmakers' needs to accomplish personal expression. From this perspective, they illustrate how throughout history filmmakers have searched and continue to search for new ways to express their personal views of reality. In fact, modes, according to Nichols, mostly inhabit one another creating new hybrid forms of representation. For instance *Night and Fog* (1955) by Alan Resnais, about the Holocaust, can be considered to be expository due to its voice-over commentary. However, the evocative emotional quality of the commentary can also be consider performative. On the other hand, you could also identify the poetic mode in the contrast established between actual colourful images of abandoned concentration Nazi camps and shocking wartime black and white newsreel footage, illustrating the horror of man's brutal inhumanity.²¹⁰

Hence, the infinite possibilities provided by syuzhet and style interaction serve the filmmaker as a vehicle to create their own set of parameters or strategies in order to communicate personal experience and express subjectivity to others. However, my argument is that, the decisions implemented of syuzhet and style interaction consists of acquiring and organising event information in a particular order. Choosing a shot size or recording a sound intends to acquiring information about the world we inhabit to communicate experience and personal points of view of a subject to an audience. We can combine syuzhet and style in

²¹⁰ Cf: Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*, p. 134

Resnais, Alan. *Nuit et Bruillard/ Night and Fog*, 1955

Cf: Lewis, Sandy Flitterman. "Documenting the Ineffable. Terror and Memory in Alain Resnais's *Night and Fog*" in Keith Grant, Barry (editor) and Sloniowski, Jeannette (editor). *Documenting the Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*, p. 204-207

endless ways in order to communicate. Each filmmaker can apply a different strategy. However, the purpose of the options involved in this interaction is to communicate information about our experience to others. A film narrative organises visual and sound information and communicates experience. All subjective choices and creative and technical elements that constitute cinema are subordinated to narrative. The purpose of filming an event, recording an interview or not or establishing a camera position is to construct a narrative. From this perspective, Nichols's modes illustrates with simplicity a number of strategies that had been applied for perceiving and acquiring event information and for communicating experience through syuzhet and style interaction by creating personal subjective biased narrative forms.

4.6 Conclusion

Narrative can be understood as a sum of events that must be organised into a sequence. In fact, our minds in order to perceive and communicate seek structure. On the other hand, organising a sum of events means to present those events in a particular order, especially in film narrative. A film starts with an event and ends on another. In between there are a number of other events presented in a particular structure. Events in cinema are constituted by visual and sound information that may refer to an imagined world or to the world that we inhabit. Thus, narrative construction implies organising event information. This is why H. Porter Abbot claims that narrative can also be understood as a means for the transmission of information that describes our experience. This suggests that representing the historical world implicates obtaining concrete information about the event and communicating that information to others in a particular order.

This process of acquiring and expressing event information in the form of a narrative corresponds to the transmission of a personal experience. The filmmaker's experience of meeting a character or assisting an event and recording it with a camera. Thus, representing an event through a documentary

means to translate and communicate the filmmaker's experience into a narrative. This is why Branigan argues that narrative is a strategy for making our individual life experience understood by others and therefore a tool for perceiving and processing experience.

David Bordwell is very convincing in demonstrating that narrative is the process by which *syuzhet* and style interact in order to cue audiences' narrative comprehension. Bordwell argued that, apart from Eisenstein, film theory had underestimated severely the importance of the audience's participation. Constructing a narrative involves telling a story to others and in order to deliver a story we have to cue the audience's narrative comprehension. In fact, filmmakers' artistic and technical choices engaged in narrative construction and event representation imply cuing film content to an audience. However, like Branigan has claimed, audiences do not remember *how* a story is told. It is very difficult for a spectator to remember composition options, lighting set ups, camera movements or sound design. Furthermore, a film narrative is always organised temporally taking into account that the spectator normally has only one way to watch it. Specially in the cinema. From beginning to end. Non-stop. So we cannot skip around or go back and re-watch a portion. Therefore, we cannot control the order or how long the narration takes to unfold. This is of capital importance for filmic construction and comprehension since a film narrative is constructed bearing that in mind. The filmmaker organises and constructs the narrative taking into the account that the audience are going to watch the film without interruptions and in the order that it is presented.

However, this does not mean that narrative comprehension happens in the same order as the narrative unfolds. Branigan argued that it had been demonstrated that as spectators we do not spread our attention equally through out the narrative but we work our way through back and forward in an uneven manner. According to Branigan, spectators tend to remember the content of a narrative in terms of sections of information and not shots, camera movements or editing choices. This suggests that narrative comprehension is not only conditioned by the interaction between *syuzhet* and style but specially by the information

disclosed about the event through that interaction. Cuing narrative comprehension through style and syuzhet interaction implies, in fact, organising event information in the narrative. That is their purpose to reveal, omit and structure specific event information in order to represent an event from the filmmaker's point of view. This also implies that the resulting event signification produced by the spectator may depend greatly on the process of omitting and selecting event information since audiences produce meaning and signification about the event partly influenced by the information revealed in the narrative.

Bill Nichols' modes illustrate a set of conventions that any filmmaker may adopt to represent an event. These modes refer to different methods of syuzhet and style interaction. Strategies to represent reality change continuously in accordance to the filmmaker's subjective need for artistic expression. However, processing event information, through omission and selection, has always shaped and restricted the filmmaker's technical and creative possibilities for representing the event. A filmmaker chooses to implement a particular mode or technical strategy in order to capture specific event information. A narrative may present a particular structure so as to organise non-omitted event information in a particular order. All this suggests that the purpose of any technical or creative choices, implemented by the filmmaker, in the filming stage or during narrative construction, intends to process event information to represent the event, and to communicate their subjective point of view of their life experience.

Second Part

Research Analysis on Narrative Construction and Event Representation

Chapter 5

Narrative construction and event representation

5.1 Omission: a personal view on narrative construction and event representation

Cinema is a technical and creative medium. Its technical qualities both restrict and offer a limitless variety of creative possibilities for representing the world we inhabit. In documentary, representing the historical world results from applying a number of subjective artistic choices, in order to communicate the filmmaker's experience of an event, to an audience, in the form of a narrative.

All elements and choices involved during the filming stage are subverted to narrative construction since, in fact, the purpose of recording images and sounds, about an event, is to construct a narrative. Representing an event through narrative construction implies organising images and sounds about the event into a particular order. Narrative structure is of crucial importance since a filmmaker undertakes narrative construction and comprehension bearing in mind

that a narrative begins with one event or series of events and ends on another. This involves, like David Bordwell has stated, a process of interaction between syuzhet and style which serves several narrative purposes. First, it intends to satisfy the filmmaker's personal needs for artistic expression in order to communicate their personal experience of the event. Second, through the interaction of syuzhet and style the filmmaker organises event information into a specific structure in order to cue the audience's narrative comprehension of the event represented.

In the first instance, the filmmaker's choices for narrative construction set up the parameters for the representation of the event and its subsequent signification. However, signification and meaning does not result, like Sergei Eisenstein and David Bordwell had claimed, from the narrative "object" alone, but through its interaction with the audience during narrative comprehension. Thus, event signification and meaning emerges from the audience interpreting the filmmaker's options in constructing a narrative for representing their experience of the event.

Furthermore, Edward Branigan has argued that audiences do not remember *how* a story is told. Audiences tend to remember narrative content in terms of sections of information about the event and not in terms of shots, camera movements or editing choices. On the other hand, all the choices involved in making a documentary for representing an event, during the filming stage or during narrative construction, intend to acquire and organise visual and sound event information in order to represent the event. This means that a filmmaker makes options in terms of lighting, composition or editing in order to obtain and organise specific event information for constructing a narrative and representing an event. This suggests that in documentary, when representing a historical event, event information plays a crucial role in conditioning both the technical and creative process of representing the world that we inhabit and the subsequent stage of undertaking narrative comprehension.

Event information, during the filming stage, encompasses images and sounds that were acquired or could have been obtained from the historical world, during the *act* of filming. This represents an unlimited source of non-organised event information, for every filmmaker is able to produce or obtain different images or sounds from the same event.

Event information, during narrative construction, embodies the images and sounds acquired during the *act* of filming in order to construct a narrative and represent an event. These images and sounds are therefore designated as visual and sound information and able to provide an indexical relationship with the event's past existence. This represents a limited volume of event information designated as raw material. This volume is limited for it contains a specific number of images and sounds.

Hence, the filmmaker's intentions for representing the event refer to acquiring and organising specific visual and sound event information into a narrative form. For instance, if a filmmaker decides to film a particular event they need to select a shot size. Choosing a close-up or a long-shot implies selecting a section of information about the event through composition. Conversely, constructing a narrative to represent an event implies organising event information from the raw material into a particular structure. Both stages entail making decisions with regard to event information so as to represent the event.

It is for this reason that I argue that the process of acquiring and organising event information, during the *act* of filming and during narrative construction, results from omitting specific visual and sound information representing the historical event.

Omission etymologically speaking refers to fail or desist to say or to do something or to include or mention. It can also be understood as failing to fulfil (or neglect) a legal requirement or obligation. We can find its etymological origin in Latin: *omittere* (to let go; to lay aside, to omit). *Ommittere* derives from the Medieval Latin word *mittere*: (to send; send; throw; hurl) ²¹¹

²¹¹ Cf. *Enciclopedia Universal Sopena. Diccionario ilustrado de la lengua española*. Tomo seis.

In the case of representing a historical event, omission alludes to the process of removing visual or sound event information during the filming stage or during narrative construction in order to represent an event. A historical event refers to the spatial, temporal and physical context that the event inhabits, in the historical world, during the *act* of filming.

A historical event represents an infinite universe of non-organised information. The filmmaker when representing the world organises that universe into a concrete version of it. The decisions implemented by every individual-filmmaker implicate an unavoidable omission of event information. Shots perform the task of “containers” with a limited capacity for storing visual and sound information about the event. Choosing a composition implies omitting most of the information available about the event in order to select specific visual or sound information. Constructing a narrative requires organising the limited volume of images and sounds acquired during the *act* of filming into a structure. This volume of event information designated as raw material represents a limited non-organised source of visual and sound event information. During narrative construction the filmmaker organises and omits most of the raw material available in order to represent the event. For these reasons I argue, that in documentary, the representation of an event and its subsequent signification results from omitting and organising event information. This process shapes and restricts the filmmaker's possibilities for perceiving and recording historical events and for communicating personal experience to the audience through narrative forms.

Strategies to represent reality, like Bill Nichols has stated, have changed throughout history in accordance to the filmmaker's personal needs for artistic expression. However, in documentary, the filmmaker's personal strategy for representing an event has always been greatly determined by the process of

Barcelona: Editorial Ramon Sopena, 1981, p.6171

Cf: Allen, R.E (ed). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990, p.827

Cf: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/omitting>

omitting event information. In fiction, on the other hand, when representing factual events, not only the filmmaker omits specific event information but also they are forced to produce a great amount of event information that bears no indexical relationship with the event's past existence. This might entail developing a character's personal psychology and motivations or it may involve artistic input from a production designer in terms of art direction or costume design. In documentary, from the very original idea up to the final narrative stage, each decision involved in representing an event, results in an unavoidable omission of content and information about the historical event. In fact, it is through omission that filmmakers are able to present their personal views of the world. For instance, choosing to make a film about a park on a Sunday afternoon implies selecting a park in a particular place in the world at a particular time of the year. Therefore, choosing a specific park implies omitting other possible parks. If a filmmaker decides to film in a particular location it means that they are omitting other possible locations. If they select a character they are also omitting other possible participants. Each selection implies an omission of other aspects of reality for any subject, place or character belongs to the same historical world that the filmmaker inhabits and exists independently of their own personal experience. Therefore by choosing to represent one aspect of the world the filmmaker is also unavoidably omitting others.

During the *act* of filming, omission manifests itself through technical and creative choices in relation to specific event information. The filmmaker has to select shot types, duration, angle, aperture, whether they want the image in the background to be in or out of focus. These decisions, amongst many others, are conditioned by the filmmaker's intentions in acquiring concrete event information. This means that a filmmaker chooses to implement a particular composition, such as a close-up or a long-shot, in order to obtain certain visual or sound information about the event. In the case of the park, they have to choose whether they want to focus the attention on one activity, like for example a group of people having a picnic, or various activities. Conversely, they might decide that they do not want to film people in the park but only the grass, the

lake, the birds, the trees, the insects or flowers. Any of those possible event options implies making technical choices to acquire them. On the other hand, each creative and technical decision involves a subsequent omission of event information. For instance, if they decide to film a group of people talking in the park they might select a close-up or a long shot. The close-up will provide event information that will be omitted in the long-shot and vice versa.

During narrative construction they must also implement omission in terms of the visual and sound information available in the raw material for representing the event. Going back to the case of the park they might end up having images and sounds illustrating various activities like people cycling, jogging, a young couple talking, children playing, people feeding the ducks by the lake, a woman sewing on a bench, or a man lying on the grass. From this limited amount of visual and sound event information the filmmaker constructs a narrative to represent their experience of the park. This process normally involves, first, omitting most of the raw material available for constructing the narrative, and second, organising the remaining non-omitted event information into a concrete structure. The great variety of possibilities available for the filmmaker to implement omission and structure will further deepen their subjective representation of the world. Each time they make a selection or decision they will omit other possibilities. Day by day, stage after stage, choice after choice, the filmmaker sculpts their personal vision of the world through the omission and organisation of event information.

Furthermore, in order to undertake omission and structure of event information filmmakers must justify intellectually to themselves, and often to others, the reasons behind every narrative construction decision. They must justify both artistic and content choices. What information is selected or omitted and why? In which order I present the information? What composition do I choose to illustrate this information? What is the connection between minute ten and minute thirty in the narrative? Why are these images together at this moment in the narrative time? The fact is that in order to construct a narrative they need to justify the decisions to implement omission and structure choices of event information. Without justifications they struggle to organise the non-omitted

information into a structure and without structure it becomes extremely difficult for the filmmaker to communicate their experience of the event. These decisions and justifications are the responsibility of the filmmaker and they intend to satisfy the filmmaker's narrative intentions. It is for this reason that I defend that, in order to further our understanding of the process of representing an event, it is necessary to undertake research analysis on narrative construction from the point of view of the filmmaker: the only person who has complete access and understanding of the reasons and justifications involved in implementing omission and structure decisions of event information during narrative construction.

5.2 Introduction to the research analysis

I have undertaken research on narrative construction and event representation from a short documentary filmed and edited by myself. The main objective was to research and analyse the process of omitting and structuring event information during narrative construction from the point of view of the filmmaker. For this purpose I have produced two different narrative representations of the same event and from the same raw material: Version A and Version B. Each narrative version presents different narrative intentions. The objective is that each narrative version will induce different significations of the same event to an audience in accordance to the narrative intentions.²¹²

During narrative construction I have not omitted any event information available in the raw material apart from some very brief shots removed for reasons which are explained later in the chapter.²¹³ This means that all the raw material available for representing the event appears in either narrative Version A or B. Therefore, the event information included in Version A and B together corresponds to the

²¹²More detailed information regarding narrative intentions appear on the introduction to the research analysis for each respective version in chapters 6 and 7.

²¹³More information in terms of the selection process appears on chapter 5.4.

total overall raw material available for constructing the narrative. Since, each respective narrative version presents different narrative intention this implies that narrative Version A omits raw material which appears on Version B and vice versa. The purpose of presenting all the visual and sound information available for representing the event is to undertake a comparative research analysis, in terms of omission and structure, between both narrative versions. The research analysis has been centred on the following issues:

Firstly, I have focussed the research on the intellectual process of narrative construction. By that I mean the intellectual justifications that the filmmaker implements to undertake omission and structure decisions in order to construct a narrative and represent an event. The main objective has been to establish what elements or aspects of filmmaking might condition the filmmakers decisions for undertaking omission and structure of event information in order to satisfy the narrative intentions.

Secondly, I have centred the research on establishing and analysing the process of undertaking omission and structure of event information. The principal objective has been to identify what types of omission and structure choices a filmmaker may implement to represent an event in accordance to their narrative intentions.

5.2.1. Obtaining the research material

I have filmed and edited the short documentary, entitled Strike, using the codes and conventions that characterise Observational documentary. The reason for choosing this documentary mode is so that I can focus the research analysis on its specific representation parameters.

First, when filming a documentary using Observational codes and conventions a filmmaker is restricted to record the event without any participation in the event itself. During the *act* of filming filmmakers do not ask any type of collaboration

from the participants. The objective is to observe and capture the event as it happens and when it happens without any intervention. Normally, they record events that only occur once in front of the camera. This represents a very intuitive process with very little time for making composition or sound recording decisions. These parameters restrict considerably the filmmaker's mediation with the event for the process basically consists of acquiring images or sounds from the event as it happens without any type of direct interaction during the *act* of filming. Therefore, this process implies that a filmmaker has less choices for representing the event since they do not use interviews or stage any events so as to meet their narrative intentions. This contributes to focussing the analysis by reducing the number of research parameters during the process of narrative construction.

Second, adopting Observational documentary codes and conventions necessitates that a filmmaker does not use any voice-over, interviews, voice-over narration, non-diegetic music or any other devices in structuring the narrative. Filmmakers, to construct the narrative, can only assemble the images and sounds captured during the filming stage. This also simplifies the research analysis by reducing the number of narrative construction possibilities for representing the event.

As a whole, Observational documentary codes and conventions establish clear parameters and limits for representing of an event. These parameters restrict the amount of manipulation and variables that can be applied to construct a narrative and represent an event narrowing and focusing the object of research analysis on omission and structure.

5.3 Evaluation of the research material

5.3.1 Raw material

The event was filmed with no preparation or research on the subject. The event was chosen at random the day before filming without any criteria. The reason was to avoid, as much as possible, to create expectations about the event. I wanted to be as unprepared as possible so as to be spontaneous at the time of filming. The chosen event was the General Strike on the 24th of November 2010 at the Avenida dos Aliados in Oporto, Portugal. This is the centre of town where the City Hall is situated. A large central space for political and popular events of the city of Oporto. I filmed the event from 2pm to 6pm. As a result I collected approximately twenty four minutes of raw material.

After viewing and analysing the raw material available for undertaking narrative construction I have divided and organised it in terms of visual and sound event information into two groups: context and characters.

a) The context

The context refers to visual and sound information which describes:

- the physical space where the event takes place
- the different groups of people attending the event
- small events occurring in the event area

— The raw material illustrating the physical space presents larger and closer views describing the event area. The visual description of the space covers an area of 360°. I have organised and divided this visual information into the following shot types²¹⁴:

²¹⁴In the following chapter 5.4 I describe the meaning of this shot types

1.extreme-long-shot

2.long-shot and

3.medium-long-shot

4.medium-shot

— The raw material disclosing different groups of people attending the event has been organised into the following groups:

1. General crowd attending the event. It designates large groups of people. I do not identify specific characteristics of individuals.

2. Small groups of people attending the event. It is possible to identify specific characteristic and details about the individuals attending the event such age, gender or clothes they are wearing.

— Images and sounds documenting small events taking place in the same event area have been divided into four groups:

1. A group of musicians playing traditional music with traditional instruments.

2. A group of people singing together a Zeca Afonso popular protest song

3. A group of people protesting together

4. A group of individuals dressed up as clowns.

b) The characters

Individuals expressing their political views. I have divided this content into three groups:

1. Individuals speaking to the public attending the event through a megaphone
2. Individuals speaking directly to video and photographic cameras
3. Individuals speaking to each other but not addressing the crowd

5.3.2 Raw material evaluation

After viewing and analysing the event information contained in the raw material I have

established two different narrative intentions for producing two different representations of the General Strike event: narrative Version A and narrative Version B. The objective is to show that both narrative versions are opposite to each other in terms of event representation and signification.

— Version A intends to signify a positive representation of the General Strike event. This means producing a coherent representation of popular protest and dissatisfaction with government policies. The narrative intends to present a sympathetic representation of the event.

— Version B aims at signifying a negative representation of the General Strike event. This means producing an incoherent representation of popular protest and dissatisfaction with government policies. The narrative intends to present an unsympathetic representation of event.

In order to compare and analyse the omission and structure choices implemented for constructing narratives Version A and B I have organised and constructed both narrative structures into three parts: context, characters and conclusion²¹⁵.

– Sequence 1. Context.

This sequence serves to introduce general information about the event. First, it describes the spatial context that the General Strike event inhabits. Second, it provides information regarding the large and small groups of people attending the event. Finally, it introduces a number of small events such as demonstrations, music and singing.

– Sequence 2. Characters

This sequence presents an number of individuals manifesting themselves publicly and addressing the crowd.

– Sequence 3. Conclusion

This sequence resumes and reinforces the information disclosed about the event during sequence 1 and 2.

²¹⁵More detailed information regarding the narrative intentions for Versions A and B appears disclosed in the introduction to the narrative construction analysis of each respective narrative version in chapter 6 and 7

5.4 Selection process

I have implemented the following strategy for organising and selecting the material to construct narrative Versions A and B:

a) As I have already stated in chapter 5.3.1 (Raw material), I have organised and divided the overall raw material into two groups: context and characters.

b) Taking into account the narrative intentions for each respective narrative version I have organised and separated the context and characters groups into two sub-groups:

- Context and characters appropriate for narrative Version A.

This corresponds to images and sounds that I have considered suitable for producing a coherent positive representation of the General Strike event and therefore a more sympathetic filmic treatment of the protestors and the event.

- Context and characters appropriate for narrative Version B.

This refers to images and sounds that I have considered suitable for producing an incoherent negative representation of the General Strike event and therefore a more unsympathetic filmic treatment of the protestors and the event.

c) As stated in chapter 5.2, during narrative construction I have practically not omitted any event information available in the raw material. This means that all the raw material available for constructing the narrative appears either on

narrative Version A or B. Therefore, the event information disclosed in Version A and B together corresponds to the overall raw material available for representing the event. Since each narrative version presents different narrative intentions this implies that narrative Version A omits raw material which appears on Version B and vice versa.

d) The only material that I have omitted and does not appear on either narrative Version A or B is due to technical or redundant reasons.

- I have omitted raw material due to technical issues such as images which are out of focus, wrong exposure, wrong white balance and shaky unstable camera movement. This content was omitted due to the fact that it would be inappropriate for undertaking the research analysis since I do not intend to research technical issues involved in narrative construction.

- I have also omitted some raw material where its content is repetitive and redundant in terms of event information. This means visual or sound content that repeats information already available in other images or sounds. For instance, I have several similar images describing the event area. The visual information is exactly the same. The criteria used for choosing one shot instead of the other is purely technical. It has to do with image and sound quality. In Versions A and B I have only omitted about five per cent of the total raw material available. That means that practically all of the information available for constructing the narrative has been used either on narrative Version A or B.

— Finally, I have also omitted raw material on Version A and B in order to reduce the length of a shot. This means that I have shortened the length of some of the shots that appear on either narrative Version A or B in sequence. This omission refers to images used in sequence 1, context. For instance, the initial four shots in sequence 1, Version A have a duration after being edited of approximately thirty-two seconds. However, the length of each shot in the raw material is much longer. Shot 1, Version A originally lasted over a minute, however, in the edited narrative this shot lasts only fourteen seconds and seventeen frames. The same applies to shot number 1 in Version B. The shot appears in the edited narrative with a duration of eight seconds and five frames in length. However, the shot in the raw material lasted also over a minute.

5.5 Specific methodology: parameters of research analysis

This chapter introduces the steps and process implemented for undertaking research analysis on narrative construction. I also introduce the specific analysis parameters that have been selected for undertaking this research analysis in accordance to the objectives stated in chapter 5.1 This implies establishing specific elements for narrative construction analysis.

5.5.1 Stages for narrative construction analysis

From the same raw material available I have produced two different narrative representations of the same event. The objective is that each narrative will induce different significations of the event to the audience according to the filmmaker's narrative intentions. The two narrative versions have been designated as narrative "Strike" Version A and narrative "Strike" Version B.

During the process of research analysis I discuss and reflect the filmmaker's omission and structure decisions involved in constructing both narrative versions.

As stated in chapter 5.2 and 5.3, for analysis purposes, each narrative version has been divided into three sequences: context, characters and conclusion. The objective is to facilitate the research analysis process of contrasting and comparing the omission and structure decisions implemented in constructing each respective narrative version. This means that narrative Version A presents visual and sound information that was omitted in Version B and vice-versa. Therefore, the content in both narrative versions present the overall raw material available for constructing the narrative and representing the event.

a) For these reasons the narrative construction research analysis of each version has been organised into the following stages:

—Firstly, in each respective narrative version I introduce the overall filmmaker's narrative intentions and the specific narrative intentions for each sequence. This means the narrative intentions for each sequence and each respective narrative version: context, characters, and conclusion.

—Secondly, I present the research analysis for each respective narrative version, which has already been referred to, has also been divided into three sequences: context, characters and conclusion. I have undertaken the research analysis shot-by-shot, for each sequence, taking into account all the visual and sound information contained in each shot and in accordance with the parameter analysis that I introduce below in chapter 5.5.2.

b) The analysis focuses the research on the filmmaker's narrative intentions.

—For this reason, first, I describe the visual and sound information in relation to each shot. The shot description presents all visual and sound elements that constitute the shot. In fact, for each shot, during the analysis, I present an illustrative frame of each shot and a list of sound and dialogue information that corresponds to each respective shot. Furthermore, I have attached to the appendix a DVD copy of narrative Version A and B. In appendix there is also a full storyboard attached, with notes on sound and dialogue, for each narrative version.

—Once I have described the visual and sound information of each shot, I disclose the filmmaker's narrative intentions in terms of omission and structure. Most of the analysis discusses the content and information that the shots are intended to signify according to the point of view and intentions of the filmmaker. The analysis is not intended to be interpreted as a more general discussion regarding technical issues in documentary-making and narrative construction.

—Based upon the analysis parameters disclosed in 5.5.2, I discuss and analyse my intellectual justifications for constructing each narrative and in accordance to the specified narrative intentions. Therefore, I illustrate and justify the decisions involved in constructing the narrative so that it signifies a particular perspective of the event. These justifications present only my personal interpretation of the content provided by the raw material. They do not intend to imply that I have filmed the event with those intentions. They also do not intend to convince or establish that my personal interpretation of the raw material is the correct one or the only possible interpretation that can be applied to the raw material.

Therefore, the intellectual justifications disclosed throughout the analysis are personal subjective reflections which aim at disclosing my personal views and reasoning. They only intend to reveal how I have intellectually interpreted the raw material in order to construct each narrative version.

c) In chapter 6 the analysis of narrative Version A discusses the narrative construction in terms of omission and structure without comparing it with Version B.

d) In chapter 7 the analysis of narrative Version B discusses the narrative construction in terms of omission and structure in relation to the choices implemented in Version A. Therefore, in Version B, the research analysis compares and contrasts the choices implemented for constructing both narrative versions. The objective is to illustrate and discuss the process of omitting, selecting and structuring event information that has been implemented to represent the event in accordance to the narrative intentions for each respective version.

e) In chapter 8.1, I present a comparative reflection on the narrative construction analysis undertaken in Version A and B. The chapter compares and resumes the filmmaker's options implemented for achieving both narrative versions in accordance to the narrative intentions. Due to the fact that the research analysis has been divided into three sections this comparative reflection has also been divided into three parts, one for each sequence.

5.5.2 Narrative construction analysis parameters

In order to undertake this research during narrative construction I have identified specific analysis parameters. The objective of these parameters is to provide an intellectual and practical open space where analysis can be debated. These parameters are constituted by two 'coding' frames with specific units of analysis: image code frame and sound code frame. To each unit I have given a code of meaning with clear analysis parameters. The purpose of these units is to generate data which is adequate to careful analysis and discussion. Therefore these units serve as key reference to undertake research analysis during narrative construction.

a) Image code frame

The image code frame consists of the following units:

1. Camera composition
2. Camera angle
3. Camera movement
4. Contrast
5. Colour

1. Camera composition

Camera composition stands for the arranging of all visual elements within the frame. I will discuss in detail composition choices during the research analysis by referring to three planes of action: Foreground, background and off-screen.

Foreground: alludes to the area in the frame which is nearer the camera lens.

Background: indicates the area in the frame which is further away from the camera lens.

Off-screen: refers to the event area outside the camera composition.

—Selecting a particular camera composition implies choosing a particular shot size (or focal distance) to record an event. There are many different types of shot sizes that can be used to film an event. Here I present a concrete description of shot types used for representing the General Strike event. I used the size of the human body as reference for defining the type of shot size.

Extreme-close-up-shot: this shot refers to framing only a part of a human face.

Close-up-shot: this shot refers to framing an object about the size of a human head usually not including shoulders.

Medium-close-up-shot: this camera shot indicates a space equivalent to a person's head and shoulders.

Medium-shot: this shot refers to framing a person's head and torso. This shot can also encompass two people standing or sitting next to each other filmed from the waist up.

Medium-long-shot: this shot refers to framing the entire body of a person.

Long-shot: this shot refers to framing an entire room or a large group of people.

Extreme-long-shot: an extremely-long-shot refers to framing an entire house or anything large like a landscape.

2. Camera angles

There are many camera angles that can be applied in filmmaking. Camera angle refers to the camera position in relation to the subject being recorded. I am going to focus on three camera angles: eye-level, high-angle and low-angle.

—Eye level shot:

The eye-level shot is set up so that the camera is at the eye level of the subject (not that of the camera operator). Eye level shots put the viewer on an equal

status with the subject.

—High angle shot:

The high-angle shot looks down on the subject. For this reason it situates the viewer in a superior position to the subject. On the other hand, it can make the subject appear weak or inferior.

—Low angle shot:

The low-angle shot, in opposition to high-angle, looks up at the subject. For this reason this camera position provides the subject with the appearance of strength or power.

3. Camera movement

Camera movement may alter shot size and composition. There are many types of camera movements that can be applied during the *act* of filming. For the purpose of this research I am going to focus on three camera movements:

—Hand held:

This refers to operating the camera without the use of a tripod, very common in documentary and especially in Observational documentary.

—Panning:

A camera movement that scans the scene or the subject horizontally. Normally it refers to a tripod camera operation.

—Tilting:

A camera movement that scans the scene or the subject vertically. Normally it refers to a tripod camera operation.

4. Contrast

Contrast refers to the overall brightness of the image. I have divided contrast into two groups:

—Shadows.

This refers to the darker areas of an image

—Highlights.

This refers to the brighter areas of an image.

5. Colour

Colour refers to the overall colour tonality in the image composition. I have divided colour into two groups:

—Warm colour tonality:

It refers to the overall colour density of the image. Warm encompasses yellows, oranges, red and browns. For the purpose of this research it is associated to vivid, positive, emotional and soothing qualities.

—Cold colour tonality:

It points to the overall colour density of the image. Cold refers to blue, green, pink, purple and magenta. For the purpose of this research it is associated to negative, unemotional, non-soothing qualities.

b) Sound code frame:

The sound code frame refers all the sound recorded during the filming stage. I have divided the sound code frame into two units:

—Speech:

This unit includes only comprehensible character's dialogue.

—Sound:

This unit incorporates all sounds recorded apart from speech such as music, non-comprehensible dialogue, traffic and general sound ambience.

5.5.3 Other terms used in the analysis

The following definitions do not intend to embody the full possible meaning of the terms presented. They represent the meaning that I have allocated to these terms and they only serve as a guideline or reference in relation to the research analysis.

—assembly

The process of arranging or organising images and sounds in a particular order.

—aperture in photography

This refers to the lens diaphragm opening inside a photographic lens. The size of the diaphragm opening in a camera lens regulates the amount of light which passes through onto the film or chip (if it is digital) the moment when the shutter curtain in a camera opens during the exposure process.

—cinematic

This refers to all the technical aspects or elements involved in making a film such as composition, camera movement, editing or sound recording.

— continuity editing

This refers to the process of arranging images and sounds in a particular order without drawing attention to the technical aspects involved in the assembling of images and sounds together. This intend to represent Hollywood's predominant video and film editing style. The purpose of continuity editing is to smooth over the inherent discontinuity of the editing process and to establish a logical coherence between shots.

— cut

The process of joining images together during editing.

— cut-away

An image that offers no spatial reference or information about its content. Normally, it refers to a close-up shot type. In documentary normally a cut-away is used to reduce the length of a particular sequence or scene or to establishing associations amongst images during narrative construction.

— depth of field

The distance between the nearest and farthest objects that appear in focus in the composition.

— editing in cinema

The process of selecting and assembling images together to construct a film narrative.

– film analysis

The process or method for analysing cinematic elements.

– film style

The personal technical and creative cinematic treatment implemented by a filmmaker to make a film.

– long take

An uninterrupted shot (with no cuts) which lasts much longer than the conventional editing pace either of the film itself or of films in general, usually lasting several minutes.

– mise-en-scène

The process of organising all the cinematic elements in a composition.

– point of view

The process of translating and communicating the filmmaker's personal experience of an event through implementing cinema's technical and creative qualities.

– representation

This refers to the visual and sound construction of a historical event.

– scene

A shot or series of shots that together comprise a single autonomous unit of

event information.

—sequence

A scene, or connected series of related scenes that are edited together and comprise a single, unified event, setting, or story within a film's narrative.

— shot

The basic unit of a film narrative This refers to a single uninterrupted image capture by a camera.

— sequence shot

A long take that extends for an entire scene or sequence. It is composed of only one uninterrupted shot with no editing.

Chapter 6
“Strike” Version A

Research analysis on narrative construction

6.1 Objectives

This narrative version intends to produce a *positive* representation of the event. This means a sympathetic representation of the event and the characters involved in the General Strike. The principal objective is to produce a coherent representation of popular protest and dissatisfaction with government policies. The intention is to confer the event a sense of fellowship and togetherness or communion where a group of people are gathered together for a common cause.

The specific intentions for the three act narrative sequences are as follows:

Sequence 1. Version A. Context

This first sequence means to signify that there is a large group of people

attending and participating in the event. The sequence intends to confer popular, festive and a sense of unity to the event. The main objective is to convey that there is a sense of unity and togetherness amongst the participants.

Sequence 2. Version A. Characters

This second sequence introduces a number of individuals declaring their concerns to the attending participants. These characters protest against the government inefficiency in resolving the country's economical and social problems. Their speech intends to represent the interests and concerns of the participants and to address General Strike political issues.


The objective of the sequence is to present the character's speech content in a coherent manner and to communicate that the participants around them are engaged and interested in their arguments. People seem to subscribe and agree with their claims. Therefore, the principal objective is to represent a coherent political protest which particularly highlights the elements of public participation and unity.

Sequence 3. Version A. Conclusion

This last sequence means to conclude the narrative by resuming and reinforcing the overall narrative intentions stated in sequence 1 and 2.

6.2 Strike. Research analysis narrative Version A

Sequence 1. Context

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Popular musicBackground voicesTraffic
<p>Shot 1. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>14: 07 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This first shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

In terms of composition the frame presents a man in the foreground playing a traditional instrument: a bagpipe. In the background, which appears very slightly blurred, created by a relatively shallow depth-of-field, there are other men playing other traditional instruments. The musicians move their bodies as they play in time to the rhythm of the music. The sunlight produces an overall warm orange tonality.

The music they play has popular and traditional qualities. It is the loudest sound we can hear in the shot. We can also hear background voices and the sound of traffic.

Filmmaker's intentions:

I chose this image to begin this narrative version for the following reasons:

Firstly, I do not want to reveal the surrounding space. I want to centre the attention on the music and the musicians, especially the bagpipe: a traditional and popular instrument normally used for playing music in traditional and popular public events. Note that also the musicians do not just play but also move as if they were dancing. Their movements heighten the festive quality of the music. The musicians seem to be enjoying themselves. The music and the instruments are popular and traditional. These popular and traditional qualities suggest the universal aspect of the gathering.

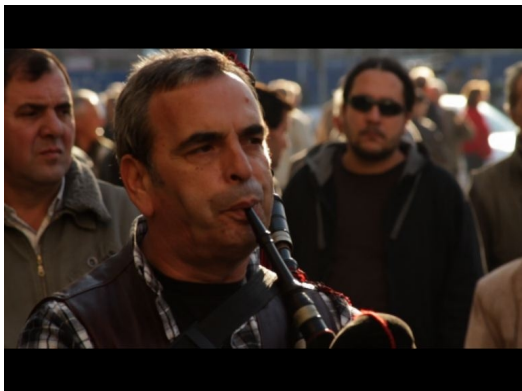
It is important to underline that so far in the narrative the viewer does not know the reasons for this event. There are no justifications for the music or the gathering. The audience has only learned that a group of people are watching a group of musicians playing popular/traditional music. This implies an omission in terms of event information. I have intentionally omitted establishing the type the event so as to focus the audience's attention on the popular traditional qualities that the music confers to the event.

Even though we can hear other sounds the music plays the central role in the event since it is the loudest sound in the scene. Through the music being louder I am conferring greater importance to the music and its qualities than to the sound of any other activities that may be happening at the same time in the same area. However, the sound of the background voices is also important for it heightens the mass presence and draws the viewer's attention to the fact that people are populating the space. Moreover, the traffic noise, even though not very perceptible, implies that we are in a city and therefore situates the location for the event.

The warm tones created by the sunlight, and even the red cloth hanging from the bagpipe, accentuates the positive qualities of the event. Warm images refer to good weather which might be understood as positive. The intention in fact is to associate warm images to holidays, free time and general outdoor activities. All

these elements in a Western culture may refer or imply positive aspects and qualities.

From my perspective the described visual and sound information in terms of image and sound sets off the narrative with a positive festive universal quality. However, and like Mitry and Bálasz had claimed, a shot, generally does not signify or represent an event by itself. A filmmaker must combine different shots and sounds in order to signify and represent the event. The following three shots are going to reinforced my referred intentions established during this initial shot.

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Popular musicBackground voicesTraffic
<p>Shot 2. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>09: 04 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This second shot corresponds to a medium-close-up-shot.

The composition presents only one musician and therefore omits the other musicians. The shot in being closer to the subject eradicates the surrounding space. The background is out of focus. This heightens attention in the foreground. Many other people surround the musician. One man stands out of the background as he watches the musician playing. Now the spectator can learn and observe how the musician plays the bagpipe.

The music continues to be the loudest sound in the event and so it becomes the sonic protagonist of the event. Furthermore, it is also possible to hear background voices from people surrounding the musicians and the sound of traffic. The musician moves as he plays. The musician appears backlit by the sun. In the frame we see punctual rays of warm sunlight illuminating specific areas of the image.

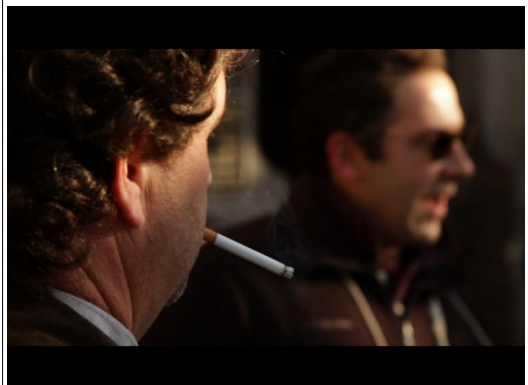
Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot maintains continuity in terms of information by focussing the attention on the positive festive qualities established on the first shot. Conversely, it also brings new information into the narrative. First, the shot reveals the identity of the musician with clarity. The composition reveals his expression and the viewer could approximately guess his age. This shot type allows us to perceive the character's emotions. The musician seems happy for playing the music to his surrounding public. Because of the proximity of the shot I can also punctuate how the bagpipes work. We can observe how he plays. It is not a common instrument that we see everyday. Normally, we see these instruments in popular and traditional environments. Being able to see the bagpipe playing relatively close-up, I believe the traditional quality of the music and the event is also accentuated.

On the other hand, this shot illustrates two new important aspects in terms of narrative information. First, the shot reveals another side of the space where the event takes place. This information we learn through establishing a spatial relationship between shot 1 and 2. Shot 1 situates the event from a particular perspective establishing a spatial reference. Shot 2 further develops our understanding of the space. We know that the background behind the musician corresponds to a space that was omitted in the previous shot. The shot being closer to the musician compresses further the space bringing foreground and background spatial planes closer to each other. The shot also confirms the premise established in the first shot that there are many people surrounding the

musicians. The shot type, medium-close-up, still omits where the event is taking place. We cannot establish the precise location.

Furthermore, the spatial relationship between foreground and background reinforces the idea that people are watching and attending the music event with interest. Behind the bagpipe player, slightly out-of-focus there is a man who is wearing sunglasses watching the event. The man looks almost straight towards the camera in the direction of the (omitted) musicians who are located behind the camera. This relation between the man with the sunglasses and the omitted musicians reinforces the idea of public participation, the fact that the public is watching the musicians. This idea is further developed if we consider that the foreground musician exemplifies the interest for public attention. The background people cannot see the musician since he has his back to them. However, the shot establishes a complex spatial relationship between the public watching and the object they are watching: the musicians. The shot establishes this information-relationship through the spatial interaction between foreground and background. Note also that the man in the background wears sunglasses to protect his eyes from the sun. This small detail evokes and maintains the presence of the sun with its positive qualities established in the first shot.

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Popular musicBackground voicesTraffic
<p>Shot 3. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>05: 09 sec</p>	

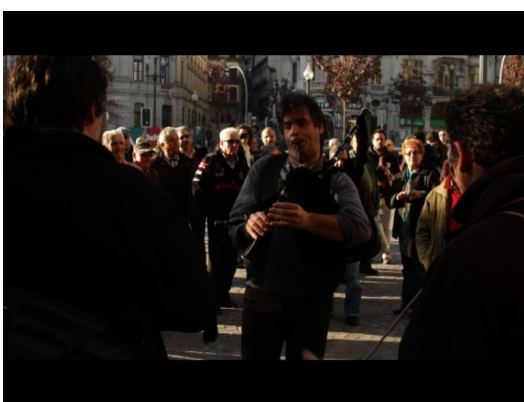
Shot description:

The third shot corresponds to a close-up-shot.

This shot only shows two musicians and consequently omits not only the other musicians but also the surrounding space and the public. The background is also out-of-focus. The composition illustrates part of the face of one musician, in the foreground, and the face of the second musician in the background. There are no instruments in the shot. As they play they also move. The foreground musician smokes as he plays while the other one smiles with enthusiasm. Their faces illuminated by the sun and the sunglasses of the background musician maintain the continuity of warm tonality values established in the first shot. We can still hear background voices from the people surrounding the musicians and the sound of traffic. However, the music continues to be the “sound” protagonist in the scene.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The shot maintains the continuity in terms of warm-image tonality and sound giving emphasis, like in the previous shots, to the popular music. However, this shot brings us closer to the musicians than shot number two. The frame omits the space and public surrounding almost completely. This omission focuses the attention on the facial expressions and therefore on the emotions that their expressions signify. The objective precisely is to accentuate the festive and popular quality of the event. Note that the background musician smiles. The foreground musician holds a cigarette in his mouth while he plays. Both elements demonstrate that the musicians are relaxed and enjoying playing music in an informal manner. This information reinforces the informal festive and popular qualities of the event.

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Popular music Background voices Traffic
<p>Shot 4. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>04: 03 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

The composition reveals another musician playing also a bagpipe. The musician appears framed between two musicians. The musicians continue to move as if dancing. In the background we can see people watching them. We still hear voices and traffic, however, the music continues to be the loudest sound in the event. Warm sunlight illuminates the surrounding public.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This composition reinforces and maintains the continuity in terms of content and intentions already established. The image tonality continues to be warm, the music continues to act as the protagonist of the event and the shot continues to compress the space to emphasize the number of people attending the event.


There are two main reasons for this shot. First, the shot shows another perspective of the space which we have not yet seen. This implies both providing new spatial information about the event area and omitting other spatial perspectives of the same event are. This new spatial information almost

completes a 360 degree circle around the musicians. This shot confirms the idea that the musicians are surrounded by people. We have already seen the space from three different perspectives going around the musicians. The objective is to learn about the space without really illustrating the overall space. The intention is to signify that the musicians are surrounded by people. The idea is to induce the audience to think that because of the amount of people attending the event I was not able to show a larger view of the space. Second, this is the last shot where the musicians appear in the narrative. Note that the shot size is not only very similar to shot number one but also features a man playing the bagpipe. This intends to provide the sensation of going back to the beginning of the scene but from a different perspective. This acts as a kind of “grammatical punctuation mark” closing down the sequence and reinforcing the traditional, festive, popular, participative qualities of the event.

These four initial shots not only introduce and partially describe the space and assign certain values and qualities to the event but also represent who is attending the event. The musicians themselves already represent different ages and generations playing music together in unity. The people in the background and around the musicians represent the diversity of people attending the event. We can identify different ages, sex and gender. Therefore, we can associate that this event appeals to all members of society. It must be an event of general public interest. This draws our attention to the possible universal characteristics of the event. The popular traditional music reinforces these values. Social representation will be further developed as the narrative moves forward.

It is important to underline that I have shown the space by fragmenting it into four independent shots. The sum of all shots together signifies to the spectator a general idea of what the space is like without illustrating the actual space. Thus, the space is not described visually but evoked, and I have associated it with certain qualities and information already established. This form of editing corresponds to Soviet fragmented montage which André Bazin's Realist theory had severely criticized in favour of the long-take and depth-of-field conceptions as stated in chapter 2.

Each shot has a particular length. From shot 1 to 4 the length of each shot decreases. This increases the narrative pace in synch with the musical beats. The objective is to accentuate the excitement that the sequence should convey about the event. On the other hand, the first shot lasts longer than the others because I am situating the audience in terms of space and action without describing the location. The next three shots complement and reinforce the spatial information signified through the initial shot. This is why they also do not need to be as long as the first one.

 <p>Shot 5. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>04: 07 sec</p>	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Popular music Background voices Traffic
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Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a long-shot.

This composition frames a large number of people against a big poster announcing the General Strike. This is the first shot that identifies the type of event. The frame compresses people against the General Strike poster. There is a Portuguese flag on the right hand side of the frame and another poster which reads: “Against Injustices”. Crowd voices and traffic noise adopt a more prominent role while the traditional music reminds now on a second level of importance in the narrative.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This is the larger visual description of the event area we have seen so far and in fact represents the largest view in narrative Version A. Still, people appear compressed against the background. The objective is not to leave much space unoccupied in the frame so as to signify that there are many people attending this event.


General Strike, written on red against white, stands out in the composition pointing to the fact that this is the most important information to communicate. It almost acts as an initial credit title. Thus, the composition draws our attention to the reason for the event, the General Strike and the reason for the General Strike appears summarised next to the poster where it reads: "Against Injustices" Through compressing the space I establish a composition relationship between the reason for the foreground people standing there and the background posters announcing the purpose of the event.

In contrast with previous narrative choices the music now plays a secondary role. The loudest sound now is the crowd voices. This indicates that we have moved forward temporally and spatially in the General Strike location. We are not longer near the musicians and so we are discovering a new event area in the space. This intends to signify that the space around is very large for we can still hear the music off-screen in the background far from where the musicians are. The Portuguese flag on the right-hand side of the shot suggests that this is not a local event but one of a national scale. It also informs and confirms that this is a Portuguese event. These two elements, the Portuguese flag and the already large advocated space, intend to confer to the event a large scale.

Even though the musicians have been visually omitted, the off-frame traditional music is still present, since we can still hear it. The juxtaposition associates the unifying qualities of the protest and festive spirit of the music to the political context of the General Strike. The voices of the crowd become louder than the music the moment that we can identify the purpose of the event. Voices refer to what people say and think and, in this case, establish that the people are talking

to each other. This is a political event where people gather to protest publicly. Since at this point we can only hear the sound of voices we are not yet able to decipher individual claims. Therefore, these voices so far represent only ambient sound that unifies the attending crowd who are standing together for a common cause and purpose. On the other hand, since we cannot yet understand what they say, the sound of voices announces future individual protests that we now expect to hear in the near future. So, it anticipates and creates narrative expectations. Furthermore, the sun stills bathes the composition with a warm tonality. This maintains continuity with the positive premise established previously in the narrative during the musicians' scene.

Thus, the narrative has now developed to allow this sequence to be understood as a Portuguese political nationwide event with many participants. People, acting as a group force, are gathered together to celebrate their democratic right to protest for a common cause. Notice also that most people have their back to the camera and are facing forward towards the General Strike poster. Their body position draws our attention in that direction. This intends to create curiosity and expectation in relation to the event area situated in front of the participants.

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Popular musicBackground voicesTraffic
<p>Shot 6. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>04: 01 sec</p>	


Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-long-shot.

The composition presents a closer version of the previous shot. The poster becomes much bigger in size. People stand all with their backs to the camera looking in the direction of the poster. We do not hear the traditional music anymore. We hear a new piece of music but we still cannot fully identify the melody or the lyrics. The music seems to come from the direction that the crowd is facing.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot approximates the audience nearer the centre of the attention. However, it maintains the expectations since it does not fully reveal what might be happening in front of the standing crowd. The fact that no one is standing facing us suggests that further into the space there might be something happening. We do not hear the traditional music anymore and we cannot fully identify the content of the new melody. These elements intend to create expectation through the omission of event information since the narrative does not reveal what event might be occurring by the General Strike poster.. We may guess since we all have our own expectations about what a General Strike might be like. However, we await for narrative confirmation for, as spectators, we know the answer we seek lies ahead of us. At the same time, the shot intends to punctuate and accentuate the title event, General Strike, and strengthen its relation to the group of protestors.

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Popular music Background voices Traffic
<p>Shot 7. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>04: 15 sec</p>	


Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

The shot presents a closer view of the event. We are now indeed nearer to the poster since we cannot see the “General Strike” words as a whole but only portions of it. We can still just make out the words “injustice” and “change”. The new song becomes more perceptible even though not completely comprehensible as of yet. The voices are much louder than before. People remain standing back to us facing forward in the same direction. We see red flags. Red as the chosen colour for writing General Strike becomes very prominent in the frame. The flags belong to the union CGTP (General Confederation of Portuguese Workers). This event might be the initiative of this workers union. Because of the position in the frame of the words “General Strike” we know we are visiting the space from a left perspective to that which we have seen in the previous two shots. Therefore, we are revealing a new side of the event area.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot satisfies a small degree of our curiosity. We approach the crowd's centre of attention further and new information about the event is revealed. The music melody announces political protest. Crowd voices are louder accentuating the gathering of people around the event. We may associate the red coloured flags and poster to left-wing politics, especially since we identify that the event might be motivated by a workers union: CGTP. However, people still remain with their back to us and facing forward further into the space ahead of us where there is an event area we have not reached yet. This intends to feed our curiosity and expectations for we are very near the focus of attention but still we cannot identify the precise content of the event. That information continues to be omitted. The warm positive qualities of the sunlight are in the same chroma range as the red that can be identified with left-wing political affiliation established within this shot. This intends to confer left-wing attributes to the colours orange, yellow and red that appear in the composition. The principal objective of this association is to establish that this is a popular, positive and left-wing political event taking place in unity.

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Popular musicBackground voicesTraffic
<p>Shot 8. Cut-away A. Sequence 1. Version A: 03: 02 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a close-up-shot.

The composition presents part of the face of one of the public members. A man on his mid forties appears smiling. He is not facing the camera. He maintains the continuity by looking forward towards the pre-established centre of attention. In the background we see tree leaves illuminated with a yellow and orange tonality. Now, we can identify the music and lyrics. It is a very well known Portuguese song by Zeca Afonso. A song that belongs to the political spirit of the Portuguese Carnation's Revolution in April 1974.


Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot serves two main functions. First, this is the last shot before I satisfy the audience's curiosity. This shot marks the end of creating expectations about the centre of attention. This sequence began with shot 5 introducing and identifying the type of event: The General Strike. A medium-long-shot which illustrated a large view of the space. As we move forward in the narrative towards the event area the shot size becomes shorter in focal distance and therefore smaller in size. The sequence ends with this close-up-shot eradicating the surrounding space completely.

Shots five to eight do not reveal what is happening but point to where something might be happening with the intention of creating curiosity and expectations on the spectator. Thus, the scene begins by drawing our attention to a particular event area and ends by with illustrating the expression and emotion of one of the event participants. He smiles and seems happy just like the musicians did beforehand. Thus the objective of this close-up-shot is to attribute positive emotional qualities to the event. In a sense the close-up shot resumes the crowd's emotions towards the event on the smile of this participant. This means to signify that the crowd feels happy and positive about the event.

Similarly, the shot also maintains the positive warm qualities established from the beginning of the narrative. The reddish warm background continues the connotations created by the warm sunlight and the flags and slogans. The interaction between the foreground smile and the reddish background leaves accentuates and reinforces these emotional qualities about the event.

This shot also acts as a transition since it leads to satisfying the expectation created previously. Identifying the well known Zeca Afonso's music already satisfies part of the expectation. Also the fact that we can identify the song indicates that we are now very close to the event. In fact, due to this shot being a close-up shot it heightens the idea that we are near the event. Therefore, this individual expression signifies the group emotion towards the event in general, and specifically towards the song and its content.

	<p>They sing protest music:</p> <p>Zeca Afonso</p> <p>“They eat everything, They eat everything. They eat everything, and they leave nothing”</p>
<p>Shot 9. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>22: 00 sec</p>	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Background voices and traffic</p>

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

The frame presents a group of people singing a popular and very well known song from Portugal's past revolutionary times. On the left, a leader with a megaphone conducts the group on the right who sings and dance along with the

music in playback. As the group sing they hold red CGTP union flags. There seems to be many people singing together.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The warm sunlight continues to illuminate the scene. The composition appears filled with red flags. In fact, up to this point, this is the shot with more colour red in it. The colour red and warm sunlight maintains continuity with previous intentions of associating positive sunlight qualities to the left wing political objectives of the event.

So far this is the longest shot in the narrative. The intention is to attribute significance to this event. This is the first shot to answer the expectations created previously through omission since it reveals the event content. The words they sing as a group, "They eat everything, and they leave nothing", not only illustrate the political content of the event but also a group of people who have gathered together for a shared cause.

Up to this point I have shown part of the space, diverse public participation and festive popular and traditional qualities associated to the political context of the General Strike. However, I have not illustrated active public unity and fellowship. The fact that they sing and dance together illustrates the most important moment of togetherness at this point in the narrative. The choice of lens gives a field of view to the shot which compresses the space to accentuate the amount of people we see crowded into a relatively small area, and therefore conveying that there are many people participating in this group event. Thus, signifying unity with a common political cause is the principal objective of this shot. Similarly, the reason for the length of this shot is to underline and heighten the unity of the protest that the singing scene represents. This premise will be developed further in the following shots.



Shot 10. Sequence 1. Version A:

10: 07 sec

They sing protest music:

Zeca Afonso

“They eat everything, They eat everything. They eat everything, and they leave nothing”

We hear:

Background voices and traffic

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

This composition reveals an opposite perspective of the space from the previous shot. The frame appears replete with people. A woman, standing back to us, holds up a blank yellow poster in the direction of the centre of attention: the background General Strike poster. People continue to sing the song all around the space in unison. The crowd repeats the same protest words: “They eat everything, and they leave nothing” underlining and resuming the principal reason for the event: inequality and social injustices.

Filmmaker's intentions:


First, the intention for this shot is to reinforce the unity and participation qualities of the event. This is why this shot illustrates a different perspective of the space: to confirm that people are singing and participating all around the event area. Therefore, the shot content aims to convince the spectator of large public event participation. On the other hand, it follows the same cutting-logic applied to the musicians sequence where the four initial shots partially illustrated the space from different positions. Notice also that we can hardly see the people singing in

the background in this shot. In fact, the singing action is almost completely omitted. The objective is to signify that the camera is unable to frame a proper view of the space because there are too many people in the area. This intends to strengthen the idea of large public participation.

Additionally, the frame includes the word "Strike" on the right-hand side top corner of the composition. The objective is to associate the protest's slogans, the music lyrics and people singing as an united group to the reasons justifying the General Strike.

Third, a large blank yellow poster appears on the centre of the composition covering a large portion of the frame. The colour yellow shares the previously mentioned positive connotations of the event. The sunlight in fact is a mixture of yellow and orange and it continues to illuminate the scene. On the other hand, and more importantly, the poster is blank because it is facing away from us, just like the people are. Both elements face the centre of frame towards the word "strike" and towards where people are singing and waving their union flags.

Therefore, everything in the frame faces towards the focus of attention: singing and protesting in unity. Notice that I will not reveal later on in the narrative the written content in the yellow poster. The poster remains blank so that the spectator fills in the blank space with their own claims. It is an omission of information which means to motivate the spectator's participation and engagement with the protest.

	<p>They sing protest music:</p> <p>Zeca Afonso</p> <p>“They eat everything, They eat everything. They eat everything, and they leave nothing”</p> <p>We hear:</p> <p>Background voices and traffic</p>
<p>Shot 11. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>08: 10 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up.

The frame shows two women singing in the foreground. One of the woman holds some red carnation flowers. More people sing in the background.

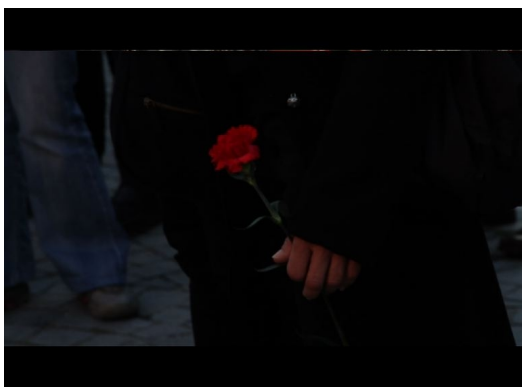
Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot aims at reinforcing the unity and participation qualities already established previously in the narrative. In this case, the objective is to underline the unity through illustrating individuals singing and not the crowd. Therefore, there is a progression from a larger group view of the gathering to a closer view but focussed instead on two women who sing in synch with the group and the playback music.

On the other hand, the melody and lyrics represent and evoke a very important political and historical moment in Portugal: the Portuguese Carnation Revolution of 25th of April, 1974. One of the women in the composition holds some red carnations which represent a symbol of the Carnation Revolution. The intention is to associate the red flags and other objects, the red “General Strike” words and other posters, the warm sunlight tones, to this crucial political moment of

Portuguese history.

In fact, it is only now that the meaning attributed to the the warm sunlight and the colour red is completed in the narrative by associating them to the Carnation Revolution. It is important to notice that the Portuguese Revolution, represented by the carnation flower, was relatively peaceful. The army came into the streets to bring down the dictatorship and people placed carnations in the barrel of their guns. Different to many other revolutions, there was no civil war between two different opposing political ideologies. Army and civilians, with a spirit of great solidarity and fellowship, joined together to open the door to democracy. This is what the red carnations presence in this scene symbolises and its association to the political context of the event. The lyrics of the music also belong to that historical moment. Somehow, through the General Strike, people attempt to revive the memory of this decisive and fundamental historical event.

	<p>They sing protest music:</p> <p>Zeca Afonso</p> <p>“They eat everything, They eat everything. They eat everything, and they leave nothing”</p> <p>We hear:</p> <p>Background voices and traffic</p>
<p>Shot 12. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>03: 22 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a close-up-shot.

The frame eradicates people and space. It focusses the attention of one single carnation. The hand holding the carnation moves the carnation following the

rhythm of the melody. We can still hear the same verse repeated again by the group singing.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot aims at resuming the signification of the event as a whole in one shot. The composition omits all references to the strike event in order to focus the attention on a flower. It is precisely the omission of event information undertaken through composition at this precise moment in the narrative that confers this shot's significance. The omission dramatically punctuates the flower's signification about the carnation revolution. The moment in the narrative structure when this image content appears confers greater significance to the shot content. This is because I have already disclosed information about the event which attributed festive, popular, positive and unity qualities to the strike event. That information contributes to heighten the significance of the flower symbol.

The objective is to associate all elements and information disclosed in the narrative to the past revolutionary carnation. Notice that the singing sequence begins with shot nine, a medium-shot, presenting a group singing and ends up with a close-up-shot of the red carnation. There is an intentional progression from a larger view to a closer one. From a large group singing as a group united to a hand holding a single flower. From the red flags and slogans to the red of the carnation. From the words "General Strike", and the song lyrics to a carnation flower. From the present time of the event General Strike to the past revolutionary carnation spirit. Thus, the principal objective is to associate all the elements that constitute and define the present General Strike to the values, qualities and spirit of the past Carnation Revolution of 25th of April 1974.



Shot 13. Sequence 1. Version A:

13: 20 sec

They shout: (voices distort)

“Socrates listen! Workers are fighting!

Socrates listen! Workers are fighting!

Socrates listen! Workers are fighting!”

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up.


A group of people, holding union red fags, shout protest slogans together.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The intention of this shot is to further develop the act of unity amongst people. In this case we see people protesting as a group against the government and specifically against the Prime Minister. They all repeat in synch the same words of protest. The group acts out like one public voice representing the working classes' interests and concerns, especially if we consider that the General Strike is an event with a nationwide appeal. The frame again compresses the space to convey that there are many people participating in this action of protest. The fact that everyone seems to shout the same words simultaneously represents a moment where a large group people gather together for the same cause.

Conversely, it is important to underline that the sound of the group voices is distorted. In fact, the sound was originally recorded with distortion. Normally, due to the distortion, this sound would be omitted (or technically corrected) from the narrative. However, due to the narrative intentions I decided to include the

original sound. This choice fulfils two purposes. Firstly, the sound distortion through its inherent loudness, compression and broken-up quality accentuates our sense of the sheer volume of people attending the event. The objective in including it is therefore for the spectator to interpret that the reason for the distortion is due to the large amount of people shouting simultaneously. Secondly, the distortion also acts as a sound effect which intends to bring out and reinforce the anger and frustration of the protest. It has a rough and artificial edge to it.

	<p>CGTP man shouts:</p> <p>Long live CGTP! Long live the workers! Long live the General Strike!</p> <p>Group (off-screen):</p> <p>Hooray! CGTP united union!</p>
<p>Shot 14. Sequence 1. Version A:</p> <p>08: 11 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up

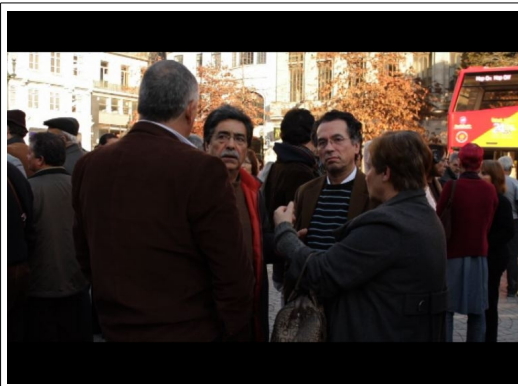
A CGTP union representative speaks to the crowd via microphone summarising the protest into three key phrases: “Long live CGTP! Long live the workers! Long live the General Strike!”. The red General Strike word, behind him, becomes abstract and illegible in the background. The warm sunlight once more illuminates the whole composition. The crowd off-screen corresponds positively to the unionist's claims.

Filmmaker's intentions:

Through the voice and representation of a unionist this shot aims at concluding this first sequence-context of the narrative with a positive celebration of the event. The reason is because firstly the union is an organisation dedicated to defend and represent the interest of the working class. Secondly, it was the unions who called for the General Strike in order to protest against government's policies. Thirdly, the unionist's speech presents ideal information for resuming the event with a positive quality: "Long live CGTP! Long live the workers! Long live the General Strike!".

"CGTP" refers to one of the two largest unions in the country responsible for the event. "Workers" refer to the social group that the union defends and represents. The purpose of the strike is to defend the working class rights and concerns. "General Strike" are the words designated to describe the specific event. Words which describe the political context and reasons for the event.

As we know the crowd corresponds and re-affirms the unionist claims and by doing so they confirm the reason for being there. Even though the crowd is off-screen, we can hear them appealing to unity and celebrating the event through shouting the same words at the same time. This illustrates another moment of acting together as one public voice in unity which also reinforces the idea of public participation.



Shot 15. Sequence 1. Version A:

06: 15 sec

We hear:

Various voices talking on and off-screen

Traffic

Shot description:

These shots corresponds to a medium-shot.

A group of four people appear in the foreground talking. In the background we can see a sightseeing tour bus coming into frame and stops. There are also other groups in the background talking. On the left hand side of the frame a group of people face left as if listening to someone's speech. We can hear faintly the voice of a man speaking through a megaphone. We also hear crowd voices talking and the sound of traffic. Some of the members of the foreground group look left directing our attention to the left side off-screen.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot acts out as a means of transition between sequences 1 and 2 and therefore between context and characters. On the one hand, the composition develops our knowledge of the space though revealing a new event area. On the other, the shot introduces a new type of event: people talking amongst themselves. This is in fact the first shot where the composition focusses the attention on people talking rather than on people's attention to another event. The purpose is to announce the next sequence where individuals proclaim their

opinions and concerns to the attending crowd.


— All shots, in this first sequence-context, were filmed via handheld and on eye-level. Eye-level means that the viewer is on an equal status with the subject. One of the objectives of the composition is to engage the audience in a way as if they themselves were participating in the event. The eye-level angle provides a point-of-view of the event similar to that of a person observing the subject. This means that through handheld camera work I am able to approximate the spectator with the real experience of being there. This intends to accentuate the audience's engagement with the representation of the event.

On a practical level, handheld camera operating is a much faster strategy than using a tripod to film events that only occur once in front of the camera. You can easily move throughout the space to record different mini-events happening at the same time in different event areas. This is particularly appropriate if there is the requirement to cover a large space and several events in a short amount of time.

Furthermore, handheld camera operation confers a more realistic look to the image. The camera moves not just to follow the action but also as if emulating the point-of-view of someone moving through the space. Therefore, handheld operation gives emphasis to the idea that we are seeing the event through the point-of-view of someone attending the event. The objective of these choices is to approximate the audience's point-of-view to that of someone actually attending the event. This also intends to reinforce the spectator's engagement with the subject.

6.3. Strike. Research analysis narrative Version A.

Sequence 2. Characters

	<p>Character A says:</p> <p>I am going to demand for the government to go far away!</p>
<p>Shot 16. Character A. Sequence 2. Version A: 03:04 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to long-shot.

The shot reveals a man speaking through a megaphone with a foreign accent. However, it is important to notice that his foreign accent would not be perceptible to a non-Portuguese audience. The man appears surrounded by people who are listening to his speech. The sunlight illuminates the background buildings but not the people attending the event.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot serves various purposes. Firstly, the shot introduces a new event area where individuals use a megaphone to make proclamations to the crowd. This represents a new type of event which we have not witnessed yet in the narrative and therefore introduces new event information about the General Strike.

Secondly, the composition also illustrates that time in the narrative has move forward from the previous context sequence. The fact that the sunlight illuminates the background buildings and not the public anymore indicates that

time has moved forward in the narrative. In fact, from now on until the end of the narrative, speakers and participants appear in shadow while the background buildings appear illuminated by the sun.

The objective is to give the impression that the narrative is presenting several strike events in chronological order. This means respecting the temporal order in which the events occurred during the General Strike event. This temporal narrative organisation of the disclosing of the events means to proportionate the audience the experience of watching the event as it happened but in less time. This intends to confer more credibility to the event representation and consequently to motivate the spectator's engagement with the event representation. In fact, this concern with narrative temporal order refers to adopting Hollywood's predominant continuity editing style as stated in chapter 2 and chapter 4.

Thirdly, the composition also intends to establish that there are people in the event area interested in listening to what this foreign individual has to say. The audience may or may not identify with the character's claims. However, they would not be standing there listening if they were not interested. In fact, the speaker's arguments aim at representing the interests and concerns of the attending group. This is the most important objective of this second sequence: to represent the public's interests and concerns through individual statements.

Fourth, the frame also means to convey public participation in the event. This confers both credibility to the speaker and to the General Strike event. Notice that the composition centres the attention on confirming that the speaker is surrounded by participants. The frame, in fact, privileges the foreground back-heads of people facing the speaker so as to highlight the amount of people surrounding the speaker. Finally, the phrase: "I am going to demand for the government to go far away!" introduces the theme of discussion: the government, and more specifically the public dissatisfaction with government policies, which justifies the reason for the General Strike.

Therefore, this shot serves to introduce new event information which focusses the attention on individuals addressing the attending public. The character's speech has a political content that refers to the public's discontentment with government policies. These individual statements act out as a popular voice that intend to represent the concerns and feelings of the general public with regard to the present economical crisis.



Shot 17. Character A. Sequence 2.

Version A: 07:24 sec

Character A says:

Because I also wonder: after all, what is the public debt?

Portuguese people owes money to whom?

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-long-shot.

The shot illustrates the same man but from a closer view than the previous shot. The composition maintains the presence of the attending public. The man continues surrounded by people who are listening to his speech. However, now, the speaker becomes the most important element in the composition. The sunlight maintains continuity by illuminating the background buildings and not the attending people who remain in shadow.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The composition, through placing the speaker in a privilege centre frame position, intends to confer him the focus of attention. For that purpose the participants are situated on the frame borders so as to attribute more importance to the speaker. Conversely, the people surrounding the speaker, like the woman on the right and the man on the left, face and look directly at him. The direction of their look and their position direct our attention to the speaker reinforcing his privileged position in the frame. On the other hand, the camera, like in sequence 1, continues to film the subject on eye-level attempting to place the viewer on an equal status with the speaker. The objective is that the spectator shares the same point-of-view of a participant attending this event. Notice in fact that in shot number 16 the foreground frame was occupied by the back of the heads of the crowd who were facing character A. This prevented a clear view of the speaker. In shot 17 the space occupied previously by foreground back-of-heads is now empty allowing free space in the frame for the spectator's point of view. The reason for this choice is to approximate the viewer to the event and, in this case, to what the speaker is saying, so as to position the audience with a closer experience of the event.



Shot 18. Character A. Sequence 2.
Version A: 07:00 sec

Character A says:

There is no money, there is no money?
Why is there no money?
At the end where did the money go?

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to medium-shot.

The composition favours character A by placing it in the centre of frame in the foreground. There are also people in the background surrounding the speaker. A middle aged man stands right of frame paying attention to the speaker. Another young man stands on the left side of the frame.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot for being so close to the subject focusses the attention on several details of the speaker and the people next to him. The speaker wears a baseball cap, beard, several rings and his nails are painted black. These details may suggest that he represents not just a foreign voice (as stated a non-Portuguese audience may not appreciate that his accent is foreign) but also an alternative, informal and perhaps a marginal one. There are a group of people behind him which suggest that people are attending and interested in this event. However, the composition favours two participants in particular through the omission of the surrounding participants. Notice the expression of attention of the middle-aged man on the right hand side with his hand on his face. His gestures indicate that he is interested in listening to the speaker. Another younger man appears on the left-hand side also paying attention. These two participants represent and exemplify two different generations interested and concerned about the the same issues, and in this case, about what this foreign man claims. Therefore, the shot, through composition establishes a relationship between the foreground speaker and the background participants to accentuate public interest and participation in the speech event.

All first three shots introducing character A are very short in length. Shot 16 last 3 seconds and 24 frames. Shot 17 lasts 7 seconds and 24 frames and shot 18 lasts 7 seconds. They have obviously been reduced in length. This means that much of the information available about the character and event has been

omitted. During sequence1-context much of the omission undertaken through composition referred not just to in-frame information but specially to off-frame information. Event representation in terms of context and space focusses on the omission of off-frame information. Representing implies choosing a shot size or focal length. Choosing an option means omitting not just other shots or creative possibilities but also off-frame event information: events that are happening outside my composition at the same time I am capturing events through my composition.

On the other hand, as stated in chapter 3.2, constructing a synch-sound narrative with speech content implicates that narrative options are conditioned by what the characters say in-frame. The focus of attention in narrative construction becomes the omission of speech content and not of the off-frame information. Narrative appears constructed from the speech content raw material. You cannot alter what a character says. The voice, sound and lip movement are in synch. They work as one unit to convey information. This, however, does not mean that I cannot relate speech content to off-frame information and produce different significations. The fact is that since synch sound technology was invented, in the early '60s, narrative construction in documentary has changed dramatically. What people say and do determine our decisions for narrative construction and event representation because filmmakers cannot undo the character's speech. However, they can partially or totally omit its content. This is what has happened in character A's three shot sequence. The shots were reduced in length and subsequently speech information was omitted. Much of the information omitted in these shots appears revealed and discussed in narrative Version B.

In this case, omission choices were determined specifically by the speech content and the filmmaker's narrative intentions for representing the event. Speech content refers to what the character says and how he says it. The filmmakers' narrative intentions refer to the filmmaker's objectives for representing the event in accordance with their point of view and to their personal needs for artistic expression. Therefore the choices involved in omitting

speech content refer to whether what the character says satisfies the filmmaker's intentions. This is going to determine whether a filmmaker implements partial or total speech content omission. Thus, the information contained in the speech not only determines its omitting options but also the choice of character in the first place. Character A was chosen to open sequence 2 because of his speech content in the first place. That was the first reason.

In sequence 1 the intention was to introduce the space signifying large popular participation with positive popular qualities, people gathered as a group for a common political cause. In sequence 2 the intention is to bring out the concerns and feelings of the group through individual statements. This is why I chose character A's speech content to introduce sequence 2. This is also the reason for choosing shots 16, 17 and 18 in that particular order and with that specific speech content. This meant to omit speech content and re-order the selected remaining dialogue into a particular structure. On the other hand, re-ordering the character's dialogue implies "re-writing" what the character said in order to satisfy the filmmaker's narrative intentions. In this case, the filmmaker intends that the characters' speech represents general public concerns and address General Strike political issues. Thus, the objective is to produce a coherent political representation of protest and dissatisfaction through individual's statements.

The selected information of all three shots outlines and resumes key popular concerns and political issues. Character A says:

Shot 16: "I am going to demand for the government to go far away!"

Shot 17: " Because I also wonder: after all, what is the public debt?

Portuguese people owe money to whom?"

Shot 18: "There is no money, there is no money? Why is there no money?

At the end where did the money go?"

The first phrase on shot 16 introduces a central issue on debate: the general public dissatisfaction with present government's policies. This is the reason that

justifies the General Strike. People are not just discontent but also angry with the government's political performance. "I am going to demand for the government to go far away!" is an imperative phrase that illustrates this emotional state of public discontentment. Nowadays, television news frequently makes use of statistics to report that most Portuguese people are dissatisfied with government's policies and performance. In fact, the statistics indicate that Prime Minister Socrates has lost popularity and public support. Character A's imperative phrase serve to introduce the anger and frustration of Portuguese's society towards their government.

Speech in shot 18 explains the reason for the discontentment: " Because I also wonder: after all, what is the public debt? Portuguese people owe money to whom?" Public debt is a central subject in continuous discussion in the mass media. It is because of public debt that Portugal is in a difficult economical situation. The result of this situation has dramatic consequences on the lives of many Portuguese people. This is the reason for the General Strike and for people gathering to manifest their dissatisfaction.

Shot 18 develops further the issue: "There is no money, there is no money? Why is there no money? At the end where did the money go?" This is what people wants to know and understand. This is what mass media discusses and analyses with specialists on a daily basis.

There is also an intentional relationship established between the selected shot size and the character's statements allocated to that shot. Shot 16 corresponds to a long-shot. The shot identifies a large crowd surrounding a speaker. His imperative speech "I am going to demand for the government to go far away!" represents the general public dissatisfaction with the government. The long-shot through revealing people surrounding and attending the event reinforces and accentuates the general quality of the speech content. This means that the speaker's phrase illustrates a general concern. Similarly, the shot type, a long-shot, also illustrates a general spatial description in terms of composition. Hence, the general spatial quality of the composition heightens and underlines

the general quality of the character's statement.

The following shot 17, a medium-long-shot, presents a closer view of the event and the speaker than in shot 16. At the same time the speech content becomes also more specific than in shot 16: “what is the public debt? Portuguese people owe money to whom?”

Shot 18, a medium-shot, offers even a closer view of the the speaker than in shot 17. Conversely, the character's speech corresponds also to a more explicit statement: “Why is there no money?”

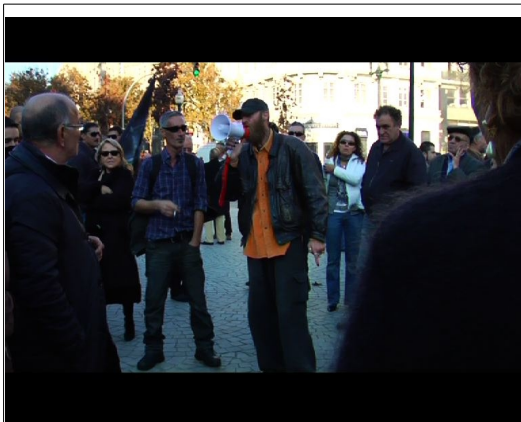
Thus, the camera approaches the event and character as his claims become more concrete. This implies a process of omitting event information via composition through shortening the focal distance and therefore the shot size. I omit the surrounding space and participants to emphasize the character's speech. Therefore, through altering the composition progressively, shot by shot, I have punctuated dramatically the character's arguments.

Therefore, representing character A's speech event implicates, on the one hand, a spatial event omission via composition and a dialogue and visual information omission through reducing the shot length. On the other, it involves re-ordering and organising the remaining visual and speech information into a particular structure in order to deliver a coherent representation of public political dissatisfaction through the character's individual statement.

Even though it is a foreign voice the discourse is coherent in representing general strike issues and concerns. Since he is a foreigner the lack of vocabulary on his discourse can be forgiven. Moreover, this is a popular event where anyone, educated or not, has the opportunity to speak and demonstrate publicly. Therefore, an informal use of the language is accepted to proclaim about political concerns. This is precisely the intention: to signify an informal popular coherent view of General Strike issues.

It is also important to underline that the words used by the speaker appear constantly in the media world. Media, whether radio, television or newspapers

communicate information nationwide. They act as means not only for informing people about the world they inhabit but also they represent nationwide general public issues and concerns. Since this speaker's questions are also discussed by the media, they represent general public concerns and not only the voice of people attending the event locally. This means that the character's statements represent the interest and concerns of Portuguese people across the country. Therefore, the objective is to confer the speech content a nationwide appeal.



Shot 19. Character A. Sequence 2.
Version A: 24:03 sec

Character A says:

Owes to whom? Say it! To whom? I want to know. What country? Germany, France, to whom?

Man replies: to China. Now is to China, man

Character A says:

China now bought that thing. Do you know what it means? That your government does not exist. That your government sold you out like slaves to the Chinese. In China they work like cattle with no rights.

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to medium-long-shot.

The shot illustrates a larger view of the space from the previous shot. The composition privileges the presence of the attending public. The man continues surrounded by people who are listening to his speech. The speaker continues to demand answers to his questions and a member of the public replies. The

sunlight maintains temporal continuity through illuminating the background buildings instead of the attending people who remain in shadow.

Filmmaker's intentions:

In the previous shots 17 and 18 the speaker raises a number of general questions. These questions are openly addressed to the attending public as a form of reflection. This means that the speaker seems to ask questions as if he was thinking at the same time he was asking the questions.

Shot 19, on the one hand, intensifies the character's questioning by demanding an answer from the attending public: "Owes to whom? Say it! To whom? I want to know". On the other, he asks more specific questions about the subject than in the previous shots: "What country? Germany, France, to whom?" By doing so he manages to obtain an answer from a member of the public: "to China. Now is to China, man".

This shot at this point in the narrative serves several purposes. First, the composition aims at reinforcing the speaker's demands for an answer. For this reason I cut from previous shot 18, medium-close-up, to a medium-long-shot. There is a great difference of shot size between shot 18 and 19. The cut accentuates the dramatic difference in focal distance and subsequently punctuates the speech content. The purpose, like in shot 16, is to relate the speaker's questions to his surrounding public. This is why I cut from a closer view to a larger view: to reveal the attending public. The objective is to reinforce his questioning through revealing whether any public member wants to participate or add anything to his claims. Thus, the cut to this larger shot size acts also as a question to the participants and to the spectator alike: "do you have anything to say on the subject?"

As stated in the intentions for shot 17 the composition leaves a free space centre of frame so that the viewer can place there their point of view on the event. A space that in shot 16 was occupied by public heads. In this case the

free space in the frame serves to appeal for the spectator's participation in this event as if questioning the audience about their opinion on the subject. Therefore, this empty area refers to the viewer's space for answering and proclaiming their opinions. This is why the previous question raised by the change of composition, "do you have anything to say on the subject?", it is also addressed to the spectator. From this perspective the shot intends for the viewer to make a stand and define their views on the subject. This also attempts to highlight the audience's individual engagement with the event.

After the speaker's insisting questioning a man replies: "to China. Now is to China, man".

The reference to China points to information obtained through mass media. Before filming, the television news announced that Prime Minister Socrates had visited China to sell part of the Portuguese's public debt. The participant obviously had seen the news and based his claim on that information. The speaker also knew about it as the following response illustrates: "China now bought that thing. Do you know what it means? That your government does not exist. That your government sold you out like slaves to the Chinese. In China they work like cattle with no rights."

The argument and reference to China serves also several purposes. First, it illustrates and reinforces public participation since one of the public members responds to the insisting speaker's questions. This participating public response aims also at encouraging the viewer's participation on the debate. On the other hand, China as subject, just like public debt beforehand, points to information obtained through mass media. Media's transmission of information is nationwide. This strengthens the idea that the subject in discussion is also of national concern. Moreover, the characters refer to mass media information to make their claims. Notice how the character speaks of China as a source of reference to draw a conclusion about Portugal's economical situation: "China now bought that thing. Do you know what it means? That your government does not exist. That your government sold you out like slaves to the Chinese. In China



they work like cattle with no rights”. Has this character been to China to conclude that in China people work like cattle with no rights? Probably not. The fact is that our knowledge of China is based on how media represents it. And from the information disclosed through mass media representation we reach our own opinions and conclusions.

In both narrative versions, A and B, I refer frequently to mass media information as a means for shaping our views and opinions of the world we inhabit. This represents the core of Dziga Vertov's cinematic reflection through his emblematic *Man with the Movie Camera*: questioning cinema's ability to represent reality and raising awareness of how, through cinema's technical qualities, we may form our views and knowledge of the world. From this perspective, this research analysis also represents a reflection on how through, omitting and organising event information, we may condition the representation of an event and its subsequent signification.

In fact, through disclosing this speech content about China I intend for the viewer to identify that this information does not emerge from the character's life experience but from mass media since the spectator may have also received the same information from a newspaper or from television news. This intends to raise awareness amongst spectators on how they form their knowledge of this event by drawing attention to the source of the information disclosed about China. The audience may decide or not to identify with the character's claims or they may decide to oppose them. This also aims at reinforcing the viewer's identification and engagement with the event. They do not have to agree but to participate. That is the purpose of this selected event information. Furthermore, the natural distance that exists between being part of the represented event and watching the representation of the event as an audience, proportionates the opportunity for the spectator to reflect upon how they form their own opinions about the event.

Shot number 19 is exactly the same as shot 17. In fact it exposes the continuation of shot 17. The content reveals information omitted previously in

shot 17. This points to “re-writing” speech content through omission and structure. That is re-ordering the content of the speech selected to signify concrete information about the event. Much of the omission implemented in shots 16,17 and 18 will appear disclosed in narrative version B in order to signify a different representation of the event. The overall omission applied in shots 16 to 19 aimed at “re-writing” character A's arguments in a coherent manner and in accordance with the stated narrative intentions. In narrative version B will be disclosed other speech information omitted on this narrative version and which will represent the event from a different perspective as intended.

 <p>Shot 20. Cut-away B. Sequence 2. Version A: 03:07 sec</p>	<p>Character A says: off-screen</p> <p>You do not have free will!</p>
 <p>Shot 21. Cut-away C. Sequence 2. Version A: 02:22 sec</p>	<p>Character A says: off-screen</p> <p>You have stolen lives, stolen youth!</p>

Shot description:

Shot 20 corresponds to close-up-shot. The composition shows the faces of two women from different generations. They could be mother and daughter. Both women wear glasses and hold their hands to their faces in a pose that highlights the attention they are giving to the man speaking, at the same time as we see them we can hear off-screen character A's statement.

Shot 21 corresponds to medium-close-up-shot. The frame shows a group of women gathering together as if listening to the speaker's words. The group also represents different ages. One of the older women holds a protest poster in the background. During the shot we hear off-screen character A's discourse.

Filmmaker's intentions:

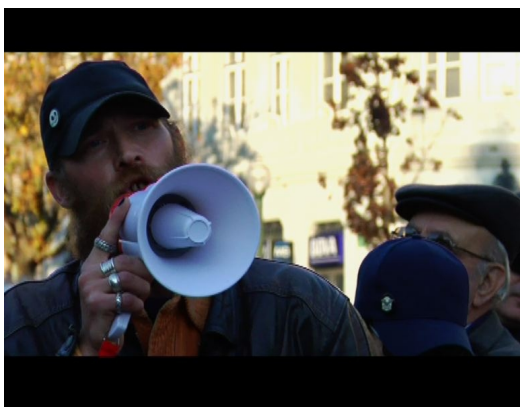
Shots 20 and 21 intend to highlight public engagement with the speaker's arguments and claims. These two shots omit the surrounding space almost completely. This means that the people in the shots could be anywhere in the event area. We do not know whether they are listening or not to speaker A. However, we assume that they are listening, first, because I cut directly from character A's previous shot 19 to these two shots. Second, in shots 20 and 21 we hear off- screen the continuation of the character's speech: "You do not have free will! You have stolen lives, stolen youth!". In fact, hearing the continuation of his dialogue over these shots suggests that these characters are nearby the speaker attending the event.

Shot 20 focusses our attention on the character's facial expression. We observe their expressions as we hear: "You do not have free will!" and we accept that these two women are listening to the speaker's claim. Therefore, we relate their facial expressions to the off-screen speech content. Their hands cover part of their faces in a dramatic pose. The objective is to signify that these women are concerned about the speech content. Their poses may signify that the two women are thinking about what character A is saying. This intends to illustrate

public engagement and participation. On the other hand, the woman in the background is younger than the woman in the foreground. Both women together represent different generations. Thus, the shot not only highlights public engagement but also strengthens the universal appeal of the subject which interests and concerns different generations alike.

In shot 21 as we hear “You have stolen lives, stolen youth!” we see several women talking amongst themselves and listening. For the same reasons as shot 20 we assume that they are attending the event and so listening to the speaker. The fact that the young women in the foreground seem to be talking indicates that they might be exchanging opinions and ideas about the character's off-screen speech content. This implies active participation and engagement. Moreover, like in shot 20, this shot encompasses two generations of women which illustrates the universal appeal of the event. This reinforces signifying that the event content is appealing to all generations. Conversely, the fact that in the foreground of the frame we see youth, and that the off-screen discourse ends up saying “stolen youth”, accentuates this identification between image and sound and punctuates dramatically the off-screen statement. This suggests that the speech was specifically directed to the young women in the frame as an example of youth in general.

Thus, shot 20 and 21 aim at reinforcing the premise of public engagement and identification established in shot 19 when inviting participants and spectators to take a stand and have an opinion about the discourse subject. In parallel, off-screen sound illustrates character A being physically omitted in the narrative since we are able to hear him but we do not see him in the frame. Thus, the off-screen dialogue directs our attention to the event that it is partially omitted by the composition.

	<p>Character A says:</p> <p>1974, April 25th: you had a Carnation Revolution. I loved knowing that, you know why? Because, here in this country, you can make a revolution without firing a shot. You just need to stick any flower in the gun barrel and that's it</p>
<p>Shot 22. Character A. Sequence 2.</p> <p>Version A: 20:10 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-shot.

The frame centres almost all the attention on the speaker. In the background we can partially identify some participants. One of them, a middle aged man wearing glasses and a beret, who we might recognise from shot 18.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot intentionally focusses the attention almost completely on the speaker through omitting most of the background information. The frame only needs to indicate that there is still people surrounding and listening to the speaker. However, the shot is not concerned with relating the speaker again to his audience. In fact this is the closer shot I have shown of this speaker so far. Therefore, by approaching the speaker the composition eradicates spacial relation focussing all the attention on the individual. His speech in this shot does not relate directly to previous arguments and claims. Beforehand, the character's speech focussed on questioning the reasons for public debt. In this shot he seems to open a new subject of discussion: “1974, April 25th: you had a Carnation Revolution. I loved knowing that, you know why? Because, here in this

country, you can make a revolution without firing a shot. You just need to stick any flower in the gun barrel and that's it”.

Therefore, the dialogue does not maintain continuity with previous shots in terms of composition or speech. There are two main purposes for these choices. First, the shot content intends to confer some credibility to the speaker so that I can partly justify the appearance of this character in the narrative. We have to take into account that the character is a foreigner who speaks of Portuguese's present political concerns. This may raise credibility issues about his arguments since he is not a native raising concerns about his own country. Previously, when analysing intentions for shot 16 I had stated that one of the reasons for choosing this character was the political content of his speech. Speaking of public debt served the purpose in the narrative for introducing one of the most important issues of the General Strike: public discontentment with government's policies.

Through speaking of the Portuguese's Carnation Revolution the character reveals part of his point of view about Portuguese culture. He seems to identify positively with some of the characteristics of the revolution: “I loved knowing that, you know why? Because, here in this country, you can make a revolution without firing a shot. You just need to stick any flower in the gun barrel and that's it”. He is arguing in favour of Portuguese culture for being peaceful at the time of the revolution. He underlines this historical fact as a positive quality and proclaims that he himself identifies with those qualities: “I loved knowing that, you know why?”. Most Portuguese people are proud of the Carnation Revolution and identify positively with its peaceful characteristics and furthermore the speech content also confirms that the character has some relevant knowledge of Portuguese's political history and so this confers some sympathy and credibility to the character. He is not just any foreigner speaking about Portugal but someone concerned with its culture and with some relevant knowledge about its political history. The composition through omitting the surrounding area focusses the attention on the character as individual, and consequently, establishes a relationship between the individual and the the carnation

revolution statement.

Additionally, as stated, the content of this speech refers to the Carnation Revolution. In sequence 1, the singing scene of Zeca Afonso's protest music and the images showing a woman holding red carnations attempted to relate the spirit of the present General Strike to the positive qualities of the past Carnation Revolution. Sequence 1 aimed at signifying positive festive unifying qualities about the event. Therefore, shot 23, by revealing this speech content, is to associate the character as individual to those positive qualities established in sequence 1. This also aims at conferring sympathy and credibility to the character.

Finally, this speech content provides additional information about the event that can benefit the narrative comprehension of foreign audiences, like the speaker himself, who may be unfamiliar with the subject. (though as stated foreign audiences may not perceive that character A is foreign)



Shot 23. Character B. Sequence 2.

Version A: 32:22 sec

Character B says: We have 50 year old people that have to fight for their children and grandchildren!

Off-screen: It's true!

Character B says: We sit down and let things happen! It is sad! I cannot recognise Portuguese people

Off-screen: They are cowards!

Character B says: They are cowards! They are cowards! Portuguese people put up with anything from the government. They do not react against it.

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a close-up-shot.

The frame centres almost all the attention on a new speaker: a woman in her mid-forties. In the the background we notice a flag with red and black colours with words written on it that we can barely make out. There are no visible participants listening to the woman's speech. However, we hear a woman off-screen supporting the speaker's arguments.

Filmmaker's intentions:

Like in shot 22, the composition intentionally focusses the attention almost completely on the speaker. It is also very similar to shot 22 in terms of shot size and maintains continuity of presenting a speaker using a megaphone to manifest themselves. Even though we can identify these similitudes the choices of omission and selection for this shot present opposite intentions to shot 22.

Notice also that the end of discourse in shot 22 seems to have been abruptly interrupted. The character introduces a new subject, the Carnation Revolution, but he does not conclude the reasons for his argument. It has been omitted to introduce content in shot 23. At the same time, the discourse in shot 23 seems to start abruptly for we do not have all the context information to fully understand the reason for her argument: "We have 50 year old people that have to fight for their children and grandchildren!". Previous information to her claim must also had been omitted. Additionally, we can also hear off-screen the voice of another woman supporting her argument: "It's true!". This off-screen voice, on the one hand, confirms public participation since the composition does not reveal if there are people standing neaby. On the other, the off-screen dialogue suggests that character B's arguments must have began before the shot indicates. The off-screen content acts out as a punctuation mark at the end of a paragraph. It seems to affirm a conclusion to an argument which we cannot completely perceive by the information disclosed in the narrative. What is the

speaker trying to say with this content?: “We have 50 year old people that have to fight for their children and grandchildren!”. It seems unfinished as a statement and yet the off-screen concludes: “It's true!”. We can only imagine or guess the speech meaning for we certainly feel that part of the discourse is missing. Furthermore, off-screen dialogue directs our attention to the missing off-screen event information. The omission of the character speaking which we can only hear off-screen. This also highlights focussing the spectator's attention on the omission of information.

This omission intends to heighten the opposition between both characters through raising the spectator's awareness about the missing information at the end of shot 22 and the beginning of shot 23. It represents an abrupt transition between two conflictive incomplete narrative contents.

We can also identify other content oppositions between shots 22 and 23. First, I cut from a foreign man to a Portuguese woman. This implies different gender and nationality. Both shots also present different information in their background compositions. In shot 22 the background appears illuminated by warm positive sunlight. The shot also presents some people and buildings in the background which maintains some continuity with previous images. Shot 23 does not present sunlight, people or buildings in the background but only a section of a red and black flag and some written words which we cannot fully understand. This indicates information that has also been intentionally omitted and which does not maintain continuity with previous shots. The background is abstract and incomprehensible because of lack of event information.

These oppositions in terms of composition, gender, nationality and background information not only illustrate a rupture in terms of content but also highlights and announces a new political point of view within the General Strike context. This new political perspective becomes particularly evident in the personal and emotional speaker's discourse supported and developed by the off-screen speaker:

Character B: “We sit down and let things happen! It is sad! I cannot recognise

Portuguese people”

Off-screen character: “They are cowards!”

Character B: “They are cowards! They are cowards! Portuguese people put up with anything from the government. They do not react against it”.

The statement clearly criticises Portuguese culture and not the government like in character A's speech. This is a very different, and opposite statement from that of her previous counterpart. It is a negative emotional statement from a Portuguese native about her own culture. The fact that previously it was a foreigner defending the characteristics of Portuguese culture accentuates by opposition the dramatic effect of the Portuguese's statement.

Shot 22 frames the character from left to right while shot 23 frames the character from right to left. This outlines a visual opposition in terms of speech direction. Character A directs his speech from left to right and character B from right to left. This opposition in terms of speech direction intends to convey that both characters might be speaking at the same time but in different locations in the event area and therefore to different audiences. Conversely, their opposite speech direction highlights visually their opposition in terms of speech content.

It is particularly important to notice that it is the off-screen speaker's input, that who is omitted in the frame, who re-directs the on-screen speaker's argument. Therefore, the omitted off-screen character and content conditions the non-omitted speaker's arguments:

Character B: “We sit down and let things happen! It is sad! I cannot recognise Portuguese people”

Off-screen character: “They are cowards!”

Character B: “They are cowards! They are cowards! Portuguese people put up with anything from the government. They do not react against it”

Since there are no visible participants in the frame but only off-screen comments the character's speech seems to be directed to the spectator directly. The

content is particularly provocative: “They are cowards!”. This aims at stimulating the audience participation on the event debate. I want to engage the spectator to make a stand in relation to the narrative content.

Therefore, the principal intention of character B's content is not just to present an alternative political perspective to that introduced by character B. It also aims at provoking the participation of the spectator. From now on each character will present a different personal argument on the subject. The intention is to provide the viewer with different political and personal perspectives. The spectator may choose to identify with some of the speaker's claims or react against them. The intention is that the viewer is not indifferent about the event content but engages and participates also in discussing the content and the representation of the event.



Shot 24. Character C. Sequence 2.

Version A: 27:05 sec

Character C says:

The salary of those earning over 2500 Euros; of those who earn 30,000. Earn 4000, earn 20, 16 and others have to arrange with 90 euros.

Another woman involved in the group says:

Portuguese people are very hungry but they are silent, man! Very hungry but silent, man!

Character C says:

The Government should be ashamed.
The Government should be ashamed

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

The composition presents a woman in the foreground visibly upset proclaiming her concerns to a photographic camera. The photographer in the foreground takes photographs of the woman as she speaks. In the background we see other people manifesting themselves to other photographic cameras and photographers. Soon after another woman situated in the background group makes another declaration to the photographic camera.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This content intends to present an act of personal popular protest. A new perspective of individuals manifesting through their personal concerns the interests of the group. The shot content breaks continuity with previous speakers. The characters do not use the megaphone or direct their discourse to the participants as before. Instead they speak directly and emotionally to photographic cameras. The composition maintains continuity with previous shots by compressing the space giving the sensation that there are many people attending the event. Moreover, in the background we can see the sunlight illuminating the buildings just like in shot 22. However, there is much less sunlight than before. The intention is to signify that time has moved forward in the narrative and therefore that this event happened after previous events as if respecting a chronological temporal structure.

Like in previous shot 23 this image begins its content in the middle of the discourse and by doing so points to the fact that previous content must have been omitted. It is an emotional speech. The character raises her concerns of social injustice with anger. In fact, her initial discourse, due to the character's emotional state, is not completely coherent. The salary numbers that she refers are confusing and perhaps contradictory: "The salary of those earning over 2500 Euros; of those who earn 30,000. Earn 4000, earn 20, 16 and others have to

arrange with 90 euros”.

Her emotional discourse illustrates how strong she feels about social inequalities and which she explains by referring to differences in salary. The fact that she speaks directly to a photographic camera highlights her emotional state for we could assume that she is speaking to the photographic camera because she is so desperate and upset that she cannot distinguish a photographic camera from a video camera. We can also assume that in fact she does not care that it is a photographic camera for her main concern is to speak and be heard by others. Video cameras normally appear associated with television journalism and therefore to television news which, as we know, normally report information about the world through a nationwide means of transmission. The fact that someone speaks directly to a camera, whether photographic or otherwise, implies that they want to address the general public nationwide through mass media and not just the attending participants in the event area.

Character C aims at representing a popular working class voice. The voice of those who suffer most as a result of public debt and government inefficiency. Her discourse serves also the purpose to explain why character B claimed that “Portuguese people put up with anything from the government. They do not react against it”. The intention is that the viewer associates character B's previous argument to the social inequalities exemplified by character C through alluding to differences in salaries. Character C's arguments are further developed and punctuated dramatically when another woman declares repeatedly: “Portuguese people are very hungry but they are silent, man! Very hungry but silent, man!”. This argument not only reinforces character B's claims but also illustrates the consequences of social inequalities: poverty. And when character C concludes by repeating: “The Government should be ashamed. The Government should be ashamed” the narrative punctuates that the popular voice blames their government for their misfortune. Furthermore, by referring to the government as responsible for poverty and social inequalities I intend to remind the viewer of character A's initial discourse questioning Portugal's public debt. Therefore, I am complementing and reinforcing this speech content with

previous statements in order to represent different political perspectives within the General Strike context.

On the other hand, these characters direct their speech to photographic cameras as if they were talking directly, as stated, to the television spectator and therefore as if they were participating in an informative television program being transmission live. This intends to represent the naivety and fragility of these characters with respect to the mass media world, especially if we take into account that these people have hardly any voice or presence in the media. They are normally ignored and they know so. Generally when they do appear is when they become objects of ridicule. They are innocent and may be easily exploited. Conversely, however innocent these characters might be, they are very conscious of the important role that the media plays in their lives, especially television. It is on television where they watch politicians, journalists and specialists alike on a daily basis, discussing, analysing and making decisions about their lives. It is through television that they hear of public debt, China buying Portuguese debt, bankruptcy, government policies, crisis or deficit. It is in fact through television that they see the world happening without being able to participate. They feel impotent, voiceless and powerless to voice their concerns. This is why there is despair and anger when speaking to photographic cameras. This is one of their few chances to be heard. This is in fact why they shout. That is what the shot content intends to convey to the viewer: the anger and frustration of a popular voice.

Note: Recently digital SLR photographic cameras became able to record video and sound. However, if we observe the action carefully they are not filming but photographing. Furthermore, even if they were filming the microphone of these photographic cameras is very poor in quality. This means that to record her speech with professional quality you need to use an external microphone. There are no external microphones being use in the scene.



Shot 25. Character C. Sequence 2.

Version A: 30:12 sec

Character C says:

We did not do any wrong! It was not us. They did. Do I owe money to the Government?

Group sings: The fight continues! The people are on the street! The fight continues! The people are on the street!

Character C says:

You must have mercy! Banks should be ashamed of the misery in Lisbon. Here in Oporto. There is only hunger. There are no houses. Banks Banks put people out of their houses. Who is to blame for this? It is the government who must solve this situation!

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

The composition presents character C in the foreground visibly upset manifesting her concerns directly to our camera. In the background we see other people protesting. A group in the background sing together as part of the protest.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This is exactly the same shot as previous shot 24. There is just a few seconds missing in between shots. In shot 24 the narrative cuts out as the character still faces the photographer. Shot 25 begins with the same character facing and addressing our camera directly. The camera does not move or change shot size. The intention is to force the viewer to look at the same scene from different points of view. In shot 24 we can observe the scene of her speaking to a photographic camera as “invisible” voyeurs. Thus, the composition offers the possibility of reflecting upon the relationship between the characters and the photographers. Shot 25 changes the viewing position. Now, we become both the point of view of the photographer and the media object for receiving the character's claims. The cut between shot 24 and 25 abruptly interrupts the action to highlight and focus our attention on the change of point of view of the event.

On the other hand, the speech content further develops character C's previous claims. After disclosing in shot 24 that the government was to blame for the present crisis the speaker reinforces her argument by gesticulating her arm and finger negatively as she claims: “We did not do any wrong! It was not us. They did. Do I owe money to the Government?”. This argument takes us back again to the initial introductory statement about public debt by character A. It outlines the great concern of the working class and a key issue of protest in the General Strike. The shot content aims to convey that working class feels that they are not to blame for the Portuguese public debt. It is the fault of the government's inefficiency and therefore they argue why should they pay for it.

In the background we can distinguish a group of people singing in unison: “The fight continues! The people are on the street! The fight continues. The people are on the street!”. The background singing scene acts out as a political supporting melody in favour of the foreground claims. The intention is to signify that character C is not alone in her claims. She represents the voice of many attending the event. As they continue singing character C further develops her

argument: “You must have mercy! Banks should be ashamed of the misery in Lisbon. Here in Oporto. There is only hunger. There are no houses. Banks Banks put people out of their houses. Who is to blame for this? It is the government who must solve this situation!”

This new speech brings a change in terms of discourse and content since she is not just shouting but also asking. She begins her speech by directing her discourse to those in power: “You must have mercy!”. And she does so by speaking directly to our camera. She is addressing banks and the government as the key entities who make the decisions that condition our lives. She is aware of that through the information that receives via television and so it is through television that she addresses them asking for help and appealing to their comprehension through our camera.

Next, she explains why: “Banks should be ashamed of the misery in Lisbon. Here in Oporto. There is only hunger. There are no houses. Banks Banks put people out of their houses. Who is to blame for this?”. This part of the speech addresses a very concrete consequence of the present economic crisis. Many people in Portugal were and are being evicted from their homes because they have lost their jobs and they are unable to pay for their mortgages. This is a very important and essential issue and the social group that her speech represents are the most affected.

Finally she demands that: “it is the government who must resolve this situation!”. Since according to her view it is the government, in the first place, that created this situation. Again, she is not just raising a point of view or concern but she is telling and demanding “via television” for the government to resolve the situation. Thus, character C by speaking directly to the camera she is also appealing and addressing directly powerful and influential entities like banks to resolve the situation by having “mercy”.



Shot 26 .Character D.Sequence 2.

Version A: 01:08:16 min

Character D says:

Comrades January is coming. Social Security, with our help, placed 40 people who slept on the street, in hostels. Now they want to force them to pay half of the hostel fees. Those who can't pay go to the street. And I'm not talking only about our case. We managed to put 40 people in hostels. At this precise moment some people are on the streets: Why?

Because there's money for the Government. There is money for the Ministers. There is money for MPs. But for us and for you there, there is no money! Why is there no money?

There is no money because some people are so democratic that they do not know what to do with their democracy. Some people have so much socialism that they don't know what to do with it. That's the problem. Only when we take political power in our hands - instead of waiting for God, for MPs, for Political leaders. Only when we take it in our hands as the song says. Only then we can be somebody. Only then can we regain the power we lost on November 25th, 1975.

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

In the foreground you see a man with a beard addressing event participants through a megaphone. He speaks old revolutionary anarchist cries about the lack of housing, the lack of democracy and the lost values after the Carnation Revolution.

In the background picture you can see an anarchist black-red flag with icons. There are several political slogans. Behind the speaker, two men, one with his face hidden by a black scarf, and other wearing sunglasses, hold a poster which reads "corrupt".

The sunlight maintains continuity with previous shots by illuminating background buildings. The foreground characters remain in shadow.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot content presents a new type of speaker. One with clear political views. Beforehand, the speakers were individuals with no direct links to political organisations. Character D appears identified by the background information as belonging to an anarchist organisation. This represents a new voice with a different point of view on the issues presented in the narrative. The objective is to present a more political perspective that complements previous individuals statements. Moreover, after listening the claims of two women the narrative offers a male perspective again to maintain an equilibrium in terms of voice and gender representation.

The speaker begins his speech with the word: "Comrades". This internationally well known word contextualises the content of his discourse within left wing politics. He begins his speech by referring to his personal experience:

"Comrades January is coming. Social Security, with our help, placed 40 people who slept on the street, in hostels. Now they want to force them to pay half of

the hostel fees. Those who can't pay go to the street. And I'm not talking only about our case. We managed to put 40 people in hostels. At this precise moment some people are on the streets: Why?"

This speech content, by presenting a concrete real case, further develops and reinforces the arguments and claims presented previously by character C when referring to banks and eviction. Character D explains how his organisation managed to place 40 homeless people into hostels. These homeless people could represent people that lost their homes like character C argued when speaking of eviction. However, character D continues explaining that the situation was reversed and people went back into the streets. He ends his speech by asking "why?" to the off-screen public. This question serves as a platform for the speaker to disclose his political views and arguments: "Because there's money for the Government. There is money for the Ministers. There is money for MPs. But for us and for you there, there is no money! Why is there no money? There is no money because some people are so democratic that they do not know what to with their democracy. Some people have so much socialism that they don't know what to do with it. That's the problem."

His speech, just like in the case of previous speakers, represents a direct attack on the government and politicians alike. However, he presents a different argument. He blames the present public debt on the lack of socialism and democracy implemented by political leaders and the government. Since as he argues at the beginning of his discourse there is money for the government and ministers but not for the people who really need it. And concludes by affirming that "that's the problem" and not a question of public debt or deficit but a question of unfair distribution of wealth. This argument strengthens and develops character C's views of social inequalities when referring to the great differences in salary.

The speaker continues his speech by offering a solution to all these problems. This is something new that neither of the other speakers did beforehand in the narrative:

“Only when we take political power in our hands - instead of waiting for God, for MPs, for political leaders. Only when we take in our hands as the song says. Only then we can be somebody. Only then can we regain the power we lost on November 25th, 1975”.

His solution consists of withdrawing the decision-making power from political leaders. Instead he proposes that it should be the common people who should have the power to make decisions like during the Carnation Revolution. By claiming this he is referring to the values lost after the revolution. He also refers to a song that describes his ideals. A song that he will sing later on in the narrative. Therefore, his solution does not defend having a better government and politicians and therefore a new different government. Instead, he defends eradicating the present political system. This represents an anarchist political perspective. On the one hand, up to a certain extent, his argument reminds us of character A's first statement: “I am going to demand for the government to go far away!”. On the other, by arguing that the power for making decisions must be in the hands of common people, he is also appealing, like character B did, to public active participation. He is asking for people to regain their power, by fighting for their rights and not to remain passive.

This is an argument raised previously by character B when she claimed that “I cannot recognise Portuguese people” and “Portuguese people put up with anything from the government. They do not react against it”. By claiming this character B is in fact implying that they did once. She did see Portuguese fighting for themselves in the past. The past reference is the Carnation Revolution. There is also a subtle visual link between character B and D. Both do their claims under the same background: the anarchist flag. For character B I used a close-up-shot. This is why we could not completely identify the background flag. However, the red-black anarchist flag is subtly present in the composition. This visual link aims at highlighting the speech content association between these two characters.

Therefore, character D's speech content intends to further develop and strengthen the link amongst previous political arguments and speakers. On the other hand, different attributes and qualities of the past Carnation Revolution have been referred to at different points throughout the narrative. This shot content also aims at reaffirming the essential reference that the memory of the past Carnation Revolution plays in this representation of the General Strike event.



Shot 27.Character D.Sequence 2.

Version A: 22:01 sec

Character D says:

And do not come with cheap talk. It will only happen when those who have the power are the people involved in associations and trade unions. So that they are the ones who have the power to decide and to say no and not just a few political representatives.

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up-shot

In the foreground we can see character D manifesting his political views through a megaphone. In the background we can see part of the anarchist flag. There are people behind attending the event and a photographer photographing the anarchist icons on the flag. The background buildings are now not lit by the sun as in previous shots, they are mostly in shadow.

Filmmakers intentions:

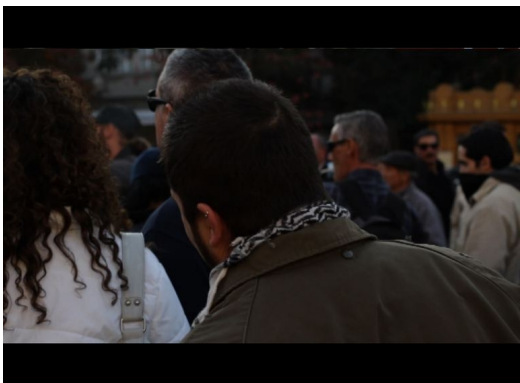
This shot continues character D's previous argument. The composition presents a close up of the unionist's face. The intention for changing the shot size is to dramatically punctuate the unionist's claims. However, the fact that the narrative cuts from shot 26 to shot 27 implies an omission of information. There is a time interval between both shots and therefore an omission of content. Moreover, the anarchist changes position in the frame. In shot 26 he appears centre left of frame. In this shot he is situated right of frame. This means that the camera had to travel spatially from left to right to change not only the composition but also the perspective. The intention is not just to dramatically punctuate the final content of his speech but also to draw the viewer's attention to the actual cut and therefore to the possible omitted content during the interval. The fact is that the camera did not need to move from left to right position to achieve a close-up. It simply needed to zoom in and change the focal distance. Therefore, by moving the camera position in reference to the subject the cut focusses part of our attention on the change of perspective.

Another important aspect that accentuates the interval and omission between both shots is the sunlight. In the previous shots, the buildings in the background were mostly lit by sunlight. This is the first shot where the sunlight is hardly present. Most of the background is now almost completely in shadow. This accentuates the time interval between both shots since it indicates that time has moved forward in the narrative.

Conversely, there is also another important reason for this change of position. That is to show the people standing behind the speaker. In shot 26 there is only some presence of participants attending the event on the right hand side of the frame. They appear vaguely for a few seconds. The composition on this shot also aims at reinforcing that people are listening to the speaker by showing standing participants not only behind the speaker but in fact on the opposite side of the frame to where people were standing in the previous shots. This means that now viewers can imagine that there are people standing around the

speaker without actually showing the complete space. In the background, we notice that we can see character A standing behind the speaker. He seems to support character D's speech by raising his hands. This reinforces the link of speech content between characters A and D.

The character's speech content on this shot repeats and accentuates the solution presented in the previous shot: "And do not come with cheap talk. It will only happen when those who have the power are the people involved in associations and trade unions. So that they are the ones who have the power to decide and to say no and not just a few political representatives". He clearly confirms that he is not interested in political arguments that he defines as "cheap talk". He also goes further by specifying and reaffirming that associations and trade unions are the ones who should have the power for making decisions and not political representatives.

	<p>Character E says: off-screen</p> <p>The people united will never be defeated!</p>
<p>Shot 28. Cut-away D. Sequence 2.</p> <p>Version A: 02:07 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up shot.


In the foreground we can see the back of a young man turning his head left as if attempting to see something or someone. In the background we can see large

number of people facing in the same direction. The frame is almost completely full with people. We can hear an off-screen voice appealing to unify.

Filmmakers intentions:

This shot serves several purposes. First, it intends to serve as spatial and temporal transition between previous speaker D and the following speaker E. The shot presents a man searching for a viewing angle. His search implies that he has difficulties to see because there are too many people in the event. In fact, the frame is full with people facing all the same direction. This not only suggests that there is something happening in that direction but also that there is interest and large participation.

Simultaneously, as we observe the action in the shot we hear off the screen: "The people united will never be defeated!". This is a popular and well known left wing slogan which appeals for common people to be united to defend their common rights. On the other hand, it also links to character D's previous statements about transferring the power decision making to trade unions and associations. Conversely, the slogan also refers for common people being united and not to political leaders. Finally, the off-screen slogan, on the one hand, serves to focus the spectator's attention towards the direction people standing are facing to. On the other, it implies that this large crowd are listening to off-screen speaker E.

	<p>Character E says: The people united will never be defeated! The people united will never be defeated!</p> <p>Group sing: off-screen The people united will never be defeated! The people united will never be defeated!</p>
<p>Shot 29. Character E. Sequence 2. Version A: 21:01 sec</p>	<p>Character E says: We must unite! People! We have to unite!</p>

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium close-up-shot.

A man on holds a megaphone and repeats the same slogan we heard off-screen before. He stands in front of the anarchist flag. We can also see a Portuguese flag behind him. People around the speaker move in and out of frame. He seems to be surrounded by participants. A man with his face hidden by a scarf stands behind the speaker. A young man crosses the frame from left to right making a comical gesture for the camera. A photographer enters the composition and points the camera to the speaker. The surrounding off-screen crowd repeat the popular slogan. The speaker appeals to popular unity.

Filmmakers intentions:

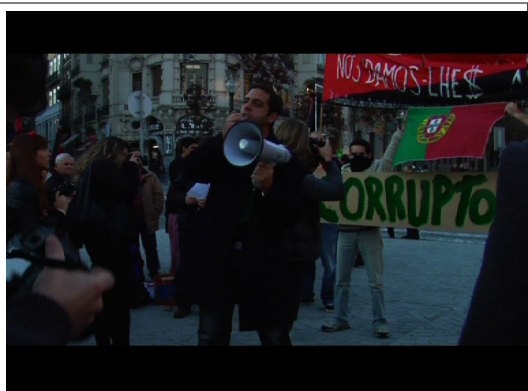
This event takes place in the same space where character D delivered his speech previously. We can identify that through the background anarchist flag. However, it takes place later on in the day. There is a temporal difference between events in shot 27 and 29. Content in shot 28 serves as a temporal transition between events and points to a content omission during the transition of events for other events must have happened in between shot 27 and 29

events.

Shots size in shots 29 and 28 and 27 are very similar. They all intend to compress the space so as to give the sensation of large public event participation. On the other hand, the intention for keeping the same shot size is to accentuate the link in terms of content and political perspective between speakers, and the fact that both speaker enjoy the same public participation. The fact that both speakers are in the same space area highlights the identification and link amongst speakers. However, it is in the speech continuity itself where the link intends to be stronger. At the end of shot 26 and 27 character D resumes that power decision making belongs to the people, and then specifies terms such as trade unions and associations. Next in shot 28 as we observe a large crowd of people compressed in the frame we hear off-screen a left wing popular slogan: "The people united will never be defeated!". This slogan links directly to character D's claims for it is only through people being united that we can create trade unions and associations. Next, we identified the off-screen voice as belonging to character E who repeats the same slogan in front of the same background as character D did beforehand. Then, we hear off-screen a group of participants repeating the slogan after character E's.

The slogan appeals to character D's claims. Since it is repeated by an off-screen public it illustrates that participants identified with those claims. The Portuguese flag in the background confers the slogan content a national appeal. This is especially because this flag was not present during character D's speech. So, it was added afterwards, and in doing so accentuates the visual message linked to the slogan and its national appeal. Moreover, the repeated off-screen slogan, first from character E on shot 28, and after from the participants group in shot 29, intends to integrate both spatial compositions into one. They are different shots, however, the off-screen voices, from the speaker and the participants, attempt to integrate both spatial planes into one through suggesting, without illustrating, that both the speaker and the participants are situated in the same location.

Finally, character E punctuates the discourse through addressing the crowd directly: “We must unite! People! We have to unite!”. This final speech serves, on the one hand, to reinforce character’s D arguments in favour of trade unions and associations as power decisions-makers since character E is appealing for the unity of common people and not political leaders. His speech also in a sense appeals for people to fight against injustices like character B asked in her past discourse. Finally, this statement serves as an introduction for his following speech content. In the following shot the character is going to speak of another concrete case, like character D did beforehand, explaining why people should unite. Notice also that the composition privileges the words “united” which appear written in the background flag. This also reinforces visually the speaker's appeal.



Shot 30. Character E. Sequence 2.

Version A: 38:03 sec

Character E says:

A few months ago, they diverted funds allocated to the poor regions of the interior to Lisbon.

We have here a democratic-mafia which dictates the laws and we have to eat all the unconstitutional laws, man.

They are taking away all our rights.

The NATO summit was not just a NATO summit. They are preparing themselves for you. And the more you drag out the problem, the more you are going to fall for them.

You need to wake up people!

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium shot.

In the composition character E appears centre of frame surrounded by people. In the foreground there is a photographer taking a photograph. There are other photographers left side of the frame also taking photographs of the event. The same photographer to whom character C raised her concerns appears photographing the Portuguese flag. As the speaker makes his declaration character D enters the frame and turns the Portuguese flag upside down. On the left hand side, we can appreciate the photographer checking out the photograph he just took.

Filmmakers intentions:

This shot content serves several purposes. First, it intends to maintain continuity with the criticism to mass media exploitation established in shot 24 and reinforced in shot 27. Notice that none of the photographers in the scene seem to be interested in what the speaker has to say. They all seem to be searching for aesthetic objects just like we could appreciate beforehand in shot 24 and 27.

As the speaker delivers his left-wing rhetoric against the government and the constitution character D enters frame and turns for the Portuguese flag upside down for the cameras to photograph. This represents a classical anarchist act of protest and rejection against present political powers. This action not only reinforces the speech content but also strengthens the link in terms of political content between characters D and E. Both characters now appear framed against the same anarchist political backdrop. The camera compositions intentionally give space to the word "corrupt" on the banner which acts as a backdrop to the speaker, spelling out the word "corrupt" in support of his rhetoric.

Character E's shot content maintains a certain parallelism in terms of content structure to character D's. He begins his discourse, like character D did, by referring to a particular case: "A few months ago, they diverted funds allocated

to the poor regions of the interior to Lisbon". Next, like character D did beforehand, speaker E emits a criticism towards political powers: "We have here a democratic-mafia which dictates the laws and we have to eat all the unconstitutional laws, man". His criticism undermines the performance of the present democratic system just like character D did beforehand. He classifies the democratic system as corrupt by associating democratic political practices to organised crime practices. He goes further by declaring that the law is unconstitutional. This declaration severely undermines the credibility of a democratic system. Then, he resumes and outlines the consequence of this corrupted political practice: "They are taking away all our rights". Up to this point his discourse reinforces that which character D claimed beforehand, and which character B and C's refer to in their declarations.

Next, the speech takes further the criticism against the democratic system through placing it within an international context: "The NATO summit was not just a NATO summit. They are preparing themselves for you. And the more you drag out the problem, the more you are going to fall for them". Nato refers to a military alliance between North America and European countries dedicated to the proposition of maintaining democratic freedom by means of collective defence. By extending his criticism to this organisation which claims to defend democracy the speaker is questioning the credibility of the international democratic system.

The speaker concludes that: "You need to wake up people!". This means that he believes that people are not aware of the corruption determining the democratic system. On the other hand, his last words: "And the more you drag out the problem, the more you are going to fall for them" and this is why "You need to wake up people!" refers to what character B argued in shot 23 by declaring that Portuguese do not fight and stand for their rights like they did in the past. However, the phrase "You need to wake up people!" also calls for people to mobilise and organise themselves in order to fight and defend their rights, as a united group.

As stated in the intentions this second sequence aims at presenting a group of individuals protesting publicly. Their speech as a whole means to represent the concerns of the attending group in accordance with the political and social context of the General Strike. Even though we might find that their speech at times does not seem articulate, the content of their speech is coherent with the objectives of the General Strike. The sequence also intends to signify that people attending the event are listening to the speakers, and participating in some of the events. Some participants seem to subscribe with their claims.

— Most of these shots were filmed using a tripod. The main reason was technical. The camera was situated in the middle of the crowd. People were moving from one place to the another bumping continuously into the camera. Therefore, in order to maintain the composition steady I placed the camera on a tripod. Moreover, speech content meant producing shots longer in length. In fact, most of shots with speech last over a minute. This represents a long time for holding the camera steady via hand-held specially when people keep bumping continuously against you. Therefore, I chose to film on a tripod to maintain the camera steady so as to avoid the viewer being distracted by unwanted camera movements. On the other hand, like in sequence 1, the camera filmed all subjects on eye-level in order to maintain continuity with placing the viewer on an equal status with the subject. One of the objectives of the composition is to engage the audience in participating in the event. The eye-level angle provides a point-of-view of the event equivalent to that of a person observing the subject as if they were attending the event.

6.4 Strike. Research analysis narrative Version A.

Sequence 3. Conclusion



Shot 31.Character D.Sequence 2.

Version A: 27:22 sec

Character D sings:

From the mine and the plough you have the body in pain. Long live the workers and long live the General Strike. Long live the workers and long live the General Strike

To the strike you go! To the strike yes!
To the strike I also go! And I go for them, and they go for me! To the strike you go! To the strike yes! To the strike I also go! And I go for them, and they go for me!

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to medium-close-shot

The shot reveals character D singing an old unionist song through the megaphone. A woman holds up a paper from which the character reads to sing the song. There are several people playing instruments accompanying the melody. The man appears surrounded by people who are listening to the song. The sunlight does not illuminate the background buildings which remain in shadow. In the background there is a shop with its lights on.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The composition compresses the space so as to emphasise that there are people attending the event. Now, the shot, in the foreground and background

remains in shadow. We can notice that in the background there is a shop with a light on. This intends to indicate that time has moved forward in the narrative following the pre-established chronological temporal order. This also implies an omission from previous shot content to this present content since other events must have happened during that temporal interval.

This is a left-wing song which celebrates and epitomizes some of the political values exposed in previous sequences. It also celebrates the General Strike as a means to unite the working class to defend each others interests: "Long live the workers and long live the General Strike". And in doing so it appeals again to solidarity and working class union: "To the strike you go! To the strike yes! To the strike I also go! And I go for them, and they go for me!".

Unity to fight for working class rights is something that character D and E defended and asked for through their claims. In fact character D argued that the solution for social injustice and inequalities was to attribute the political decision power to the working class through unions and associations. Since the song can be identified as a union song it accentuates this political ideology. On the other hand, the unity of workers in defence of common rights was something that character B stated to miss since she could not understand why Portuguese people did not fight anymore against injustice to defend their rights. The melody is punctuated by a drum beat as if it was a kind of military march. The song uses the present tense: "To the strike you go! To the strike yes! To the strike I also go!". This combination of present tense and musical rhythm accentuates the concept of unity and fellowship and celebrates workers going to the strike to defend their rights as an united forced. Finally, the unity and fellowship qualities of this song may remind us of Zeca Afonso's music scene in sequence 1. There, all people sang together holding red carnations as a symbol of the memory of the past Carnation Revolution. This may lead to remember the unionist anarchist claims about the working class losing their decision power making after the Carnation Revolution in shot 26: "Only when we take in our hands as the song says. Only then we can be somebody. Only then can we regain the power we lost on November 25th, 1975".



Shot 32. Character D. Sequence 2.

Version A: 20:08 sec

Character D says:

Down with Capitalism! Down with the capital State!

Group: Down!

Character D says:

Down with poverty and hunger

Group: Down!

Character D says:

Out with governments and corruption!

Group: Out!

Character D says:

Long live the unity of workers against the Capital and the State!

Group: Long live!

Off-screen: Long Live the Strike!

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to medium-shot.

The shot reveals character D holding up his fist shouting old anarchist revolutionary claims. A woman on the right hand side of the frame also raises her hand and reinforces his speech. The off-screen public repeats also after him. On the right hand side of the frame we can read from the anarchist flag the word “united”.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The shot presents a complete rupture in terms of composition continuity. During the whole narrative the composition has framed the space and characters on eye-level. This means that the camera puts the viewer on an equal status with the subject. However, this shot presents a low-angle and looks up at the subject. This confers power and strength to the character in the frame and therefore to what the character is protesting about. Since people out of frame repeat part of the speech back to him in support of what he is saying, this composition confers power not just to the individual in the shot but also to the off-frame participants that his claims represent.

In the previous shots, as stated, the chant is called out in time to a drum beat. This shot begins with one single drum beat that marks the end of the previous chant. This single beat, on the one hand, aims to confer a false continuity with previous drum beat's content since there is an unavoidable temporal interval and an omission in terms of content between both shots. On the other hand, this single beat acts also as form of "grammatical" punctuation. This means that not only serves to stop the previous singing scene but also serves to announce the subsequent speech. The lack of continuity in terms of shot composition and this single announcing drum beat intend to separate this shot content from the rest of the narrative.

The speech content summarises some of the most important claims made by the speakers in sequence 2. The delivery of the speech appears to be organised in bullet points as if following a drum beat rhythm. The speaker raising his fist in a typical left-wing gesture punctuates each phrase using an imperative tense commanding the off-screen group that repeats after him precisely the commanding word:

" Character D: Down with Capitalism! Down with the capital State!

Group: Down!

Character D: Down with poverty and hunger

Group: Down!

Character D: Out with governments and corruption!

Group: Out!

Character D: Long live the unity of workers against the Capital and the State!

Group: Long live!”

Each phrase seems a bullet point command. And the group responds by confirming the command in unison. As a whole it seems to work, just like the song in the previous shot, as a military marching melody that accentuates the concepts of unity and coming together and celebrates workers as a united force defending their rights. The final phrase “Long live the strike!” reverberates off-screen in a black screen as a voice coming from the revolutionary past.

Therefore, this last sequence aims to sum up the overall content of the narrative. Firstly, it intends to strengthen the spirit of togetherness and public participation in the event established and represented during sequences 1 and 2. Secondly, it intends to summarise and reinforce key issues and concerns represented through the character's statements in sequence 2. Thirdly, the sequence attempts to confer power and hope to those supporting and demonstrating about the concerns disclosed throughout the narrative.

Chapter 7

“Strike” Version B versus Version A

Research analysis on narrative construction

7.1 Objectives

This version means to produce a *negative* representation of the event. This means an unsympathetic representation of the event and the characters involved in the General Strike. The objective is to produce an incoherent representation of popular political protest and dissatisfaction with government policies. The intentions is to confer the event little public participation and sense of unity. There are no significant events addressing General Strike issues and concerns. The main purpose is to discredit and undermine the public significance and political objectives of the General Strike event. The specific intentions for the three act narrative sequences are as follows:

Sequence 1. Version B versus A. Context

This first sequence means to establish poor public participation and engagement in the event. People seem to be scattered around with little interest in the General Strike. There are no visible demonstrations or significant acts of unified public protest. The objective is to undermine the public significance of the event.

Sequence 2. Version B versus A. Characters


This second sequence introduces three characters protesting publicly with the aid of a megaphone as in Version A. However, their speech and political claims are incoherent and even absurd. They do not appear to protest against the government inefficiency in resolving the country's economical and social problems. The content of their arguments undermine the seriousness and political purpose of the event. There is little public participation. However, people attending the event seem to be engaged with the speaker's inconsistent arguments. The overall objective is to discredit the political content of the General Strike event.

Sequence 3. Version B versus A. Conclusion

This last sequence means to conclude the narrative by resuming and reinforcing the overall discrediting and undermining objectives stated in sequence 1 and 2.

7.2 Strike. Research analysis narrative Version B versus Version A.

Sequence 1. Context

	We hear: Traffic Background voices
Shot 1. Sequence 1. Version B: 08:15 sec	

Shot description:

This first shot corresponds to an extreme-long shot.

In terms of composition the frame presents a large view of the Allies Avenue in the centre of town in Oporto. The foreground space in the frame appears to be empty. In the background we can see a yellow bus. On the bus there is a slogan which reads “General Strike”. On the the left there is another slogan which reads: “Against Injustices” and “Change of policies”. On the right hand side of the bus we can identify an union symbol: CGTP.

On either side of the bus there are people standing by. Behind the bus a large building covers almost the entire background of the frame. This building is covered by nets and scaffolding. There is also a crane coming on the top of the building. In the middle of the frame some people walk by. We can hear the sound of some traffic even though we see few cars pass by. We can also hear in the distance the sound of voices coming out of a speaker. We do not distinguish what they say. Most of the background is in shadow.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The composition on this initial shot identifies the event, the General Strike, and the location where it takes place. We may not recognise yet that it is the centre of Oporto. However, we can appreciate that it is a large central square and that the event, the General Strike, occupies only a small portion of the total space available. This intends to confer the event a small scale. Even though it is a General Strike event there seems to be little public participation. Notice that the emptiness of the foreground area is much larger in terms of size than the area occupied by the the Strike. The composition aims to establish a relationship between foreground and background in order to confer a quality of “emptiness” to the event. This emptiness means to undermine the significance of the event by demonstrating that the event is of a small scale with little public participation. The fact that people walk by in the middle of the frame as if unaware of the event highlights this quality of distance and emptiness attributed to the event.

The large building under construction serves also as a reference for comparing sizes. The bus and people standing by are relatively small by comparison with the large building in the background. This also intends to accentuate the small scale of the event. Notice also that the background remains in shadow while the foreground, even though practically empty, appears partially illuminated by the sun. At the same time the overall tonality of the image is cold. Not only the background building is in shadow but even the sunlit foreground has an overall blue cold tonality. Furthermore, the voices coming out of the speaker have a an echoey quality and we cannot fully understand its content. These elements accentuate the distance between the point of view of the viewer and the event. As a whole these choices in terms of composition, sound and lighting confer the event an overall negative significance. The principal objective is to signify that the General Strike was a small isolated event, with little public participation and fellowship and unity qualities. An event of hardly any social or political public significance.

	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Traffic</p> <p>Background voices</p>
<p>Shot 2. Sequence 1. Version B:</p> <p>09:01 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot also corresponds to an extreme-long-shot.

In terms of composition the frame presents another large view of the Allies Avenue in the centre of town in Oporto. This shot represents the reverse view of the square from the previous shot 1. The foreground space in the frame appears to be almost empty. Some people in silhouette walk by and exit the frame. The foreground appears in shadow while the background appears illuminated by the sun. The view of the word General Strike on the yellow bus appears to be blocked by an sculpture. It is the a sculpture of D. Pedro IV who was the 28th King of Portugal for seven days in 1826, and the first Head of State and Government of Brazil between 1822 and 1831.

On both sides of the bus there are people standing by. Centre of frame behind the bus we can just make out the Town Hall. Next to the bus we can partially see a Portuguese flag and next to it we can read a slogan which says “Against Injustices”. On the right side of the frame we can also see a red open-topped bus for tourists that seems to be waiting to undertake its regular city tour journey. Two cars pass by on the right-hand side of the frame. We hear the sound of traffic and voices.

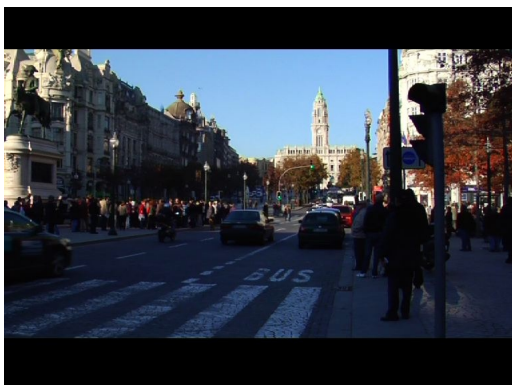
Filmmaker's intentions:

This composition uses a similar field-of-view and focal distance to the previous shot. Primarily, it intends to offer a reverse perspective of the space to that offered in shot number one. Both shots together illustrate a general overview of the space where the event is taking place. Moreover, shot number two maintains sound and composition continuity with the previous shot. We can still hear the echoic voices coming out of the speaker and we cannot still distinguish clearly what they are saying. The Strike event purposely remains small in size in the background while the foreground continues to be practically empty in terms of event participants. This reinforces and confirms the qualities of distance and small scale attributed to the event previously.

Furthermore, the frame presents new information that advances the narrative forward. Firstly, the sound of voices and traffic are louder and competing with each other. This may imply a physical approximation to the event. Second, there are more people entering and exiting frame walking in different directions, the red tourist bus waits to undertake its tour and cars move freely through the roads. This attempts to indicate that the city continues to function normally, and people, whether native or tourist, continue to perform their routine tasks independently of the General Strike event. This could also signify that people are indifferent, unaware or uninterested in the event.

Furthermore, people exiting frame may highlight their indifference. Specially if we take into account that they walk through a large cold-toned foreground shadow that confers to their figures an impersonal silhouette effect. In fact, and by contrast, due to the composition, the warm sunlight does not privilege or highlight the Strike but the surrounding buildings and the statue of D. Pedro IV. The composition intentionally confers a monumental quality to these buildings. They represent past and present political regimes and powerful institutions. In the background we see the Town Hall which corresponds to the chief administrative building of the city of Oporto. The building on the right hand side belongs to one of the most powerful Spanish banks: The BBVA. Conversely, the

statue of D Pedro IV symbolises the past absolutist royal power. The Strike appears encapsulated and trapped amongst them. The size and height of these buildings surrounding the event seems to oppress and undermine the significance of the General Strike. Another important detail is that the statue of D Pedro IV, a symbol of past absolutism, is blocking not only our view of the Strike but especially the words “General Strike” as if, in terms of composition, it was dismissing the importance of the event in favour of the actual statue. The following two shots reinforce the audiovisual statement accomplish in shots 1 and 2.



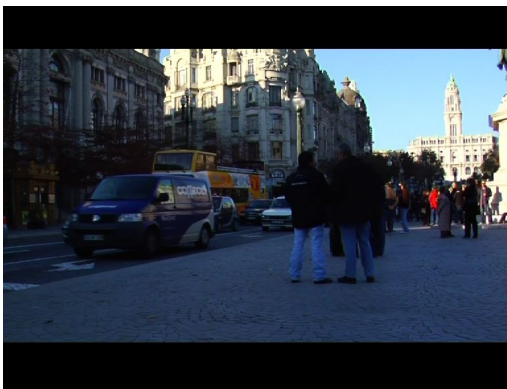
Shot 3. Sequence 1. Version B:

05:03 sec

We hear:

Traffic

Background voices



Shot 4. Sequence 1. Version B:

04:17 sec

We hear:

Traffic

Background voices

Shot description:

Shots 3 and 4 correspond to an extreme-long-shot.

Shot 3 presents another large view of the right-hand side of the centre of town. Cars move forward towards the Town Hall situated in the background. We can still hear the echoey sound from the speakers and the traffic. A group of people stand left of frame. A smaller group stand on the right hand side of the composition. The foreground remains in shadow and the Town Hall and the surrounding buildings remain illuminated by the sun.

Shot 4 presents a large view of the left hand side of the square. Cars circulate in the opposite direction to shot number 3. On the left side of the frame we can perceive another yellow tourist bus waiting to undertake its journey through the city. A small group of people stand scattered in the space. The foreground remains also in shadows while the background buildings appear illuminated by the sun. We can still hear the echoic sound from the speakers and the traffic.

Filmmaker's intentions:

Both shots as a whole intend to expand our knowledge of the event area established in shot one and two. On the one hand, they both maintain continuity in terms of sound background and lighting. The foreground remains in shadow while the buildings are illuminated by the sun. This intends to highlight and reinforce the audiovisual statement accomplished in shot number two. By developing our knowledge of the space they attempt to accentuate the fact that the city continues to function independently of the event. Notice that cars in both shots move in opposite directions. This indicates that the traffic circulates all around the event area. This means that people are not only driving through the event but also around it. This information intends to suggest public indifference towards the event.

At the same time, cars circulating around the strike isolates the event from the general dynamic of the city accentuating the small impact that the strike has in

the general regular activities that daily take place in the city. In doing so it is attempting to signify that the event has no impact on society as a Strike, and least of all as a General Strike nation wide event.

Moreover, these shots contribute to our understanding that there are few people participating in the event. The composition draws our attention to the fact that the few people attending the event are scattered around the geographical space of the protest. This diminishes the strength of the group gathered together to protest together for a common cause and therefore the actual significance of the event. Finally, the composition in these two shots does not show the words General Strike. The frame ignores and dismisses this crucial reference. Instead it focusses our attention on the traffic circulation. This points to an intentional omission of information which deviates our attention towards the filmmaker's intentions.

If I compare these four establishing shots with the four initial shots in narrative Version A I can identify clear differences in terms of information, signification and audiovisual information omission. In narrative Version B I aimed at establishing the event as unimportant, isolated and with hardly any public participation. In narrative Version A the four initial shots intend to confer the event positive popular qualities and large public participation.


In order to achieve these objectives I have implemented the following choices:

In narrative Version B the composition privileges large views of the space. The objective is to diminish the physical scale of the event with regard to its surroundings. The strike seems small in size in comparison with the buildings and the large empty foreground area. The emptiness in the foreground composition illustrates lack of public participation. The four shots as a whole describe the complete surrounding space around the event area drawing our attention towards the fact that vehicles circulate normally as usual. This intends to undermine the event significance for it implies that people drive through the event and ignore it.

In narrative Version A the composition privileges us with closer views within the event space area. The frame compresses the space by closing the field-of-view in order to signify larger public participation. The four shots as a whole do not show the surrounding space. Instead they focus our attention on a group of musicians playing popular music with traditional instruments. On each shot the composition reveals a new perspective of the space covering an area of 360° around the musicians. This intends to evoke the space and public participation instead of actually describing it visually. By doing so this initial sequence omits the spatial information disclosed in Version B. Due to the fact that the shots stay fairly wide in size in narrative Version B there is no clear social representation. We cannot identify who is attending the event so far. Instead I centre the attention on impersonal individuals entering and exiting the frame. This accentuates signifying public indifference towards the event.

The soundtrack in both narrative versions presents clear differences in terms of content and signification. Narrative Version B privileges the echoey meaningless voices from the speakers and the sound of car engines. This accentuates an atmosphere of emptiness and lack of participation. While narrative Version A focusses the attention on the popular and traditional qualities of the music conferring the event a festive and participative atmosphere.

The composition in narrative Version B remains cold in tonality in the shadow empty area of the frame while warm sunlight illuminates the surrounding buildings and statues. These buildings represent past and present regimes in power oppressing and encapsulating the strike and consequently diminishing its power to represent society. On the other hand, narrative Version A omits the surrounding buildings in the composition and attributes warm sunlight to the musicians and surrounding participants. This confers the event positive popular, unifying qualities. Neither narrative sequences are complete. They both present visual and sound information that has been omitted in order to produce different signifying event representations and according to the filmmaker's original narrative intentions.

	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Traffic</p> <p>Background voices</p>
<p>Shot 5. Sequence 1. Version B:</p> <p>05:03 sec</p>	

Shot description:


This shot corresponds to an extreme-long-shot. The composition presents a closer view of the Strike event by eradicating part of the surrounding buildings. In the foreground shadow area we have a group of few people scattered in the space. The Strike event is now illuminated by warm sunlight. The base of D Pedro's IV statue partially blocks the slogan "General Strike". Centre of frame we can see the Portuguese flag and behind it, in the far background we can appreciate the Town Hall. We can hear the traffic and voices from the crowd.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot intends to position the viewer in the event maintaining continuity with previous intentions. The composition still oppresses the event. Even though the surrounding buildings do not have the same presence in the frame they are still encapsulating the group of participants. The statue still prevents our full view of the words "General Strike". The car on the left and the base of the statue block our general view of the event. Notice also that the composition privileges the Portuguese flag centre of frame. It appears intentionally compressed against the

background building, the Town Hall. The flag represents Portugal as a nation. The Town Hall corresponds to the chief administrative building of the city of Oporto. Both elements together stand out in the centre of the composition representing, not the strike participants, but the regime in power.

Finally, the composition establishes a strong inter-relation between foreground and background. The foreground is in shadow and the background is illuminated by the sun. This aims at separating foreground and background and therefore accentuates the distance between both composition areas. People in the frame appear also divided into two groups. Some people are scattered in the shadow area and a small group appear compressed against the background. This also accentuates the distance between both areas. The objective is to visually underline the large area in the composition which is unoccupied so as to draw our attention to the lack participation. In fact, due to choices in terms of camera position and focal distance it is larger in size the unoccupied area than the occupied one.

	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Traffic</p> <p>Background voices</p> <p>We can distinguish individual conversations</p>
<p>Shot 6. Sequence 1. Version B:</p> <p>07:08 sec</p>	

Shot description:


This shot corresponds to an medium-long-shot.

The composition presents a reverse view of the event from the previous shot. The image describes a small group of scattered people talking in an area of shade. A young woman says goodbye to a friend and exits frame. We can hear voices but we cannot distinguish what they say. We can also hear some traffic.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot intends to approximate the viewer close to the participants. The composition presents a reverse view of the previous shot. The composition describes a group of scattered people in the area of shade. By doing so it represents the group socially by establishing who is attending this event. Most of the people in the frame, men and women, correspond to people under forty years-old. This implies so far that there is not a wide range of the population attending this event. This may question the credibility of the event since there seems to be not only a small participation but also a poor social representation.

On the other hand, the shot omits the sunlight established in shot number 5. People are framed within a shaded area with a cold tonality. There is hardly any sunlight in the shot. The composition also omits any reference to the strike like the slogans, protest posters or union symbols. Furthermore, as I cut to this shot, I centre the attention on a young woman saying goodbye to a friend and exiting the frame. All these elements attempt to undermine the event by suggesting that in the event area there is nothing happening. Few people seem to be attending the event. The remaining participants seem to be just talking amongst themselves as friends uninvolved in any strike demonstrations. There is no sign of political unified protest, and as a result people are leaving.

	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Traffic</p> <p>Background voices</p>
<p>Shot 7.Sequence 1. Version B:</p> <p>05:22sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to an long-shot.

The composition presents a small group of young people holding a poster. The poster says: “United and self-organised we will give them the Crisis”. The poster has anarchist symbols. The foreground area is empty. A young teenager drops a sheet of paper on the floor and proceeds to pick it up.

Filmmaker's intentions:


This shot punctuates dramatically the information conveyed through shots number 5 and 6. The composition presents an empty event area so as to accentuate the lack of public participation in the event. The frame remains also almost in complete shadow. The sunlight faintly crosses the space and has little impact. Notice that the poster says “united and self-organised”. However, there is hardly anyone seen to be attending the event. The demonstrators are completely ignored. They appear a bit bored and unmotivated. In fact a young teenager, out of boredom and distraction, drops a sheet of paper which she is holding. The whole scene as a whole seems to evoke Samuel Beckett's

absurdist play “Waiting for Godot”, in which two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, wait endlessly and in vain for someone to arrive named Godot.

If I compare the omission and structure choices implemented in shots 5 to 7, Version B, with the options undertaken in Version A , that correspond to shots 5 to 8, I can identify a number of discrepancies in terms of event signification. In Version B these shots maintain continuity in terms of undermining the event. They point to the fact that there is hardly any interest or significant participation in the event. However, there is no continuity amongst them and they do not advance the narrative towards any direction. On the contrary they halt the narrative for they want to convey as a sequence that there is no interest in the event for there is nothing really happening. In fact, amongst these three shots there is not even spatial or technical continuity. Shot number 5 focusses on making us aware that the empty space foreground area is larger than the occupied one. Next, shot number 6 bares no spatial or lighting continuity with shot number 5. The shot describes a reverse space from that of shot number 5. It does not progress towards the event area. It does not geographically position the event area as we could have expected but instead the camera places itself back at the event. It denies the viewer the opportunity to witness the event and even prevents any visual reference to the strike as if it was not happening at all and people were just standing there doing something else. The camera ignores the event and instead centres our attention on a young woman exiting frame and therefore the event. Furthermore, there is no continuity in terms of lighting. In shot number 5 the participants appear to be lit by the sun. Now, in shot number 6 they appear in shadow. The same happens when I cut to shot number 7. There is no spatial reference or continuity to previous shots. The objective is again to underline that there is no public interest in the event. In Version B each shot acts out separately as a single undermining statement without suggesting any narrative progression or creating any expectations.

Conversely, in narrative Version A, shots 5 to 8, maintain not only spatial and lighting continuity but also delineate a clear narrative progression. The sequence begins with a medium-long shot presenting a large view of the space and ends

up with the close-up of a single participant smiling. Shot-by-shot the composition positions the viewer, consistently, towards the focus of attention in the event. In shot 5 and 6 the composition draws special attention to, unlike in Version B, the words General Strike. As the camera approaches the event the frame compresses the space to signify large public participation. The camera frames the participants in a way that they are all facing in the same direction reinforcing the distance from the focus of attention. Unlike in Version B, the four shot sequence in Version A act like a unit with a common purpose and respecting the continuity in terms of content and information. Version A omitted illustrating large empty spaces in the event area like in Version B so as to avoid revealing the small scale of the event and the small public participation.

	<p>They sing protest music:</p> <p>Zeca Afonso</p> <p>“They eat everything, They eat everything. They eat everything, and they leave nothing”</p> <p>We hear background voices and traffic</p>
<p>Shot 8. Sequence 1. Version B:</p> <p>27:03 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a long-shot. The composition presents a small group of people holding union flags and singing. As they sing along to the playback music they move as if they are dancing. A man leads holding a megaphone. A larger group of people stand behind the singing group. Someone sitting on the floor seems to be filming the event from a low angle perspective.

Filmmaker's intentions:

From shots 5 to 7 I have presented an apathetic and undermining description of the strike's significance. So far the content in the whole narrative has stated that there is no public interest or significant participation in the event.


In shot number 8 we finally assist to an act of unity. A small group of people sing a famous and popular protest song together. The group hold red union flags that illustrate a left-wing political positioning. The lyrics of the song reinforce this political position: "They eat everything, and they leave nothing". This is most participative moment we have witnessed in the narrative. Moreover, we have not seen the composition so full with participants. The only empty space on the left side of the frame is occupied by someone sitting and filming.

This shot lasts five times longer in length than any other previous shot. The reason is for the audience to have enough time to appreciate the content that continues to undermine the strike event. Firstly, we may notice that there are very few union flags in the scene. There are only seven flags. Secondly, most of the crowd are not holding flags neither singing. We can actually distinguish the individual voices of the women singing. In fact, we cannot only hear the individual voices but we can also hear background voices. If there was a large crowd singing as an united group we probably could only hear their singing voices and nothing else. Furthermore, if we focus our attention we could even count how many people are really singing. The fact that a person can be sitting in front of the crowd on the floor calmly filming it also implies that there is much space free available. All these elements illustrate lack of unity and mass participation and weaken the premise of this event signification. If we take into account that this is not only the longest shot in duration so far in the narrative, but also the only one that has attempted to disclose public participation and unity, it becomes apparent however, that it has failed to convey either unity or mass participation.

Narrative Version A uses four separate shots to describe the same event and not just one like in Version B. The four shots offer a much closer view of the event

omitting the empty event area revealed in Version B. As a whole the four shots act as a unit to signify unity and public participation. Shot 9 and 10 present the group singing waving their union flags in medium-shot instead of a long-shot like in Version B. Each shot presents a different perspective of the event. Shot 9 introduces the event from a similar position to that of Version B. However, the shot is much closer and so it prevents the audience from distinguishing the number of people singing and waving their flags. Shot 10 offers also a close view of the event but from an opposite perspective. The composition includes the word Strike to highlight the reason for the singing event and the actual content of the chosen lyrics. Shot 10 by offering an opposite viewpoint of the group completes our understanding of the space without actually showing it. The shot means to signify that there are people attending the event all around. Both shots compress the space to convey large public participation and togetherness. Shot 11 offers a closer view of the event by focussing the composition on two women singing holding red carnations and shot 12 closes down the singing sequence by centring the attention on a hand holding a red carnation. These two last shots, on the one hand, reinforce the spirit of union accomplished in shots 9 and 10 by illustrating individuals singing and not just a group. On the other, the red carnations, symbolised the memory of the past Carnation Revolution of 25th of april 1974. The objective of introducing this information is to associate the reasons and elements that constitute the present General Strike to the values and qualities of the past Carnation Revolution. This is a vital piece of information that was completely omitted in Version B and which confers the strike as having positive, popular, festive and unifying qualities.

From now on, the content in narratives Version A and B, in sequence 1, will deviate completely from each other. This means, that they will omit, entirely, each other's content and information.

	<p>We hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic Background voices A bus passing by
<p>Shot 9. Sequence 1. Version B:</p> <p>19:22 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a long-shot.

The frame describes a small group of people holding a protest poster that reads “corrupt” approaching the camera. The group acknowledge the camera presence, smile and walk past, exiting frame. The group and a large portion of the composition remain in shadow. After the group exits frame a sightseeing tour bus passes in front of the camera.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot has two main purposes. Firstly, it intends to break the continuity in terms of content and information with the previous sequence. Like in shots 5 to 7 this composition acts as a single visual statement that devalues the significance of the event. It presents an abrupt transition from a group singing, in the previous shot, to a small group supposedly arriving late to the event. The composition forces us to compare the small group against the vast empty background which holds no reference to the strike whatsoever. It seems as if there is no strike and so it draws our attention to lack of public participation. The camera adopts a similar position to that in shot number 6. The camera places


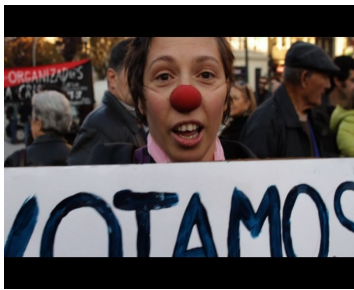


itself back to the event focussing the fact that there is hardly anyone else arriving to the strike and therefore weakening the significance of the event.

The Town Hall, a government building and symbol of the regime in power, stands out in the composition through the lighting contrast established in the frame. The Town Hall is lit by the sun while the small group arriving and large empty square remains in the shade. This confers to the Town Hall, like in shot 3, 4 and 5, a prominent presence. The Town Hall remains solemn and with no resistance from the General Strike event. One cannot help wonder why did the participants and protesters place themselves so far away from the this building that somehow represents the government they protest against.

There are people walking through out the square behind the arriving group. However, they are scattered and moving in different directions and with no real interest to participate in the strike. They have different objectives. At the same time, cars also continue to circulate normally reinforcing the idea that people drive through the strike ignoring it. This has already been established in the beginning of the sequence through the content of shots 3 and 4. Finally, at the end of the shot a sightseeing tour bus acts out as a visual wipe crossing and blocking our view of the square. This is the third time that we have witnessed a sightseeing bus in the narrative. First, a bus appears in shot number two and then in shot number four then occurring for a third time illustrates in a dramatic form of punctuation that life goes on in the city independently of the strike. It illustrates that tourists on a General Strike day can nevertheless visit the attractive locations in the city of Oporto as if nothing of great significance was happening that could prevent the sightseeing tour bus undertaking its normal route.

We have to take into account that these tour buses have been appearing, throughout the narrative, all around the isolated strike area. Moreover, the purpose of these tours are for tourists to visit places of interest in Oporto. The strike, seeing from the point of view of a tourist bus could be interpreted as another touristic attraction. This undermines completely the representation of

the event, especially if we take into account that the following shots introduce clowns amusing the strike participants: another type of touristic attraction or spectacle. This shot also means to act as a temporal transition between events. The large shaded area covering most of the central square points to the fact that time has move forward in the narrative. We can notice that the sun has moved further away from the frame. We can identify the sun changing position due to the Town Hall building that serves as a spatial reference.

 <p>Shot 10. Sequence 1. Version B</p>	 <p>Shot 10.1. Sequence 1. Version B: 14:03 sec</p>	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Traffic Background voices</p>
 <p>Shot 11. Sequence 1. Version B: 05:05 sec</p>	 <p>Shot 12. Sequence 1. Version B: 06:01 sec</p>	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Traffic Background voices Laughing</p>

Shot description:

Shots 10 to 12 correspond to a sequence introducing male and female clowns performing within the crowd of strike participants.

Shot 10 corresponds to a medium-shot.

The camera first introduces a male clown who moves away from the camera. In the background we can appreciate another man dressed also as a clown and holding up a poster. The camera follows the clown who takes out a piece of paper and shows it to a member of the public. As the camera follows the male clown we hear a female off-screen sound miming a melody. Suddenly a female clown enters frame. She looks surprised by the camera presence and holds up a poster for the camera. It reads: "We vote on the people". During the shot we can appreciate people standing all around.

Shot 11 frames a close-up of the first male clown holding a small piece of paper for the camera. It reads: "The sun shines if you look at it". As he shows this written statement to the camera the clown looks at the paper.

Shot 12 presents a second male clown sitting on the floor holding a poster. He stands up, makes a gesture and moves away from the camera. Some people assisting the clown's performance laugh out loud as the clown leaves. In the background we may notice that the previous female clown is now holding the same poster amongst the crowd.

Filmmaker's intentions:

Shots 10 to 12 act out as unit describing a new event: a group of men and women dress up as clowns perform comical acts for the strike participants. There is no continuity in terms of content and information between shot 9 and this new sequence. In shot 9 I introduce a new group arriving to the event. The group exit frame and we do not see them entering the event area. We could expect that shot 10 would illustrate the same group entering the event area. However, instead it introduces a new event as if forgetting or ignoring the arriving group of demonstrators. This points to a clear omission of information and deviation in terms of narrative content.


On the other hand, there is continuity in terms of lighting since the crowd in the event area are now in the shade while the buildings, like in shot 9, are illuminated by the sun. This maintains continuity in signifying that the narrative has moved forward in time following a logical chronological temporal order. Furthermore, by omitting the arriving group in shot 10 and cutting instead to the clown event I also reinforce the idea that time has moved forward in the narrative for I omitting the arriving group entering the strike event area. This indicates not only an omission in terms of the audiovisual description of the group arriving but also a temporal one.

Shots 10 to 12, for the first time in the narrative, and like in Version A, compress the space through composition signifying large public participation. Up to this point the composition has revealed large views of the event area to demonstrate lack of public participation. The composition from shots 1 to 9 has always privileged empty areas in the frame. Shots 10 to 12 show the clowns surrounded by participants. However, the intention of the sequence is not to signify that there is large public participation in the strike event for there is no strike event presented in the frame. Instead there are a group of clowns performing comical acts and amusing the crowd. People laugh out loud. There is no signs of public protest in the shots, not a single reference to the General Strike. They have all been purposely omitted and substituted instead by the clown's poster saying: "We vote on the people" and "The sun shines if you look at it". The omission of strike protest content seems to indicate that people are gathering together to assist to an amusing comical performance instead of the General Strike.

Instead, in Version A, a medium-close-up in shot 13 compresses the space describing a large unionist group, waving their red flags, and shouting out loud several times all at once: "Socrates listen! Workers are fighting!". The sound even distorts to highlight the emotional public appeal and to emphasise that there is a large crowd participating in the event in unity. The crowd in the name of the working class are protesting against their prime minister. Next, in shot 14 a unionist via microphone addresses the crowd celebrating the General Strike.

The crowd off-screen corresponds and re-affirms the unionist claims. This event was completely omitted in narrative Version B and substituted by the clown sequence in order to undermine the significance of the strike event. On the other hand, narrative Version A also omitted completely the clown scene so as to avoid discrediting the event.

Both narrative Versions, A and B, use the following shot to serve as transition between sequence 1 and 2. However, there is a slight difference in terms of information omission that has altered the shot signification.

	<p>We hear:</p> <p>Background voices</p> <p>Traffic</p> <p>we can distinguish individual conversations</p> <p>Woman:</p> <p>Look at that son of a bitch!</p>
<p>Shot 13. Sequence 1. Version B:</p> <p>07:03 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

A group of four people appear in the foreground talking. In the background we can see a sightseeing tour bus arriving and stopping. There are also other groups in the background talking. On the left-hand side of the frame a group of people face left as if listening to someone's speech. Perhaps, they are listening to someone speaking through a megaphone that we can also hear faintly mixed with the voices of the crowd talking and the sound of traffic. Some of the members of the foreground group look left directing our attention to the left side

off-screen. As they look the woman in the foreground says: “Look at that son of a bitch!”.

Filmmaker's intentions:


This shot, as stated, acts out as a means of transition between sequences one and two. Moreover, it illustrates a new event area which we have not witnessed yet. By doing so, the shot also introduces a new type of event: people talking amongst themselves. This is in fact the first shot where the composition focusses the attention on a specific group of people talking amongst themselves. This intends to introduce the next sequence where individuals will address the general public and manifest their concerns.

The purposes referred above serve both narrative Versions A and B. However, In Version B the sightseeing tour-guide bus acquires a different meaning since the composition has consecutively privileged the presence of this kind of bus in several shots through out the narrative. Appearing again now at this point of the narrative it reinforces the meaning already established and referred in shot 9.

Furthermore, on this shot we have access to a new type of information that was omitted in Version A. The woman in the foreground indicates with her finger as she points out to the group with reference to the off-screen speaker: “Look at that son of a bitch!”. Her statement modifies completely the signification of the shot. Before the character spoke, like in Version A, the shot served as transition between sequences 1 and 2. Now, her statement negatively conditions the viewer's expectations about the off-screen character soon to be revealed in the next shot. In Version A this information was omitted so as to avoid contaminating the viewer's understanding of character A.7.3 “Strike” Research analysis narrative Version B versus Version A.

7.3 Strike. Research analysis narrative Version B versus Version A.

Sequence 2. Characters

	<p>Character A says:</p> <p>There is no money, there is no money? Why is there no money? At the end where did the money go?</p> <p>When Salazar went away he left behind a safe full of diamonds and gold. This was the country's assurance. Now, we rely on Ronaldo's.</p> <p>BES (Bank of Saint Spirit) warranty is Ronaldo, isn't it? So what do we do? We steal Ronaldo and send it to Afghanistan so that he plays football in front of Bin Laden. Then, BES goes bankrupt for their warranty is fucked!</p> <p>Because, when I go to BES and bring a diamond. He once told me: "I do not work with that." So what bank are you? What?</p>
<p>Shot 14. Character A. Sequence 2. Version B: 50:20 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

The composition places the speaker centre of frame in the foreground. There are also people in the background surrounding the speaker. A middle-aged man stands right of frame paying attention. Another young man stands on the left side of the frame. There is also a woman behind the speaker listening with

attention. We may notice a young couple also standing behind the speaker. We saw this young couple arriving in shot 9, sequence 1, just before the clown sequence. During the speaker's discourse the young man standing left of frame, and his friend, exit the event.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot corresponds to shot 18 in Version A. However, in Version A the speech content ends with a question: "At the end where did the money go?". This shot in Version A lasts only 7 seconds. On Version B the shot includes much more information and lasts 50 seconds. Therefore, a great deal of content was omitted in Version A and now it is disclosed in Version B.

Like in Version A the composition presents details about the speaker. He wears a baseball cap, a beard, several rings and his nails are painted black. These details, together with the content of his speech, define the character as a marginal voice.

We can also appreciate a varied group of people standing behind him: a middle-aged man, a young man, a woman and a young couple. This group represents different generations and gender and they seem to be attending the event with interest. Only the young man on the left side of frame exits after listening to the speaker's speech.

The great difference between Version A and B lies on the difference in terms of speech content. In Version A I use 7 shots to represent character A's speech. These shots omit information and re-order the speech content so as to signify a coherent argument within the context of the General Strike. In Version A character A, as stated, served the purpose of introducing general issues of public concern that illustrate the justification for the General Strike. These issues meant to represent the concerns of the group of participants.

In Version A shot 18 I interrupted the speaker's discourse after the question "At the end where did the money go?" Next, I cut to shot 19 where the character

further develop his argument by insisting with his questioning: "Owes to whom? Say it! To whom? I want to know. What country? Germany, France, to whom?" He obtained an answer from a public member: "to China. Now is to China, man" and he developed his argument with base on that declaration and referring to information gained through television: "China now bought that thing. Do you know what it means? That your government does not exist. That your government sold you out like slaves to the Chinese. In China they work like cattle with no rights". He concludes his argument by making two statements directed to public members: "You do not have free will! You have stolen lives, stolen youth!". These statements appear off-screen as the narrative presents two close-up-shots of participants apparently listening and thinking about the content of the character's speech. Thus, in this sequence, I have re-organised and omitted the content of the speaker's declarations in order to signify a coherent discourse.

In Version B the speech after the phrase, "At the end where did the money go?", continues. By doing so the character's discourse takes a complete different direction, in terms of meaning, from that presented in Version A. Part of his argument, like in Version A shot 19 when speaking of China, is also based on information obtained through mass media:

"When Salazar went away he left behind a safe full of diamonds and gold. This was the country's assurance. Now, we rely on Ronaldo's.

BES (Bank of Saint Spirit) warranty is Ronaldo, isn't it? So what do we do? We steal Ronaldo and send it to Afghanistan so that he plays football in front of Bin Laden. Then, BES goes bankrupt for their warranty is fucked!

Because, when I go to BES and bring a diamond. He once told me: "I do not work with that." So what bank are you? What?"

On this argument the character does not answer his own question. Instead he seems to change subject content. In a few words he outlines Salazar's past financial system and compares it with the present democratic one by arguing that now the financial system relies on public figures, like the worldwide famous

Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo. Then, he states that Ronaldo has become the warranty of an important Portuguese bank named BES (Bank of Saint Spirit). The fact is that the BES has hired Cristiano Ronaldo to produce a large publicity campaign. Just like the Millennium, another Portuguese bank, did with José Mourinho, the worldwide famous Portuguese football coach. Therefore, the speaker uses this information from the mass media to develop his arguments. However, unlike in Version A, his claims do not seem coherent with present General Strike objectives.

The speaker refers to BES because there has been a great deal of media discussion regarding the bank's debts and performance pointing to the fact that banks may be part of the problem and a key element in causing the present economic crisis.

After having introduced Portugal's financial crisis character A proposes the following solution: "So what do we do? We steal Ronaldo and send him to Afghanistan so that he plays football in front of Bin Laden. Then, BES goes bankrupt for their warranty is fucked!".

He proposes to steal the bank's warranty identified in this case as Cristiano Ronaldo. Moreover, he wants to force Ronaldo to play football for Osama Bin Laden: the founder of al-Qaeda, the terrorist organisation responsible for the September 11 attacks on the United States and numerous other terrorist attacks against civilian and military targets. He was recently executed by United States special forces in Pakistan and his death has been celebrated in many countries worldwide.

Character A's solution can be interpreted as highly controversial, offensive and particularly absurd. Is the BES going to be bankrupt if we force Ronaldo to play football in front of Bin Laden or if we managed to prevent Ronaldo from satisfying his publicity campaign contract? Is this solution going to help with the present economical crisis? Do the speaker's declarations represent the participants interests and concerns and do they meet General Strike objectives? The answer is 'no'. The proposal serves no purpose regarding the economic

crisis of the General Strike's objectives and concerns.

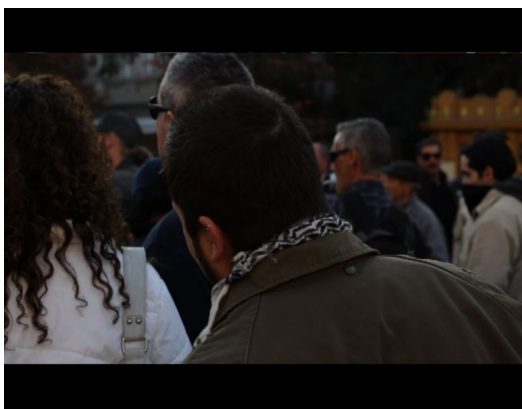
Through allowing this information to filter into the narrative not only discredits the character's arguments but also the General Strike as an event. Beforehand, the woman in shot 13 called him "a son of a bitch". Her declaration announced clearly part of the participants position with regard to the character's arguments. It is a violent and offensive statement that on the one hand, served to introduce sequence 2 with negative qualities. On the other, it also negatively portrays the participants. The objective is to maintain continuity with undermining the significance of the event.

As character A proposes stealing Ronaldo, the young man on the right-hand side of the frame and his friend abandon the event. At the same time, we can hear someone off-screen clapping approving the proposal. Moreover, the young man is the only one to leave from the event. The rest of the surrounding group representing different generations and gender stays and listens to the rest of the character's arguments: "Because, when I go to BES and bring a diamond. He once told me: "I do not work with that." So what bank are you? What?"

His following argument judging the credibility of the bank is consistently absurd with previous arguments contributing to the discredit of the character and the event itself. The reason for the narrative to allow this last statement is so that the viewer reflects upon the people standing around the speaker listening and so still attending the event after his inconsistent declarations. This intends to confirm that the participants are interested in the character's absurd declarations and propositions. In fact, we have already heard some clapping in support of his claims. This intends to convey that participants are not interested in coherent political claims but in absurd ones instead. The objective is to discredit the general public attending the event so as to discredit the significance of the General Strike event.

I could have omitted the speech content earlier when the young man left the event. This would have changed the significance of the event with regard to the participants for it would have focussed the attention on the public leaving and

not on the participants staying. Therefore, by ending the shot content in the moment the young man left I would have signified that the public were not interested in the absurd comments of the character. However, as the narrative continued to expose another absurd statement, the participants stayed and therefore, the significance of the event and participants was severely undermined.

	<p>Character A says: off-screen 1974, 25th of April</p>
<p>Shot 15. Cut-away D. Sequence 2. Version B: 02:07 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up.

In the foreground we can see the back of a young man turning his head left as if attempting to see something or someone. In the background we can see a large number of people facing in the same direction. The frame is almost completely full with people. We can hear off-screen the voice of character A saying “1974 25th of April”.

Filmmakers intentions:

This shot has three main purposes. First, it serves as a temporal and spatial transition between shots 14 and 16. The intention is to join both shots in a fluid manner. The reason is that shot 14 and 16 are different in shot size and to cut them together it would draw attention to the actual cut distracting the audience from the discourse. Therefore, the first intention is to join both shots' content without noticing the technical difference between them. Secondly, the objective is to join the speech content in both shots as if they belonged together and therefore as if there was no interruption during character A's discourse. In fact, as I cut to this shot, we can hear off-screen character A saying "1974 25th of April". This phrase serves to introduce the following discourse as if it was the continuation of the previous one.

Thirdly, the shot presents a young man seeking for a better viewing angle. Moreover, most people in the frame are all facing the same direction and the composition appears to be full with people. The objective is to reinforce the idea that there is large public participation and that a large number of people are attending and listening to character A's arguments. The composition incorporates spatial continuity since we may notice that the same couple that appear first in shot 9 arriving, and then in shot 14 standing behind character A, is now standing back to the camera facing towards the event. In fact, if we look close enough we can see part of character A's back head speaking in the background. However, it is very difficult to identify all this information since the shot lasts only just over two seconds. This for most audiences may be insufficient for identifying this visual information.

It is important to underline that during most of the narrative the composition has brought to the fore larger views of the area so as to signify little public participation in the strike. Since introducing the clown scene the narrative has introduced closer views of the event area signifying larger public participation similar to that represented in Version A. However, the intention is opposite to that of Version A. The objective is to imply that event participants are interested

on inconsistent and incoherent event content in terms of General Strike objectives. This was first signified through the crowd being amused by the clown performance instead of attending General Strike political events. Now, it is signified through showing people listening to absurd speech content. The purpose is to maintain continuity with the pre-established intention of discrediting the event as a whole.

Furthermore, this shot was also used in Version A. It corresponds to shot 28. However, it had a different purpose from Version B. In Version A the shot served as spatial and temporal transition between previous speaker D and the following speaker E. The shot in Version A also presents different content. We do not hear character A's speech like in Version B. Instead we hear character E's saying: "The people united will never be defeated". In shot 29 I introduced character E appealing to unity as we hear the public off-screen corresponding by repeating the same phrase. This not only suggested large public participation but especially rapport amongst the participants and a coherent positive representation of the event. However, this shot content belongs to Version's B spatial and event context and not to Version A. Therefore, Version A "misplaced" this shot and by associating it to another event it attributed to the shot content a different signification.

Therefore, omitting information, re-ordering the dialogue of a character or placing the content of images in a particular order, may alter the comprehension of the event dramatically. As a result it may confer different qualities and signification to the representation of the event in accordance to the filmmaker's narrative intentions.



Shot 16.Character A.Sequence

2.Version B: 44:14 sec

Character A says:

April 25th: you had a Carnation Revolution. I loved knowing that, you know why?

Because, here in this country, you can make a revolution without firing a shot. You just need to stick any flower in the gun barrel and that's it

So let's do what has to be done.

You know what?:

a Cannabis revolution. Eh!

Medicinal plant! That is going to work!

For cannabis, cannabis does not make psychological or physical addiction.

No. What it is addictive is tobacco.

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up-shot.

The frame focusses most of the attention on the speaker. We can still just about see some of the participants that appeared in shot 14 in the background.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot intends to focus most of the attention on the speaker. The composition maintains some continuity in terms of background information through indicating that some of the same people that appeared in shot 14 are still listening to the speaker. However, the main purpose is for the viewer to focus on the speaker and not the surrounding area. This is why the frame eradicates background

information. The objective is to strengthen the relationship between speaker and spectator. In shot 14 the audience could observe how people were listening to the absurd and incoherent character A's declarations. Through the composition I confirmed that he was addressing the surrounding group of people. Now, through omitting the background the speaker seems to be addressing the audience directly and not the event participants. The objective is to motivate the audience to make a stand against the character's declarations for now they are not just observers but also participants. Notice that his speech does not relate directly to his previous arguments. In fact, his new choice of subject is particularly sensitive for a Portuguese audience, especially after having witnessed the speaker's absurd arguments:

“1974, April 25th: you had a Carnation Revolution. I loved knowing that, you know why? Because, here in this country, you can make a revolution without firing a shot. You just need to stick any flower in the gun barrel and that's it”.

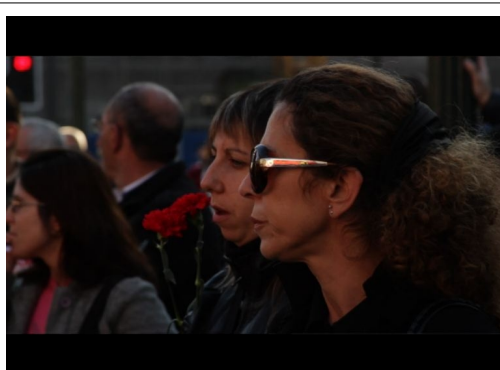
Character A begins his discourse by praising the Carnation Revolution for its peaceful qualities. However, soon after he discredits his statement again by disclosing an another absurd suggestion which has no place within the General Strike political context:

“So let's do what has to be done. You know what?: a Cannabis revolution. Eh! Medicinal plant! That is going to work! For cannabis, cannabis does not make psychological or physical addiction. No. What is addictive is tobacco.”

Given the present serious economical crisis in Portugal proposing a “cannabis revolution” due to the fact that cannabis is not addictive undermines not only the character's arguments and the participants who attend his speech but also the General Strike event as a whole. In Version A this shot content corresponds to shot 22. Due to choices of order, omission and organisation of the information the shot served different purposes from Version B. First it is important to remember that in Version A the character only was allowed to say: “1974, April 25th: you had a Carnation Revolution. I loved knowing that, you know why? Because, here in this country, you can make a revolution without firing a shot.

You just need to stick any flower in the gun barrel and that's it". The rest of the information disclosed in Version B was completely omitted.

The omission of content in Version A had two objectives. First, to confer some sympathy to the character since he was demonstrating that he had some knowledge of Portuguese political history. In fact, most Portuguese are proud of the Carnation Revolution. Second, in sequence 1 Version A, we watched a large group of people holding red carnations singing Zeca Afonso's popular protest song in unison. This scene attempted to symbolise and associate the spirit of the present General Strike to the positive qualities of the past Carnation Revolution. Therefore, to a certain extent, the omission in Version A intended also to associate the character and his speech to those positive qualities established in sequence 1. It is important to notice that character A's previous arguments in Version A were re-organised through omission and order in order to present a more coherent speech content in accordance to the General Strike objectives. This means that in Version A the spectator had not heard him making absurd comments like in Version B. Therefore, when the viewer watched his positive statement about the Carnation revolution the content may confer some sympathy to the character. In particular, if we take into account that the rest of the speech disclosed in Version B was completely omitted in Version A .



Shot 17. Cut-away E. Sequence 2.

Version B: 01:17 sec

Character E says: off-screen

These people knew

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-close-up-shot

The frame shows two women in the foreground. One of the women holds some red carnation flowers. The other woman wears sunglasses and nods as we hear the voice of a man off-screen saying "These people knew". Other people stand in the background.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This shot fulfils several objectives. First, it serves as a temporal and spatial transition between shot 16 and the following shot 18, and therefore between the speech of character A and character E. The composition compresses the space producing the sensation of public participation. As we hear off-screen "These people knew" the woman wearing sunglasses nods affirmatively confirming the off-screen speaker's claim and reinforcing the idea of public engagement with the discourse.

The shot by introducing the beginning of character E's discourse off-screen also serves as a means to introduce character E that will appear in the following shot. Moreover, hearing the speech off-screen indicates that people in the frame are listening to this speaker.

Conversely, the content of this image was also used in Version A under different circumstances. The shot appeared in sequence 1 and not two like in Version B. In Version A the women in the foreground appeared to be singing Zeca Afonso's protest song. The purpose in Version A was, on the one hand, to strengthen the feeling of people singing together and, on the other hand, to associate the General Strike to the spirit of the Carnation Revolution which appeared symbolised by the red carnations. Thus, the principal objective was to associate the reasons and elements of the present General Strike to the values, qualities and spirit of the past Carnation Revolution of 25th of April 1974. That information was omitted in Version B. Instead the frame focuses our attention on the woman

nodding as we hear the off-screen discourse. She does not sing. This implies that she is listening to Character E's speech. Therefore, in Version B she is not singing but listening to a discourse. I changed the signification of the image content through omission and order by associating its content to a different context. It is also necessary to underline the this shot content belongs to the spatial context of people singing in Version A, sequence 1, and not to the context established in Version B. Therefore, like beforehand with shot 15, this image content was also “misplaced” in Version B to fulfil another purpose in a different moment in the narrative.



Shot 18. Character E. Sequence 2.

Version B: 01:03:00 min

Character E says:

knew that the country was in bankruptcy.

And we need to decentralise from these killers. And there's a novelty. These people are into trafficking babies between governments: The General Consul in Barcelona. The Minister of Minister of foreign affairs. Trafficking Portuguese babies! Those who have mobile phones can see it right now. Trafficking Portuguese babies. We are in the hands of a vermin group who have the name of parliament and who engage in black magic rituals with children for God's sake. We must wake up!

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-long-shot.

The composition presents character E addressing the public through a megaphone. The speaker moves from left to right as he makes his arguments directing his speech to all the surrounding public. He seems emotionally convinced about his claims. The camera follows the speaker revealing some of the surrounding space.

There is a group of people standing behind the character. Some photographers take photographs of people dressed up as clowns holding a poster which reads: "Entire party of liberation". In the far background we may notice a red and black anarchist flag. Other people stand by listening to the speaker.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The objective of this content, like in the case of character A, is to discredit both the character and the event. From this perspective it aims at maintaining continuity with the general intention of constructing a narrative that undermines the significance of the General Strike through the inconsistency of the character's statements.

However, the choices implemented to present character E are different from those applied to character A. This intends to impart new information about the event and to develop further the narrative in undermining the event. With character A I basically signified that a large crowd was listening to his absurd comments and propositions. This discredited the seriousness of the event.


In the case of character E I apply a set of different choices which are partly opposite to those implemented in character A's. The intention remains the same but the means are different. Both the beginning of character E's discourse and the spatial association established between shot 17 and 18 point to an intentional omission of information. Firstly, there is no continuity between shot 17 and 18. The women with red carnations do not appear in shot 18. Moreover,

shot 17 signified, through compressing the space, that there was a large crowd attending the event. However, the composition in shot 18 reveals the opposite. There are not many people in the event area. People stand comfortably scattered behind the speaker. Most of the people attending seem to be photographers interested in photographing the clowns. The camera reveals as it follows the speaker that there are not people standing in front of the character in the foreground. We just notice some people standing on the both sides of the frame who appear to be listening to his arguments. The objective is precisely to draw the viewer's attention to this incongruity. We see a woman nodding confirming the declaration off-screen and people in the background. Then, we cut to a shot that demonstrates little public participation. The contrast from cutting from one space to the other, particularly due to lack of spatial continuity, intends to highlight the lack of large public participation and the incoherence of the character's claims.

The first line of his discourse that links shots 17 and 18 seems to be coherent and in accordance with General Strike issues: "They knew the country was in bankruptcy". However soon after the speaker changes tone and content and embarks in manifesting a series of absurd accusations and declarations which undermine him as a speaker and the event as a whole. So far we have not witnessed in the narrative any coherent events or discourses that may satisfy expectations about the General Strike. The fact that people are more interested in photographing the clowns intensifies the process of undermining the character for the clowns are the centre of attention and not the speaker who seems to be addressing almost no-one as far as the camera reveals. Furthermore, at the end of sequence 1, we observed how the clowns amused the public with their comical acts. However, now, the clowns are the spectators and not the performers. The performer is character E himself. For this reason we may associate character E's emotionally convicted discourse to another type comical act.

In Version A I omitted all this information. Instead character E appears appealing to public unity. The off-screen public supported his claims by repeating back to

him. There is harmony between the participants and the speaker. His speech seemed somehow consistent with the strike objectives by criticising the government, the constitution and even Nato. He also did not appear alone like in Version B. Behind him stood a group of anarchists supporting the speaker with their posters and anarchist flags, and so reinforcing his claims. All this information was also omitted in Version B. The omission applied on either narrative version resulted on producing a different signification of the event and the speaker.

	<p>Character D says: off-screen</p> <p>They used the same tactic as in the United States.</p>
<p>Shot 19. Cut-away A. Sequence 2. Version B: 03:24 sec</p>	

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a close-up-shot.

The composition presents the profile of of a man in his mid-forties. He smiles as he looks forward. In the background we see tree leaves illuminated with a yellow and orange tonality. During the shot we can hear off-screen: “They used the same tactic as the United States”

Filmmaker's intentions:

Like previously in shot 17 the content of this image acts as a temporal and spatial transition. The shot serves to separate character D and E's discourse. At the same time, the shot introduces the speech of character D that will continue in the following shot: "They used the same tactic as in the United States"

The warm tonality in the background image and the smile on the character's face could signify positive qualities in terms of public participation and event representation, especially since as we view the shot content we hear the character's claim off-screen. However, after the undermining information that has been disclosed through out the narrative the content of this image could also have an opposite interpretation. We could interpret that the character as laughing at the speaker. Its content precisely intends to be ambiguous and open ended. Some members of the audience after listening to character E may interpret the content as ironic. Others may still expect or hope for the following discourse to be coherent. This shot was also used in Version A in a different context in sequence 1. It corresponds to shot number 8. The shot in Version A presented different sound information. Instead of listening character D's off-screen discourse we heard Zeca Afonso's protest music. The warm tonality and the smile of the character served to introduced Zeca Afonso's singing scene with positive unifying qualities. The individual expression of the character signified the group emotion towards the event in general, and specifically towards the song and its content.



Shot 20. Character D. Sequence 2.

Version B: 36:00 sec

Character D says:

...against the Black Panthers. They filled up housing estates with drugs.

Drugs and more drugs. And it was not light drugs. It was heroin because we know of that.

It was police and the state that introduce the drugs to sedate the movements of residents. Movements that were active and organised.

They introduced the drugs, apart from what came from the colonies like marijuana. Besides that, the police and the state began to introduce heroine in the housing estates. Most of these testimonies died.

Shot description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.


The composition presents character D speaking through a megaphone. A man with a photographic camera films him. In the background there are a few people scattered in the space. Right hand side of the frame we can notice part of an anarchist flag. We have seen this flag beforehand in shot 7 sequence 1. There are still a few sun rays in the background buildings. However, most of the buildings surface remain in the shade.


Filmmaker's intentions:

Character D, through referring to the Black Panther Party for Self-Defence in the United States (an African-American revolutionary leftist organisation active from 1966 until 1982) accuses the government and the police of introducing heroin in the housing states to sedate the associations and other organised social movements. His discourse may not seem as absurd as character A and E's. However, we are reluctant to accept it as the truth, especially after having witnessed the previous speaker's absurd accusations, propositions and declarations.

Furthermore, the composition presents a comical situation that discredits the speaker since not only are there few people attending the event but also they do not seem to be paying much attention to the speech. During the first part of the scene the character seems to be addressing the photographic camera. Nobody else seems to be paying much attention to him. Instead the few people standing behind him talk amongst themselves. Once the camera man exits frame he seems to be left alone talking to himself. Some flags behind him fall down to the floor and serve as a comical punctuation to end the shot. Finally, this shot also maintains continuity in term of time representation. The fact that the background buildings are almost completely in the shade indicates that time has moved forward in the narrative. This intends to convey that the narrative is presenting the event in chronological order as it happened.

In Version A the narrative omits the content of this shot. Instead the character introduces a coherent protest where he identifies the reasons for the present crisis: a question of unfair distribution of wealth. He also presents a solution which consisted of transferring the political power to the common people like had happened during the Carnation Revolution. By claiming so, he reaffirmed the reference to the memory of the past Carnation Revolution introduced during sequence 1 and developed through out the narrative presented Version A. This content was also intentionally omitted in Version B to discredit the character and the strike event.

	<p>We can hear: off-screen</p> <p>Portugal in this world</p>
<p>Shot 21. Cut-away B. Sequence 2.</p> <p>Version B: 03:07 sec</p>	

	<p>We can hear: off-screen</p> <p>Singing</p>
<p>Shot 22. Cut-away C. Sequence 2.</p> <p>Version B: 02:22 sec</p>	

Shot description:

Shot 21 corresponds to a close-up-shot.

The composition illustrates the faces of two women from different generations. They could be mother and daughter. Both women wear glasses and hold their hands to their faces in a pose that indicates that they might be thinking about what the speaker just said. During the shot we hear off-screen the voice of a man saying: “Portugal in this world”.

Shot 22 corresponds to a medium-close-shot.

The frame shows a group of women gathering together. The group also represents different generations. One of the older women holds a protest poster in the background. During the shot we can hear singing off-screen.

Filmmaker's intentions:

Shot 21 concludes sequence 2 with a pose that is ambiguous and open ended like in shot 19. Both generations seem to be thinking. Perhaps the shot signifies that they are thinking about what speaker D just stated. Conversely, their pose could also be interpreted as a general reflection on the narrative so far particularly if we take into account the non-identified voice declaring off-screen "Portugal in this world". What is it suppose to mean that phrase after the information that the narrative has disclosed up to this point and in relation to this shot content? The objective is to create a moment of ambiguity with regard to the event and its representation.

Shots 22 serves as a temporal and spatial transition to introduce the following narrative conclusion. During the shot we can notice different generations. We can also hear someone singing. The main intention is to separate sequence 2 from the final conclusive sequence. At the same time as we appreciate the shot content we can hear singing off-screen. In the following shot we will assist to a new event where character D sings a song. By hearing off-screen singing we are indicating that these women are attending the following event.

Conversely, shot 21 and 22 were also used in Version A in a different context and so with a different purpose. They correspond to shot 20 and 21 respectively. They were used to support and reinforce character A's claims in shot 19. They served as an illustration to the character's statements. During shot 20 in Version A we can hear character A claiming off-screen: "You do not have free will! The facial expression of these two women punctuate these claims in a dramatic way strengthening character A's arguments and reinforcing the representation of

public participation. In shot 21 we also hear character A stating: “You have stolen lives, stolen youth”. In the shot content we can in fact see the young women. Associating the off-screen declaration with the visual content of the shot reinforces public participation and again emphasises the character’s statement.

As we can appreciate both shots were used in different narrative versions with different signifying intentions. Their purpose varied according to the context in which they were inserted in the narrative and in accordance to the off-screen sound information that was attached to its visual counterpart.

If I compare sequence 2 in Versions A and B I can establish two great differences in terms of omission and structure that conditioned the event representation and its subsequent signification. Firstly, as already referred, I can identify very important differences in terms of speech omission in character A, D and E. Due to the omission implemented the character's speech content appears either coherent or absurd.

Second, in Version B, I can also identify omission in terms of slogans or any other objects, such as poster, that may indicate acts of strike, demonstration or protest. In fact, unlike in Version A, in Version B I omitted most references to strike events so as to signify that there was nothing significant happening in the General Strike event area. Third, in Version B I completely omitted female speakers B and C for being inappropriate for discrediting the event. This total omission of character and speech content points also to a disequilibrium in terms of gender representation since all the speakers were male. This also undermined the representation of the event.

Another very important issue is structure. In Version B, throughout the whole narrative, I have been presenting events with no integrated structure. Events appear separated from each other as separate block of information. There is no continuity in terms of event information. There is no connection between Zeca Afonso's singing scene and the following clown scene. This lack of content structure in Version B becomes even more apparent in sequence 2 for the

characters' speech bears no relation to one another apart from being incoherent and absurd. Each character refers to different subjects and they appear completed unconnected from each other as single independent undermining events. Thus, the narrative structure purposely organised the information in an order that presented an incoherent representation of the General Strike. Not just in terms of omitting and disclosing information but also through the structure implemented to present the remaining event information.

In Version A, however, it is the complete opposite. The whole narrative appears structured linking contents from different images and sounds to represent the General Strike as a coherent and participative event. In sequence 2 all the speech content is related to each another. Character B represents a different perspective from character A. Character C develops further part of the arguments presented by character A and B. The same applies to character D and E that complement each other. Thus the narrative structure in Version A integrates the available event information to present a coherent representation of the General Strike.

7.4 “Strike”. Research analysis narrative Version B versus Version A.

Sequence 3. Conclusion

Introduction

This last sequence means to conclude the narrative reinforcing the little public and political participation, the lack of unity and the incoherent individual political claims. The whole sequence last six minutes and two seconds. This is the equivalent, in terms of volume of information, of sequence 1 and two together.

The conclusion constituted two shots. The first shot lasts four minutes and forty nine seconds. The second shot lasts one minute and thirteen seconds. The first one represents the lengthiest shot in both narrative Versions A and B. I have not omitted the material so as to show the entire raw information. You could edit this material in a number of different ways which could modify the representation of the event and therefore its signification. However, this shot remains unaltered so that the characters and content appear to act freely in front of the camera. The objective is to summarise the differences of information that may converge in the same space, and that normally, in narrative construction, are objects of omission, selection and structure. The action takes place in front of a camera that observes without participating even though it becomes an integral part of the action.

The action takes places in three different planes:

Foreground composition

Background composition

Off-screen

Due to the fact, that this material has not been divided in smaller units of information with specific focus of attention, it forces the public to undertake their own personal process of omission and selection. Thus, the spectator must choose as the action develops, where they want to place their focus of attention

since it is not possible to focus on different planes at the same time. This is even more apparent if we take into account that the narrative keeps moving forward and does not wait or stop for narrative comprehension. This is similar to what the filmmaker experiences when filming this type of events following observational documentary codes and conventions. During the event the filmmaker must choose what to film and how to do it as the event occurs for they are filming events that they only happen once in front of the camera. These events do not wait for the camera operator or for the filmmaker to make their filming decisions. Due to this shot length and the complexity of its content this shot has been subdivided into several sub-clips so as to undertake analysis research.

SHOT SEQUENCE 23:



**Shot Sequence 23.1. Sequence 3.
Version B**

Character D sings:

To the Strike you go! To the strike
yeah. and one for all and all for
me. To the strike comrades

Character A says:

Would you like me to make a song?
Would you like me to make a song?

Character A continues :

I am going to tell you one thing you
that Fernando Pessoa said: God
wants. Man dreams and the work is
born.

Also the man also said ... know what?:
Is there something more truthful than
overcoming the force?

Character D sings:

Hey! Who pays you? Who pays you to
be here to annoy the people?
Somebody pays you? Somebody pays
you? Want to talk?

Character A says:

I work voluntarily

Sub-clip 23.1 description:

This shot corresponds to a medium-shot.

In the foreground we can identify character A addressing the public. In the background character D sings a song that celebrates the act of unity of going to a protest. He is supported by two women who are playing the drums. A young

man appears playing the guitar on the left hand side of the frame. Other people stand behind, listening. Behind character D we can appreciate a red and black anarchist flag-poster. The flag's slogan reads: "United and self-organised we will give them the Crisis". The slogan appeals to public unity and refers to the actual economical crisis. Due to the fact that character A is speaking as character D is singing it becomes difficult to understand what they are saying.

Character D approaches character A with the megaphone as he sings. He attempts to stop character A from speaking through singing via megaphone. He manages to do so briefly. A middle aged man smiles as he observes the scene. Soon after character A addresses the public again through referring the great poet and writer Fernando Pessoa. Character D, visibly upset, approaches again character A. He stops singing and confronts character A verbally. Finally, character D allows character A to speak through the megaphone. Two women cross the frame. One of them was identified in Version A as character B. She was omitted in sequence 2 Version B.

Filmmaker's intentions:

On this initial part of the sequence we may notice that all visual elements remain now in the shade. We could also realise that in the background buildings there are some lights on. The objective is to suggest that time has moved forward in the narrative. This intends to announce the end of the event and the conclusion of the narrative.

In the first instance, the composition presents two separate planes of conflicting action. Character A speaks in the foreground as character D sings in the background. Our focus of attention may easily shift from one to the other and consequently both sounds superimpose each other. This produces confusion and prevents full comprehension of the event content. Finally, character D, through using the megaphone, manages to gain advantage in achieving public attention. We appreciate a left-wing song which celebrates the strike and appeals to solidarity and public unity in defence of working class rights: "To the

Strike you go! To the strike yeah. and one for all and all for me. To the strike comrades”. Soon after character A re-establishes the competition for public attention by addressing the public through referring Fernando Pessoa. Character D responds by confronting Character A's claims. The repeated conflict between the characters for public attention transforms itself into a comical act which may remind us of the past clown scene.

We may also notice that there is no clear presence of public participation in the event. Nobody is singing along with character D and the composition does not confirm large groups attending the event whether in frame or off-frame. Furthermore, this is the second time we have seen a full view of the anarchist flag. The first time we saw it was in sequence 1, shot 7. During shot 7 the demonstrators holding the flag seemed bored and unmotivated for there was no one attending the event. They were being ignored by the public. Therefore, the only time we saw it before it was associated to an event with no participation that signified that nothing was happening at the strike. Now, we see it associated to a conflict between two characters that undermines the seriousness of the event, especially if we take into account their past absurd arguments and declarations in sequence 2. In fact, during narrative Version B I have intentionally avoided illustrating references of protests via written slogans. Even the words “General Strike” announcing the event appeared diminished against large views of empty event areas that indicated lack of public participation and therefore it undermined the public significance of the event.

This first section ends with character D confronting character A through the megaphone by questioning: “Who pays you? Who pays you to be here to annoy the people? Somebody pays you? Somebody pays you?” The fact that he uses the megaphone to confront him means that he wants everyone to hear him. According to his words he must consider character A's comments inadequate for the event. However, character D contradicts himself by offering character A the megaphone to speak: “Want to talk?” This contradiction further develop the comic qualities of the event that diminish the political context of the General Strike by transforming it into a spectacle.



Shot Sequence 23.2. Sequence 3.

Version B

Character B says:

Come here to say you're hungry! Go there to say it. Say you're hungry! Don't give her money. She must ask. She must say she's hungry. Then, I also will give her some money. She has to say. Ask. Say you're hungry.

Hungry Woman says:

Oh Sir. I'm hungry!

Character B says:

Say it.

Off-screen:

Do not say that in Portugal there is no hunger

Character B says:

Say you're hungry.

Hungry Woman says:

Sir, I'm hungry!

Off-screen: Damn!

Hungry Woman says:

Sir. I'm hungry!

Off-screen:

Tell the Minister that you are hungry

Hungry Woman says:

Sir. I'm hungry

Hungry Woman says:

I am here asking because I am hungry.
"Give me the three Euros! Give me the



CONTINUES:

Shot Sequence 23.2. Sequence 3.

Version B

three Euros!

Character B says:

I will.

Character A says:

I'm talking!

Hungry Woman says:

Give me the three Euros!

Character B says:

I will. You must ask! You have to say that you're hungry!

Hungry Woman says:

Give me the three euros!

Character B says:

I will give you. You must ask! You must say you're hungry!

Hungry Woman says:

Give me the three euros!

Character B says:

I will. But you must ask!

Sub-clip 23.2 description:

The composition alternates shot size between medium-shot and medium-close-up shot. During this section two women enter frame. I refer to them as character B and Hungry woman. They place themselves in the foreground in front of the camera. They become the centre of attention while character A and D remain in second plane of action in the background.

During the action both characters go in and out of frame. Sometimes they

remain partially in and out of frame at the same time. The Hungry woman asks for money to character B and other people situated off-screen. Character B agrees to give her money in exchange for the following requirement: she must publicly declare that she is hungry.

Character B, first, leads the Hungry woman so that she speaks through the megaphone. She realises that it is occupied by character A and so she turns to the camera and asks the Hungry woman to declare that she is hungry to our camera. The Hungry woman ignores her and asks for money to someone off-screen. Character B convinces the off-screen character not to give money to the Hungry woman unless she fulfils her requirement.

Character B insists, with an imperative tone, that the Hungry woman declares to the camera that she is hungry. The Hungry woman fulfils her task. Character B and other off-screen characters ask her to do it again. Instead, the Hungry woman asks for money again to people off-screen. Character B insists again to the off-screen characters not to give her money yet. She must declare again that she is hungry. Meanwhile character A continues to speak through the megaphone even though we cannot make sense of his full discourse content.

An off-screen character demands to the Hungry woman to declare again that she is hungry to the camera. She does so. They keep insisting and she keeps doing the same declaration expecting money in exchange. This process repeats itself several times. As the off-screen characters keep insisting for the Hungry woman to continue her declaration they say : “Tell the Minister that you are hungry”. During this section character B remains off-screen and the Hungry woman remains in and out of frame. Finally, the Hungry woman after repeating the process four times she asks for her reward. However, character B, who now enters frame, indicates that before receiving her money she must repeat her declaration through the megaphone. The Hungry woman keeps asking for her money and character B assures her that she will pay her once she makes her declaration through the megaphone. Both stand still waiting for character A to finish his speech.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This section introduces two new characters who manifest themselves in the foreground position and off-screen. Character A and D become secondary characters in the background. Even though foreground and background planes conflict with each other the new characters adopt a more prominent position in the frame becoming the centre of attention. The scene presents an intense triangular interaction between foreground, background and off-screen information. This interaction of elements in and out of frame forces the viewer again to select and choose where do they want to place their attention. However, due to the fact that different actions occur at the same time, the viewer is bound to miss out information. All these elements conflict with each other and prevent our full comprehension of their content. The result is a continuous shift of attention in search for information.

This scene could have been edited through omitting and selecting certain content in order to control the transmission of information. Since I did choose not to edit the material the audience must do the editing in real time as the event develops in front of their eyes. This results in continuous omission of information. Since if we focus our attention in one action or discourse we miss out the information of the other. There is always bound to be missing information in the process of narrative comprehension particularly if we take into account that great part of the action happens off-screen. The camera intentionally does not pan to visually reveal the off-screen action. Instead, it remains still, framing part of the body of the off-screen characters. At the same time, since I chose not to edit the shot content characters are able to move freely in and out of frame.

These choices have two main purposes. Firstly, to draw attention to the act of representing an event through a camera. This refers to the process of omitting information via camera composition which I have been discussing through out the analysis in narrative Versions A and B. Therefore, one of the objectives is to make the audience aware of the process of selection and omission involved in representing an event, partly through frustrating the audience by not revealing

the off-screen action. Off-screen, as I have repeatedly referred, points to that event information we do not have access to, since the camera, by choosing a position and a shot size, chooses to omit specific information about the event.

Secondly, I also want to illustrate how it is always unavoidable to omit information when representing an event. This is the camera forcing the filmmaker to make a selection when filming. The filmmaker must decide a camera position and a shot type. The selection is always going to imply an unavoidable omission of other event contents. Having access or not to event knowledge conditions narrative comprehension and therefore it represents a crucial aspect determining how we form our knowledge of the world through mass media.

On the other hand, the camera also assumes its own presence as another protagonist in the scene. Once character B realises that the Hungry woman has no opportunity to make her contracted-declarations through the megaphone she turns to 'our' camera. The Hungry woman complies several times with her requirements expecting to receive money in exchange. An off-screen character says: "Tell the Minister that you are hungry". This means to accept the camera as a means of nationwide public means of transmission. The characters associate the camera with a television broadcast and therefore they hope for politicians, and more specifically the Prime Minister, to hear their claims.

Off-screen characters and character B insist several times that the Hungry woman continues to make declarations to the camera, and therefore to the viewer, that she is hungry. She reluctantly complies every time. Finally, the Hungry woman asks for her reward. However, character B is not satisfied yet. She states that she will pay her once she makes her declaration through the megaphone. The Hungry woman attempts to do so but character A prevents her from achieving that. They must wait for him to finish his speech. Both women, character B and the Hungry woman, wait uncomfortably for him to end his manifest so that they can conclude their business transaction.

This section, like the previous one, presents another tragic spectacle that discredits the political objectives of the General Strike. Character B and the off-

screen characters are attempting to expose that there is hunger and therefore social injustice which refers more concretely to an unjust distribution of wealth. However, they manipulate and use a person in need to make their claims. By doing so they are exploiting the need of a person to achieve their goals. Exploitation through injustice is what they want to manifest and protest against. However, in the process they are doing the same. Their actions are also exploitive and ethically questionable. All this diminishes the seriousness and political objectives of the General Strike which character's D initial song was trying to convey to his audience.



Shot Sequence 23.3. Sequence 3.

Version B

Character A says:

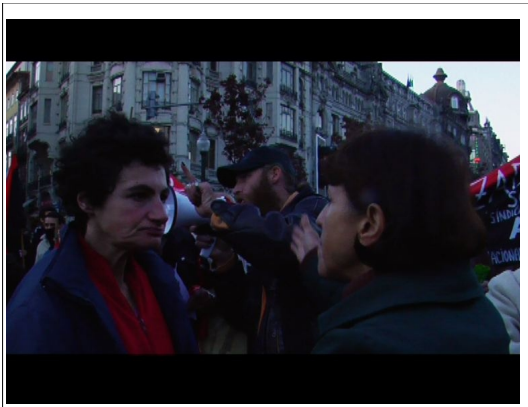
Now, I also want to know. They transformed the river into a sewer. And thirty years ago my wife bathed in the river and did the laundry. You know what that means?

To Transform the river into a sewer means that all the land around this sewage is worth nothing. Nothing! And besides now, they say that I have to pay debt! To whom?

Not even in three hundred years they make this river as it was. You know in thirty years they destroyed the river but in their land the river is clean and with fish.

Hungry Woman says:

Give them to me lady! Give them to me!

 <p>CONTINUES:</p> <p>Shot Sequence 23.3. Sequence 3.</p> <p>Version B</p>	<p>Character B says:</p> <p>You have to ask! You must say you're hungry!</p> <p>Character A says:</p> <p>Look I don't know. What else do you want to hear? ... Do not pay the motorway toll. Go through and make like this (he gestures the finger but we do not see it).</p> <p>As I say. You know why? You know why? I pay later. I left in my will not to forget to pay the gardener. Until that fuck it!</p>
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Sub-clip 23.3 description:

The composition maintains a medium-close-up-shot.

During this section character B and the Hungry woman stand back to the camera facing character A and D. They stand as spectators listening to character A's declarations. He speaks of how the river in Oporto was polluted. A sightseeing tour bus crosses the frame in the background. People sitting in the bus look down to the event.

The women await impatiently. Specially the Hungry woman who makes an unsuccessful attempt to pick up the megaphone. Next, the Hungry woman asks again for her money. However, character B insists again that she will only pay her once she declares via megaphone that she is hungry. Then, the Hungry woman makes another attempt to pick up the megaphone. Character B also insists. However, character A continues his speech. Now, he defends not paying the motorway toll. People attending the event applaud expressing approval to the character's claims. The women continue to await impatiently.

Filmmaker's intentions:

On this section the focus of attention shift back to characters A and D. The two women stand back to the camera facing characters A and D. We watch the scene from their point of view of character A's speech about Oporto's river being polluted. Character D nods affirmatively in support of character A's claims. The two women are not interested in what he says, they just wait impatiently for him to finish. They have other objectives. The Hungry woman wants her promised money and character B wants the Hungry woman to declare via megaphone that she is hungry. During this content another sightseeing tour bus passes by in the background. Throughout the narrative the composition has several times drawn our attention to sightseeing tour bus circulating around the event area. This reinforces the already established idea that the strike might be interpreted as another tourist attraction, and therefore as a spectacle.

All these elements conflict with each other and undermine the General Strike objectives. In the beginning of the sequence character D confronted character A's declarations for considering them inappropriate. Then, he allowed him to speak through the megaphone and now character D nods affirmatively in support of character A's claims. This illustrates inconsistency and incoherence in character D and therefore on the event. Furthermore, the women who act now as public are not interested in the speech content but in fulfilling their own objectives. The Hungry woman impatiently asks again for her money and character B insists on her fulfilling their agreement. Their dismissing attitude signifies not only that the event has no significance but also that there is no fellowship or sense of unity in the strike for each one of them seem to have a different agenda.

Finally, character A presents another incoherent speech. First he argues about the river being polluted. Then, he defends not paying the motorway toll and finally he concludes with an incomprehensible statement: "As I say. You know why? You know why? I pay later. I left in my will not to forget to pay the gardener. Until that fuck it!". However, some public members express approval of his

claims by applauding. People applauding incongruent arguments discredit not only the public but the event itself. The public by applauding indicate that their concerns are represented by the speaker's inconsistent speech. This signifies that the public and the event are also inconsistent.



Shot Sequence 23.4. Sequence 3.

Version B



Shot Sequence 23.4. Sequence 3.

Version B

Character B says:

Let her speak!

Character D says:

We will transform this moment in a popular assembly.

Pick up the megaphone if you wish to speak.

Character B says:

Let her speak!

Hungry Woman says:

I'm hungry Sir. Give me alms to eat!

Character B says:

Say it again! Let her speak! Let her speak!

Hungry Woman says:

I'm hungry Sir. I need to eat! Give me alms!

Character D says:

She already said that.

Character B says:

I will give you. Take it! Come on!

Sub-clip 23.4 description:

The composition maintains a medium-shot.

During this section character D declares that those who wish to speak may use the megaphone to do so. Then, the Hungry woman finally complies to character B's requirements. She picks up the megaphone and declares: "I'm hungry sir. Give me alms, to eat!". Character B not satisfied forces the Hungry woman to repeat herself. Character D declares that she already said that. Character B pays the Hungry woman and they both exit frame. Meanwhile another participant picks up the megaphone to speak.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This section presents the conclusion to character B's agreement with the Hungry woman. The Hungry woman finally satisfies character B's requirements and in exchange, as agreed, character B pays her the promised amount. This content intends to confirm and reinforce that the Hungry woman did not make the repeated declarations, first to our camera and later via the megaphone, out of her free will. She was paid to do so. Otherwise, she would not have done it. In fact, several times, the Hungry woman attempted to get her money from character B. This confirmed her reluctance to comply. However, character B, in exchange, for money, force her continuously to do declarations that she did not want to do. Once character B pays her off I fully confirm the act of manipulation performed by the character to achieve her aims. As referred, due to the General Strike context we can also deduce that she did it in order to communicate that people are hungry in Portugal. Therefore, character B wanted to expose that there is poverty in Portugal. This refers to an important General Strike issue: social injustice. However, her method was unethical and exploitative and could be considered morally wrong. The visual confirmation of the payment heightens the act of exploitation and accentuates the incoherence of the act of protest which diminishes the significance of the General Strike event.

In Version A this past content about character B was omitted. Instead she appeared in Version A sequence 2 accusing Portuguese people of being cowards for they did not stand and fight for their rights anymore. She appealed for people to stand up and protest against social injustice. By doing so she appealed for public unity. If Version A had included the past disclosed information it would have discredited all her claims and arguments. Conversely, Version B sequence 2 omitted completely character's B declarations disclosed in Version A so as to represent the speaker's event with incongruent actions that undermined the event representation. This again exemplifies another situation in the narrative where omission of information conditions event representation and its subsequent signification.



Shot Sequence 23.5. Sequence 3.

Version B

PCP Man says:

It is like this:

PCP Man says:

Political consciousness, who has it?
I think that the right wing has no capability to govern the country!

Character C says: off-screen

No it doesn't. It doesn't. It has none!

PCP Man says:

It is like this: Capitalism is a worldwide defeat. PCP! (The Portuguese communist Party)

Character C says: off-screen

PCP! PCP! PCP!

PCP Man says:

PCP! PCP! PCP!



CONTINUES:

Shot Sequence 23.5. Sequence 3.

Version B

Character C says: off-screen

PCP! PCP!

They made me do this! Damn it!

Sub-clip 23.5 description:

The composition presents a medium-long-shot.

During this last section a new character, designated as PCP Man, picks up the megaphone to make a protest. Character D indicates to him to hold the megaphone closer to his mouth to speak. PCP Man first asks a question: "Political consciousness, who has it?". And then he makes a statement: "I think that the right wing has no capability to govern the country!". An off-screen character supports his statement: "No it doesn't. It doesn't. It has none!". Next, the character makes his last declaration and celebrates the political party he supports designated as PCP (The Portuguese Communist Party): "It is like this: Capitalism is a worldwide defeat. PCP!" At that precise moment off-screen, a woman, designated as character C, enters frame. Both characters, holding up their arms with their fist closed, show their support to The Portuguese Communist Party. Another woman standing behind character D as she claps her hands repeats also PCP. Character C exits frame. Then, character B enters frame and grabs the megaphone to speak. However, character D prevents her from doing so. Instead he addresses the public. During the scene some people stand scattered in the background composition.

Filmmaker's intentions:

This last section intends to highlight little public participation in the event. Once character B and the Hungry woman exit frame the composition clearly reveals that there are few people standing in the event area. Two women and a man stand by the flag behind character D. Other people stand behind the new speaker. More people stand further in the background without paying attention to the event. As a whole people stand in small groups scattered around the space which signifies little public participation. Second, when PCP Man makes his claims we can only identify one off-screen supporting voice. Moreover, when he celebrates the Portuguese Communist Party, PCP, only one character enters frame to support him. Another woman claps also in support standing behind character D. This also illustrates lack of public participation for hardly any member of the public is participating in this event. On the other hand, a very important statement, on this final section, lies in the first statement by PCP Man: "Political consciousness, who has it?". This question summarises and condenses much of what Version B intended to signify throughout the whole narrative. In particular in sequence 2 and in the past statements disclosed throughout this shot sequence. The speech content, selected and omitted in the narrative, aimed precisely at signifying not only absurd or incoherent diminishing declarations but also the fact that their statements were incongruent because they lacked political consciousness. Furthermore, PCP Man who raises the question does not answer. Instead he makes two simple statements that illustrate his own lack of political consciousness. The sequence ends with character C exiting frame as character B enters frame. Character B attempts to grab the megaphone supposedly to speak but she is prevented to do so by character D. Instead character D begins a new discourse. However, we cannot hear clearly what he says because character C's off-screen voice is much louder. She says "They made me do this! Damn it!". These two actions act out as a conclusion to this scene. Character D by not allowing character B to speak closes down the final speaker's section.

SHOT SEQUENCE 24



Shot Sequence 24. Sequence 3.

Version B



Shot Sequence 24. Sequence 3.

Version B

Character C says: Look it is shit!

Excuse me! They are living there in such houses ... There is no shame. People are so! Teachers, everything. Living in a poor house. A state house.

Another Woman says: Is Socrates!

Character C says:

Yes, but the others left all the holes! Those who were in power before left the holes! Not only Socrates is to blame! Is it just Socrates? He's not..... Listen! But listen lady. But the deficit was with six point something Remember that one.

Character D sings: All the workers go there to fight!! To the strike you go! To the strike yeah. I also go! To the strike you go! To the strike yeah. I also go! I go for them and them go for me! From the mine and plough you the body in pain Long live the workers and long life the General Strik

Shot description:

This shot composition begins as a medium-shot and then as the camera pans left to present another event it becomes a medium-long-shot.

The composition initially frames character C talking to Another woman. Character C looks visibly upset and feels deeply wronged. Character C argues about poverty and social injustice. Another woman blames Prime Minister Socrates. Character C agrees but also defends that Socrates is not the only one to blame. She claims that before him other political leaders also did wrong. The composition reveals that there is hardly any one around the characters. The anarchist flag stand behind them and some people walk in and out of frame. No one is listening to their conversation apart from the camera. In the background we can appreciate a car entering frame and stopping. Other cars pass by in and out of frame.

As character C speaks of deficit the camera initiates a slow pan left revealing two men in the background with a video camera filming. We can also appreciate the PCP Man supporting one end of the anarchist flag. Far In the background there is a bus waiting with its doors open. Other people stand scattered in the background. The camera resumes the pan in a medium-long-shot that presents character D surrounded by small group of people singing a song. As the camera resumes the pan a woman comes running into frame to play the drum. Another woman also enters frame playing another drum. Other men enter the frame holding a paper which seems to contain the song lyrics. They stand by character D. The song they sing is the same song celebrating going to a strike that character D was singing at the beginning of shot sequence 23. The scene ends and cuts to black on a drum beat mark.

Filmmaker's intentions:

The composition presents the two women talking with no one around to listen but the camera. People walk in and out of frame without paying any attention.

Even though the flag appears in the background area no one is standing by it. The composition does not reveal who is supporting the flag so far. There is an empty space in between the characters which leads to another empty space below the flag. Through that space we can see cars circulating passing through the event, ignoring it. A black car enters frame and stops below the flag space. All these elements, on the one hand, mean to illustrate lack of participation, on the other, intend to attribute little significance to the women's conversation and opinions for no one seems to be interested. Furthermore, the emptiness around the composition, people moving in and out frame, the shot becoming darker announces the end of the narrative. This means that these are the last statements we hear in the nationwide General Strike event representation: a conversation between two working class women, that nobody but the camera listens to, discussing and deciding who is to blame for poverty and social injustice. This represents another attempt to discredit the event representation.

During their conversation we can hear drums beating off-screen. Then, a man's voice also off-screen starts singing. We cannot identify the song's lyrics. The drum beats off-screen acts as a funeral march that condemns the event to its end. As character C mentions the word "deficit" the camera pans left to reveal PCP Man holding one end of the anarchist flag. Then, we notice that there is another camera filming in the background. This camera is filming in the direction of our camera. We can also appreciate a number of people standing dispersed around the space. They confirm that most participants have already left. Finally the camera stops to present character D singing the same strike song he was singing at the beginning of sequence shot 23.

During Narrative Versions A and B so far the use of camera panning to scan the environment is not a technique that has been employed. During both narrative versions camera movement has only been used to accompany the characters movements through the space. However, on this occasion I have scanned the space horizontally without following any subject in movement. Using this technique only at this particular point in the narrative intends to confer the panning a particular significance that it would not have otherwise. This shot

serves several purposes in concluding the narrative.

The camera through panning transports the viewer from one event area to another travelling through the space. The fact that I do not follow anyone in movement draws particular attention to the camera movement itself for we have not seen this movement before in the narrative. The objective is to focus our attention on the *act* of filming. During the panning the frame reveals another camera filming in our direction like our camera is filming in their direction. Each camera acts as a mirror of each other's actions accentuating our awareness of the *act* of filming.

Furthermore, the camera only moves away from the scene when character C resorts to the word "deficit" for her arguments. "Deficit" refers to one of the most repeated and discussed concepts in the mass media during the last few years. This word acts out as a cue for the camera to abandon the characters to their own conversation. By initiating the panning in the moment we hear "deficit" the camera is responding emotionally as a character. The camera is reacting against the word "deficit" and moving away so as to avoid to listen further into the conversation. The camera does not want to listen any more to inconsistent statements or arguments. The camera movement emulates a person looking away. By doing so it is presenting and punctuating its point of view of the event through rejecting it.

Contrarily, the camera movement presents the viewer with a continuous process of omitting information in order to reveal new content. This is what synthesises the *act* of filming and representing an event since you must always omit information in order to represent an event. The camera technically forces you to select what content you want to reveal about the event. This implies an unavoidable process of continuous omission of other elements.

The shot begins with a medium-shot showing two women talking and ends up with a medium-long-shot that discloses character D surrounded by small group of people singing a song . As the camera moves from left to right in direction to its destiny unfolds new information: the PCP Man holding the anarchist flag, the

camera crew filming, people standing by and finally character D singing with a group of people. At the same time, for the camera to reveal a new element during the camera movement it must omit a previous one. As a whole, the panning moves from one event area, the two women talking, to another, character D and the group singing. This means that the camera presents first a particular event and content and then omits it completely in order to present another. While we attend to character D singing the women still talking, the other crew still filming and the Man PCP is still holding the anarchist flag. However, by the end of the movement they all have been completely omitted. They ceased to exist in the event representation. Now, our focus of attention is the singing scene.

It is important to underline that the panning scans the space horizontally from one area to another without interrupting the shot through a cut. This means that as a viewer I know that what I just saw, like for instance the PCP Man or the women talking, are still there even though they were omitted visually. I know because the shot was not interrupted. If there had been a cut I could interpret that time had moved forward and therefore that the characters are not there anymore. This is because in between cuts there is always a time interval. One shot always ends and another always begins. In between shots something must have happened in the event. If instead of panning I would have cut from the two women talking to the group singing we would not have had the same perception on the process of omitting information. We would not had been able to observe the camera omitting and revealing new content in real time as it moves.

The end of the shot presents few people singing. In fact, we can hardly hear anyone singing apart from character D, instead more clearly we can hear voices of people talking. Some small groups of people stand in the background talking and ignoring the event. Two women enter frame and begin to play drums. It is particularly curious that people entering frame do not block the camera view of the event. They seem to be aware of the composition and so they seem to know where to place themselves in the frame so as not to interfere with the camera point of view of the event. Only a teenager walks in and out of frame blocking

partially our view of the event. These elements seem to imply that the group are performing the song for the camera and not for the public. We can also notice a young woman taking photographs of the scene. Her actions, like the camera crew beforehand, accentuate our awareness of the *act* of filming and therefore of the process of omitting and choosing contents in order to represent visually the event.

As I have stated we can hardly hear anyone singing apart from character D. Character D is reading the lyrics from a paper in order to sing. This indicates that he has not memorised the song. Perhaps he never knew the song by heart. This may explain why we cannot hear the others singing clearly. They also do not know the lyrics. This idea of not knowing the lyrics is confirmed by two middle aged men who stand by the singing group. Like character D they both hold a piece of paper where apparently they must have written the song lyrics. Their expression reveals that they also do not know the song by heart. In fact, they must search in their paper to identify the lyrics the group is singing.

The fact of not knowing or remembering the lyrics by memory may imply that this is not a popular song that everyone knows. It might also suggest that this is an old song that people may have forgotten. We can identify by its lyrics that it is a left-wing song which praises unity amongst the working class: "All the workers go there to fight!! To the strike you go! To the strike yeah. I also go! To the strike you go! To the strike yeah. I also go! I go for them and them go for me!" The song appeals to solidarity and celebrates the General Strike as a means to unite people so that together they can defend and fight for their common rights. In fact, the song ends by celebrating the working class and the General Strike: "Long live the workers and long life the General Strike". If people do not remember the song and they need to read the lyrics in order to sing it might signify that people forgot the values which the song commemorates. This is may be why there is no political consciousness like we saw PCP Man question beforehand.

During the song the drum beats the tempo of a march. Due to the undermining information that has been consistently disclosed throughout the whole narrative, this tempo seems to represent the march of a funeral. The funeral of the values and ideals that the song commemorates but that they do not exist anymore because we have forgotten it or because they are not relevant anymore in present times. Thus, the last phrase, “Long live the workers and long life the General Strike”, seems to signify a farewell to those past forgotten and irrelevant values rather than the celebration of their strength and appeal.

The conclusion in Version A is much shorter than in Version B. It lasts only fifty eight seconds. This is due to the fact that it omits most of the information disclosed in Version B, especially the content presented in shot sequence 23 that discredits the representation of the event. On the other hand, Version A does present character D singing the same song as in Version B. However, in this case, the representation of the event produces a different signification in the narrative. In Version A the singing scene celebrates the General Strike as a means to unite the working class in defence of their rights. In fact, the song lyrics serve to summarise some of the political values exposed in previous sequences. Unity to fight for working class rights is something that character D and E defended and asked for through their claims in sequence 2. This means that the information exposed beforehand through out the narrative conditions our interpretation of this content. If in Version A, I had disclosed the absurd declarations and statements that appear in Version B, the content of this song would not have the same significance.

In Version A I present character D singing in a medium-close-up shot instead of a medium-long-shot like in Version B. This avoids disclosing the lack of participation in the event for we do not have access to the surrounding space. It also prevents drawing attention to the fact that people singing do not know the lyrics. By shortening the focal distance I omit noticing that we do not hear their voices for we do not see them singing. Moreover, the medium-close-up also omits the two middle aged men searching for the lyrics in a paper they hold, which demonstrates and highlights the fact that people do not know or

remember the song.

Character D is seen reading from the paper to sing. However, he is the only one that appears to be reading. The composition attempts to focus our attention on character D singing through a megaphone and in time to the drum beat. The megaphone has been used as a protest tool and the tempo of the drum beat punctuates the lyrics in a dramatic way. Character D is not just singing but making a left-wing proclamation and, in this case, unlike in Version B, the fact that he is reading contributes to that signification. The paper that a supporter holds in front of him represents the physical proof of the proclamation. On the other hand, the last shot in Version A confirms the song content as a left-wing demo-song.

The last shot in Version A represents the counterpart of the panning shot in Version B. The panning shot, as stated, is the only shot in both narratives, A and B, that scans the space horizontally without following a character's movement. For that reason, as stated, the panning confers the shot certain unique qualities that I have described beforehand. Similarly, the last shot in Version A presents the only low-angle shot that appeared in both narrative versions. In fact both narratives versions present images filmed on eye-level to place the viewer in equal status with the subject. This, like in the case of the panning shot in Version B, supposes a break in terms of filming style continuity with the intention of providing a different quality and signification to the event. The shot reveals character D holding up his fist shouting old anarchist revolutionary claims. This represents a typical left-wing gesture. A woman on the right-hand side of the frame also raises her hand and reinforces his speech. The speech content summarises some of the most important claims made by the speakers in sequence 2. The speaker delivers the speech following a drum beat using an imperative tense. The off-screen group repeats after him in support. All these elements sum up the overall content and intentions presented in narrative Version A strengthening the spirit of unity and public participation established and represented during sequences 1 and 2. The fact that the composition chooses to disclose this content using a low-angle perspective intends to confer

power and strength to the character, to his claims, to the supporting participants that his claims represent and therefore to the General Strike as a significant working class event.

Chapter 8

Strike. A comparative reflection on narrative construction analysis

Version A versus Version B

8.1 Introduction

This document presents a comparative reflection of the research analysis undertaken on the narrative construction of Versions A and B. The objective is to summarise and compare the analysis undertaken in chapter 6 and 7 in order to extract specific preliminary results on the process of omission and structure. This document has a repetitive character but necessary due to the fact that it intends to condense and organise the results achieved during the analysis in order to produce data. The fact is that chapter 6 and 7 act out as a form of “raw material of research analysis”. Chapter 8, from this “raw material” has extracted specific data and results on omission and structure. From this data I have reached and produced the conclusions, in terms of omission and structure, disclosed in chapter 9. Due to the fact that the research analysis in chapter 6

and 7 has been divided into three sequences I have also organised this chapter into three parts. One for each sequence:

Sequence 1: context.

Sequence 2: characters.

Sequence 3: conclusion.

For each sequence, I systematically compare and summarise the decisions undertaken in terms of omission and structure for narrative Versions A and B. In order to focus the reflection analysis I have subdivided each sequence into three comparative sections: composition, omission and structure. I have focussed the reflection on discussing and comparing the differences between both narrative versions in terms of composition, omission and structure and with respect to the narrative intentions stated for each respective version in chapter 6.1 and 7.1.

8.2 Sequence 1. Context

8.2.1 Version A. Context

In Version A I intend to signify public participation, a sense of unity or togetherness and a festive popular atmosphere. The objective is to associate these qualities to the General Strike so as to confer significance to the event. In order to achieve these objectives I have made the following choices:

a) Composition

The composition compresses the space. The objective is to keep the frame replete with elements that, on the one hand, signify public participation, and on

the other, prevent revealing empty space areas that could signify the opposite. For this reason most of the shot sizes used in this sequence correspond to close-up, medium-close-up and medium-shot. I have only used two medium-long shots in shot 5 and 6. However, even in those shots, the composition focuses the attention on the number of people attending the event. For that purpose I kept the foreground and background planes in the frame occupied with participants. By suggesting public participation I mean to signify unity and popular appeal since the crowd appear to be gathered together for a common cause.

Furthermore, the composition privileges warm tonalities in order to confer a positive festive quality to the event. Almost every single shot presents events and participants illuminated by the sunlight. The sun is associated with good weather, outdoor activities, spare time and holidays. These are considered positive aspects in our lives and the intention is to relate these qualities to the strike event. Similarly, the composition also highlights red and yellow objects such as the union flags, the words General Strike, the yellow poster in shot 10 and the red carnations during Zeca Afonso's singing scene. All of these objects represent different elements related to the General Strike. The objective is to confer to these red and yellow objects the sunlight values in order to accentuate warm positive festive qualities to the General Strike. Finally, a very important red object in the sequence is the red carnation which symbolises the memory of the past Portuguese Carnation Revolution. In fact, it is through the illustration of the red carnations that I complete the meaning conferred to warm tonal images and red and and yellow objects in the strike. The intention is to associate the red union flags, the red of the words "General Strike" , the warm sunlight tones, to the positive communion or togetherness qualities of this crucial political moment in Portuguese history.

b) Omission

In terms of omission the sequence avoids presenting empty space areas so as to not inform the audience that there was little public participation in the event. This is why I do not use long-shot or extreme-long-shot compositions that may reveal the small scale of the event and the reduce number of participants. This omitted information would discredit the significance of the event.

For the same reasons I have also omitted event information that appears in Version B such as single events like in the case of shots 7 and 9. These events illustrate lack of public participation which diminishes the relevance of the event. More importantly, I have also omitted completely the clown sequence which appears in shots 10 to 12 in Version B since it may confer comical undermining qualities to the event.

In shot 15, the last shot in sequence 1, I omitted the woman's statement: "Look at that son of a bitch". This information would have conditioned negatively our expectations about the following character addressing the general public in sequence 2.

c) Structure

In terms of structure sequence 1 in Version A appears subdivided into five small scenes:

—Scene 1: Shots 1 to 4 correspond to the initial popular music scene. It assigns popular festive qualities to the the event. It does not identify the type of event but only the fact that people are gathered together in a space. On the other hand, the four shots together present a fragmented spatial description of the surrounding event area. We learn that the musicians are surrounded by people without actually describing the physical event area and we establish that the event appeals to different social sectors.

—Scene 2: Shots 5 to 8 identifies the General Strike as the event. The composition continues to privilege public event participation. Through omission I produce expectation in the viewer about possible strike events.

—Scene 3: Shots 9 to 12 correspond to Zeca Afonso's singing sequence. This scene satisfies previous narrative expectations since I establish people singing a well-known and popular protest song all together. The intention is to associate the present General Strike to the qualities of the past Carnation Revolution.

—Scene 4: Shot 13 corresponds to a protest scene. The shot content presents a group demonstrating together for a common cause. It describes another typical strike event and reinforces participation and unity qualities.

—Scene 5: Shot 14 corresponds to closing this first sequence. The scene celebrates the working class and the General Strike.

—Transition Shot: Shot 15 serves as a temporal and spatial transition between sequence 1 and 2. It presents a new type of event: members of the public talking amongst themselves. It serves to introduce the following sequence where individuals address the general public.

The information appears organised in the narrative so as to signify popular, festive and unity qualities about the event. For this reason I initiate the narrative with the traditional music playing scene. Next, as we identify the General Strike event I attempt to create expectations in the viewer's mind about possible future strike events. Then, I partly satisfy the spectator's expectation through revealing two strike mini-events: Zeca Afonso's protest music singing scene and a group protest scene. Finally, the sequence celebrates the union of the working class and the General Strike as a significant working class event. The main objective is to confer significance to the General Strike so as to engage the spectator in identifying with other future event contents.

8.2.2 Version B. Context

In Version B I intend to signify the lack of public participation or unity. The objective is to convey that there are no significant events occurring at the General Strike. In order to achieve these objectives I made the following choices:

a) Composition

Unlike in Version A the composition in Version B presents large views of the space focussing our attention on empty areas. In the edited sequence, I avoid selecting shot sizes such as close-ups, medium-close-ups or medium-shots with the exception of the last clown scene. All other events correspond to medium-long-shot, long-shot and extreme-long-shot. The objective is to signify the lack of public participation and to undermine the significance of the event. For that purpose the composition reveals the small scale of the event and the reduce number of participants.

The foreground composition emphasises large shaded areas. This produces a colder tonality since in the shaded area the colour temperature is higher. The fact that the shade area appears in the foreground and the sunlight in the background confers more prominence and importance to the shaded area and therefore to the cold tonality.

Wide shots of area help highlight three interpretations of the event. Firstly, they diminish the scale of the event by comparison. The surrounding buildings such as the Town Hall, the banks and the Statute of D. Pedro IV, that represent past and present institutions and regimes in power, are lit by the sun and seem more dominant than the strike event. As a result, the “General Strike” event by comparison appears small in size and insignificant in the composition.

Secondly, these large visual descriptions of the location illustrate that cars and sightseeing tour buses circulate around the isolated strike area. The large empty

foreground areas point to lack of participation and unity. This implies that the event is being ignored by society and therefore it has little significance.

Third, the composition only presents events in medium-close-up and close-up in the event area during the clown scene. The objective is to undermine the seriousness of the event since instead of illustrating typical acts of protest like in Version A I focus the attention on comical acts.

b) Omission

In terms of omission the sequence avoids presenting contents that signify participation or unity amongst the participants. For that purpose I omitted the following information that appears in Version A:

Firstly, I completely omit the initial music scene that conferred festive and popular qualities to the event.

Secondly, I prevent disclosing the red carnations that appear in the Zeca Afonso's singing scene Version A so as to avoid associating the strike event to the Carnation Revolution. Moreover, I want to avoid attributing unified qualities to the event.

Thirdly, I omit disclosing typical strike events such as shots 13 and 14 in Version A. Shot 13 presents a group protesting together. Shot 14 celebrates the working class and the General Strike.

Fourthly, I avoid associating public participation with the strike events. In shot 7 I show a group of demonstrators holding a poster of protest but, there is no one attending that event. In shot 9 I show a group of participants arriving at the strike with another poster of protest. However, they are a small group and they arrive alone. Behind them the space is practically empty. No one follows them. I also omit disclosing the group entering the strike event area. As a whole I omit any references to the General Strike. We are not shown demonstrations or protest events. In fact, the words "General Strike" are almost ignored in the narrative.

When they appear they are diminished by comparing them to the large surrounding background space. The principal objective is to signify that there are no significant protest events occurring during the General Strike.

c) Structure

In terms of structure sequence 1 in Version B appears subdivided into six small scenes:

—Scene 1: Shots 1 to 5 describe a 360 degree large view of the strike event area. I use an extreme-long-shot for that purpose. They intend to highlight the small scale of the event and the reduce number of participants

—Scene 2: Shot 6 in medium-long-shot presents smalls groups of people standing scattered in the event area. This intends to signify little public participation. The composition focusses the attention on a person leaving the event. This content aims to signify lack of public interest in the strike event. I omit illustrating protest or demonstration events. The objective is to establish that there are no significant General Strike events happening in the location.

—Scene 3: Shot 7 also in medium-long-shot presents another part of the event that confirms that there is no protest activity or participation during the strike. A group of demonstrators stand alone in the space. There are very few members of the public present.

—Scene 4: Shot 8 introduces, in medium-long-shot, Zeca Afonso's singing scene. In Version A I used four different shots to develop the sense of unity in this scene. Version B describes the event in only one shot that focusses our attention on the lack of participation and unity. The composition reveals the reduce number of people singing. We are also able to identify the number of union flags they hold. This intends to accentuate the lack of public significance of this scene and subsequently of the General Strike as a whole.

—Scene 5: Shot 9 exhibits a small group of demonstrators arriving alone to the strike area. No one follows them. The space behind them is almost empty.

There seems to be no public activity in the event area. I omit confirming the group entering the strike event area. This content discredits the significance of the event since it focusses the attention in the lack of of strike events and public participation.

—Scene 6: Shot 10 to 12 present several people dressed up as clowns performing comical acts in the event area. The composition compresses the space for the first time in this narrative version. The objective is to illustrate that people are in fact paying attention to comic performances instead of serious General Strike political events. Thus, the idea is to signify that people have gathered together to watch public comical performances and not to satisfy General Strike objectives. For this reason I omitted revealing any reference to strike events occurring inside the event area. This intends to undermine the seriousness of the event as a whole through centring the attention on the comical performances.

Transition Shot: Shot 13 serves as a temporal and spatial transition like in Version A. It corresponds to the same shot used in Version A. It presents a new type of event. People talk amongst themselves. It serves to introduce the following sequence where individuals address the general public. However, unlike in Version A, the shot discloses a new piece of information. The woman standing by the group declares “look at that son of a bitch”. This information intends to negatively condition our expectations about the following character addressing the general public.

Therefore, the information appears organised and disclosed in the narrative so as to signify that this is a small event, with a reduce number of participants, which has little social and public significance. Furthermore, I suggest through omission that there are no significant demonstration events happening in the General Strike event area.

In order to achieve these objectives I have established no connection in the structure between the different contents. The scenes are not organised or structured in relation to each other. They do not act together as units of meaning

and they do not create expectation like in Version A. Each scene acts out as a single event with no connection to previous or future contents. They are intentionally separated from one another to signify that there is nothing of significance happening in the strike event area. Firstly, it presents large views that diminish the scale of the event. Secondly, we see someone existing the event area so as to signify lack of interest in the public event. Thirdly, we see demonstration events with very little participation. Fourthly, at Zeca Afonso's singing scene we confirm a lack of unity and participation in the event. The composition reveals the reduced number of participants singing and holding union flags. Finally, I illustrate the public watching clowns performing instead of watching political demonstrations. All these elements converge to discredit the event and its social and public significance.

8.3 Sequence 2. Characters

8.3.1 Version A. Characters

This second sequence introduces a number of individuals protesting to a crowd in front of them. These characters protest against their government's inefficiency in resolving the country's economical and social problems. Their speech intends to represent the interest of the group and to address General Strike political issues. The sequence also aims at signifying that people attending the events are listening to the speakers. There is public participation. As a whole the sequence intends to present a coherent political representation of protest and dissatisfaction. In order to achieve these objectives I made the following choices:

a) Composition

The main purpose of the composition is to confirm public participation. I resort to a medium-shot and medium-long-shot to reveal that participants are listening to the speaker's arguments. This intends to signify that the character's claims represent the interests of the group. The composition also emphasises visual references to strike events such as demonstrations and political slogans. The objective is, on the one hand, to highlight public participation, on the other, to present objects that indicate actions of protest by demonstrators. Furthermore, the camera prevents revealing empty event areas that could focus our attention on the reduced number of participants. Finally, I also use close-up and medium-close-up-shots of participants to confirm and reinforce that people are listening to the speakers. The objective is to accentuate public engagement with the event.

b) Omission

In terms of omission I have mostly omitted speech content. Character A's speech has been partly omitted and re-organised so as to expose a coherent argument. This is partly the reason why I have used seven shots to present his declarations. The objective was, firstly, to omit absurd arguments that could discredit the characters and the event. Secondly, to re-order the coherent statements into a comprehensible structure that could represent the interests and concerns of the participants and the General Strike. I have also omitted partially character D's and E's speech content which has been disclosed in Version B. The reason was to avoid disclosing incoherent statements which could undermine the representation of the event. Therefore, much of the omission undertaken intended to avoid disclosing inconsistent arguments that could discredit the General Strike political context. Consequently, I have structured the remaining speech content into producing coherent political statements so as to signify a positive representation of the event.

c) Structure

The structure has been organised into five small scenes. One for each speaker. Each character, on the one hand, introduces new content that represents specific subjects of public concern. On the other hand, their statements further develop arguments presented before them by previous speakers. As a whole, their speech acts out as one unique public voice which intends to represent different issues of public concern. Their declarations also intend to summarise and illustrate a variety of General Strike political issues.

—Scene 1: Character A represents a male foreign perspective. He serves to introduce a central issue regarding the General Strike: Portuguese public debt. Through his speech the speaker questions the reasons for the Portuguese public debt and its possible consequences. As stated I have used seven shots to present his arguments in a coherent manner. These shots were reduced in length to omit incongruent comments that may discredit his claims and the event as a whole. Two of these shots, 20 and 21, present close-up-shot of public members so as to reinforce public participation. Character A refers and celebrates the Portuguese Carnation Revolution for its sense of solidarity, togetherness and pacifist qualities. By doing so I relate the present General Strike to the qualities of the past Carnation Revolution. Just like I did in sequence 1 during Zeca Afonso's singing scene where women hold red carnations, a symbol of the Carnation Revolution.

—Scene 2: Character B represents a female Portuguese perspective. She presents a different perspective from character A. She argues that Portuguese people do not fight anymore like they did in the past. She is referring supposedly to the Carnation revolution. She appeals for people to fight for their rights. Her statement adds new content in the narrative and further develops the representation of the event. While character A questions the public debt, character B asks for the public to fight against injustice. Her discourse appears in only one shot. I use a close-up-shot to deliver her speech. This intends to direct her speech directly to the viewer so as to motivate the spectator to adopt

a political position with regard to her claims. Therefore, the objective is to stimulate the audience's engagement and participation.

—Scene 3: Character C represents another Portuguese female point of view. Her speech further develops Character A and B's statements. She argues against social injustice and public debt. Firstly, she refers to great differences in terms of salaries to expose social injustice. Secondly, she argues that public debt is not the fault of the working class but the banks and the government. Character C introduces new specific information by referring to salaries, banks, eviction and poverty which further develops previous statements by character's A and B. She asks for the government to resolve the problem. The character is visibly upset. She represents the anger and frustration of the working class. I use a medium-shot shot to present her claims. The shot appears split in two. In the first clip the character directs her declarations to a photographic camera. This focuses our attention on media exploitation. In the second clip, she addresses 'our' camera directly and therefore the viewer itself. This intends to motivate spectator's engagement and participation within the context of the event discourse.

—Scene 4: Character D represents a Portuguese male perspective. He claims that the present democratic system is a failure due to political corruption. He argues against the government in favour of trade unions and associations. He defends that the power to govern must be in the hands of the common people and not on political leaders of representatives. To support his arguments he resorts to a a personal case. He explains how he managed to help place forty homeless people in hostels. However, he complains that now these people are back on the streets again for the social security forced them to pay part of their rents and they couldn't.

Character D further develops all of the previous arguments by introducing new content. Firstly, he uses a personal example to illustrate his point. The homeless case illustrates character C's previous statements on poverty and social injustice. Secondly, he discloses the reason for social injustice: the failure of the democratic system. Thirdly, he presents a solution: trade unions and

associations governing the country. I use two shots to expose his arguments. The first shot corresponds to a medium-shot. The composition confirms that the character is supported by a group of demonstrators which stand behind him. This gives credibility to the speaker and presents acts of public protest through the written slogans that appear in the background of the frame. The second shot is a medium-close-up which serves to punctuate the speaker's claims in a dramatic way by repeating part of his speech again. Moreover, the shot intends also to confirm public participation by confirming that people are standing behind the speaker listening to his statements.

—Scene 5: Character E represents another Portuguese male perspective. He resumes and further develops previous arguments. He begins by appealing to unity like character B and D did beforehand. The crowd off-screen support him by repeating after him. This illustrates public identification and engagement. Then, character E further develops character D's previous arguments about the failure of the democratic system. Character E states that the funds allocated to Portuguese interior regions were diverted to Lisbon. He uses this concrete example to support his following criticism arguments just like character D did before him. His criticism encompasses all sectors representing the democratic system: the government, the constitution and even Nato which refers to a military alliance between North-america and European countries dedicated to the protection of democratic freedom. Finally, he ends his speech by appealing again to unify.

I use three shots to deliver his speech. The first shot corresponds to a medium-close-up that presents participants in the event area. The intention is to convey that people are attending character E's discourse. During the shot we hear character E's appealing to unity off-screen. This reinforces the link between public and speaker. In the second shot, I introduce character E that continues to appeal to public unity. During the shot we hear the crowd off-screen repeating his claims back to him in support. This content also accentuates public engagement with the character. In the final third shot, he delivers his arguments and accusations against the democratic system. This content concludes

sequence 2 from a left-wing political perspective that corresponds to the expectations of a General Strike event.

Therefore, the information appears organised in the narrative to represent the concerns of the participants and the objectives of the General Strike. All speech contents and new information to the narrative and further develop previous arguments. Their statements are related to one another complementing each other. As a whole they represent a left-wing political perspective of the issues on debate. It is important to underline, that in order to represent the voice of the group of participants, I chose a foreign voice and four Portuguese perspectives, two female and two male, so that I could establish an equilibrium in terms of gender and social representation. However, as I have stated during the research analysis in chapter 7 non-Portuguese audiences may not perceive that character A is a foreigner.

8.3.2 Version B. Characters

This second sequence introduces the same characters representing the interests of the group like in Version A. However, now their speech and political claims are incoherent. They do not protest against the government inefficiency in resolving the country's economic and social problems. The content of their arguments undermine the seriousness and political purpose of the event.

In order to achieve these objectives I made the following choices:

a) Composition

The composition serves several purposes. Firstly, it intends to indicate little public participation in the events. For that purpose I resort to a medium-long-shot that focuses the attention on empty spaces and on the reduced number of participants. Secondly, the composition intends to convey that the attending

public are engaged with the speaker's incongruent arguments. For that purpose I use medium-close-up and close-up shots of attending participants that highlight their engagement with the speaker. These choices undermine the significance of the event since the composition implies that there is a reduced number of participants who identify with incoherent statements that bear no relation to General Strike objectives.

b) Omission

In terms of omission I avoid illustrating any visual references to the General Strike. During sequence 2 we do not see any acts of demonstration or any political slogans. The anarchist flag and the poster that reads "corruption" which appears in Version A was omitted in Version B. Instead, during character E's discourse, I disclose a demonstration poster held by one of the clown characters. The poster reads "Entire party of liberation". Therefore, the only visual General Strike reference presents a comical undermining content.

I also omit all the coherent statements presented in Version A. Furthermore, I completely omit characters B and C for considering its content inappropriate for discrediting the representation of the event. Instead I chose to present incongruent arguments by character A, D and E. These are male characters. Therefore, the omission not only points to disregarding relevant speech content but also social and gender representation.

This omission of protest posters, social representation and coherent political statements displaces the event from its political context. Since there is no visual or speech information that complies or refers to the General Strike objectives this implies that there are no relevant and significant political events happening during the General Strike.

c) Structure

The narrative appears organised into single and separate blocks of incongruent and irrelevant statements. Unlike in Version A, there is no relation between the different discourses. As a whole their speech does not represent left-wing General Strike political issues. They do not represent areas of social concern by public members within the strike event context. Conversely, the sequence intends to suggest that the participants are engaged with the speaker's incoherent arguments and proposals. This undermines the representation of the General Strike as a significant public event.

In terms of structure sequence 2 appears organised into three small scenes. One for each speaker:

—Scene 1: Character A, after questioning the reason for the Portuguese public debt, proposes kidnapping Cristiano Ronaldo so as to bankrupt the Portuguese Bank of Saint Spirit (BES). Then, after celebrating the Carnation Revolution he proposes a cannabis revolution arguing that cannabis is not psychologically or physically addictive. In Version A this character also questioned the public debt and celebrated the Carnation Revolution. However, the content disclosed in this scene was omitted to prevent the public from listening to his incongruent propositions that discredit the event as a whole. This content of his speech is irrelevant to the General Strike left-wing political objectives.

I use three shots in order to deliver his speech content. Two shots correspond to a medium-shot and a medium-close-up-shot of the character. There is no omission of discourse in these shots. The character's proposals are delivered in full on each shot. In Version A, I used seven shots so as to omit the incoherent declarations of the character. The third shot corresponds to a medium-close-up of the participants. The shot serves to reinforce public engagement with the character's speech. This means to undermine the participants for listening to the character's absurd comments. This shot was also used in Version A sequence 2. The shot in Version A served as temporal and spatial transition between character D and E. It also served to introduce character E's discourse. During

the shot we heard character E appealing to unity. Therefore, the shot also intended to highlight public engagement with character E. Thus, this medium-close-up shot of participants signified in both versions participation by the public. However, depending on the context where the shot was inserted in the narrative it produced opposite event significations. In Version A it highlighted public participation and unity. In Version B, it confirmed that people were engaging with incongruent and irrelevant speech content.

—Scene 2: Character E accuses the government of trafficking babies and of undertaking black magic rituals with children. I used two shots to present this scene. The character delivers his speech in one unique shot. A medium-long shot that confirms little public participation. The composition also highlights a clown character in the background holding a poster which reads “Entire Party of Liberation”. All these elements undermine the seriousness of the strike event. I also used a medium-close-up of participants. The composition encompasses two women holding red carnations. The woman in the foreground appears to nod affirmatively in support of character E's claims. During the shot we hear the beginning of character E's discourse. This intends to reinforce that people are listening and supporting character E's absurd accusations which discredit the participants and the event as a whole.

In Version A the medium-close-up of the two women holding red carnations was used in sequence 1 during the Zeca Afonso's singing sequence. The shot had a complete different purpose. The red carnations symbolised the memory of the Portuguese Carnation Revolution. The intention for this shot content was to associate the present General Strike event to the qualities of the past Carnation Revolution.

—Scene 3: Character D accuses the government and the police of introducing heroin in the housing estates in order to sedate popular associations and residents movements. I use two shots to deliver the scene. The first shot corresponds to a close-up-shot of a participant smiling. During the shot we hear the beginning of character D's discourse off-screen. The close-up shot also

highlights public engagement with the character's speech content. Character D presents his statement in only one shot, a medium-shot that, like in the case of character E, illustrates lack of public participation. Two flags standing behind the character fall down on the floor at the end of his speech. They act as a comical punctuation mark that undermines the seriousness of the event.

In Version A I use the same close-up of the participant smiling in sequence 1. The shot content was used to introduce Zeca Afonso's singing scene. The shot, in that context, is meant to signify public participation and unity.

Character E and D appeared represented in Version A with different information. Both character's presented a coherent argument. The composition used revealed slogans and protest posters and confirmed public participation and support.

All three scenes in Version B, sequence 2, used medium-close-up and close-up shots of participants to reinforce public engagement with incoherent speech content so as to undermine the participants and therefore the General Strike event. Their discourses are not related in terms of content or complement each other like in the case of Version A. They act as single and separate declarations. They also do not represent relevant information within the General Strike left-wing political context. There is no reference of demonstrations of protest or visual elements such as posters and slogans. Instead I illustrate a clown holding a protest poster with comical qualities. I also omit female character's B and C statements since I only use male speakers to represent the speech events. This confirms a disregard for just social representation. All these choices converged to represent the General Strike as an event with no credibility or significance.

8.4 Sequence 3. Conclusion

8.4.1 Version A. Conclusion

This last sequence aims at summarising and highlighting the overall intentions of signification stated during the narrative analysis. Firstly, it intends to strengthen the spirit of unity and public participation established during sequences 1 and 2. Secondly, it assumes the key issues and concerns represented through individual statements in sequence 2. Thirdly, the sequence attempts to confer power and hope to participants, speakers and the General Strike as a mean to unite the working class in order to fight for their rights.

In order to achieve these objectives I made the following choices:

a) Composition

The sequence consists of two shots. The composition has a separate purposes for each shot. Firstly, it prevents revealing the reduced number of participants so as not to undermine the significance of the event. For that purpose I use a medium-close-up shot that focuses our attention on character D singing an union song through a megaphone instead of exposing the surrounding space. Secondly, the frame intends to confer power and significance to the General Strike. For that purpose I use a low-angle shot. The camera looks up at character D raising his fist in a typical left-wing posture as he delivers his speech. This confers the appearance of strength and power to the shot content since the viewer now stands bellow the eye level of the subject.

b) Omission

On this final sequence I have omitted disclosing lack of public participation so as to avoid undermining the event significance. Secondly, I have also omitted most of the content presented in Version B for the same purposes. In particular, the content related to Characters A, D and B since that content would have completely discredited the character's statements presented in sequence 2.

c) Structure

The sequence presents a single scene with three objectives. Firstly, it celebrates the General Strike as a means to unite the working class in order to fight and defend their rights in unity. Secondly, it summarises the speaker's principal statements which represent the concerns of participants and the objectives of the General Strike. Thirdly, it intends to confer power and hope to the General Strike as an instrument for the working class to achieve their objectives.

The scene appears structured into two separate shots. The first one corresponds to a medium-close-up of character D singing a song. The composition compresses the space to prevent revealing lack of public participation. The song lyrics celebrate the strike as an event of unification and solidarity amongst the working class. It appeals for the working class to unite in order to defend and fight for their rights. The frame focusses our attention on character D singing through a megaphone. The megaphone represents an instrument for individuals to manifest their concerns publicly. The composition, through drawing our attention to the character singing through the megaphone, intends to signify that the song represents a left-wing demonstration. The melody is punctuated by a drum beat as if it was a kind of military march that celebrates the working class going to the strike to defend their rights as an united forced.

The second shot presents a low angle perspective of character D delivering his final speech. As already referred the low angle position confers power to the

speaker for it places the viewer on an inferior level with the subject. Character D looks much bigger and powerful than ever before in the narrative. The strength of the effect is increased by the fact that this camera angle has not been used before and that this visual content represents the last shot in the narrative. In fact, this choice of angle, due to its rupture with filming continuity, separates this content from the rest of the narrative. The shot intends to confer power not only to the speaker and his claims, but also to the off-screen supporters that his statement represents, and therefore to the General Strike as a means for the working class to fight for their rights.

The speech content summarises some of the most important claims made by the speakers in sequence 2. The delivery of the speech appears to be organised in bullet points as if following the drum beat performed by the woman playing the drum. The speaker raises his fist in a typical left-wing gesture punctuating each phrase using the imperative tense commanding the off-screen group that precisely repeats the word he is commanding. The fact that the off-screen crowd repeat after him indicates engagement and unity. The delivery of the bullet-point speech acts as a form of military marching song that accentuates the concepts of unity and fellowship and celebrates workers on strike as an united force in defence of their rights.

8.4.2 Version B. Conclusion

This last sequence has two principal purposes. Firstly, it intends to make the viewer aware of the process of filming. This means drawing the spectator's attention towards the process of omitting and structuring information. The shots used in this final sequence force the audience to select and omit information during the process of narrative comprehension. Secondly, the sequence content aims at highlighting the overall aspects disclosed through out the narrative to discredit the General Strike. The objective is to undermine the participants, the speaker's statements and the significance of the event itself as a whole.

In order to achieve these objectives I made the following choices:

a) Composition

Like in Version A the sequence consists of two shots. The composition serves several purposes. Firstly, it intends to reveal lack of public participation in the event. For that purpose the frame uses a medium-shot and medium-long-shot. This shot size focusses our attention on the reduced number of attending participants.

Secondly, the composition attempts to raise the viewer's awareness with regard to the filming process. For that purpose the narrative presents two sequence shots. The first one lasts over four minutes. The shot discloses information on several planes at the same time: foreground, background and off-screen. The viewer must undertake their own process of omission. They must choose, amongst the information available, where they want to focus their attention. By making a selection they are also forced to make an omission since they cannot keep their attention in all planes of action at the same time.

The second and last shot in the narrative scans the event area horizontally. Like in the case of Version A I have not used this shot type beforehand in the narrative. This new camera movement draws attention to itself. The objective is to make the audience conscious of the camera movement and therefore of the filming process. The fact that the camera is not following any subject in movement it draws attention to the camera movement itself instead. Conversely, the camera as it scans the event area introduces another camera crew filming in the direction of our camera. This highlights further the panning movement and specially the *act* of filming and representing.

b) Omission

I have completely omitted content disclosed in shot thirty-two, Version A. The reason is because that content celebrates the General Strike as a means for the working class to defend their rights as an united force. These are qualities and aspects I have consistently omitted through the whole narrative in order to diminish the significance of the event.

On the other hand, I have included content revealed in shot thirty-one, Version A. However, I disclosed that content using a different composition which has altered its subsequent signification. In Version A I presented the scene in a medium-close up shot so as to avoid revealing the surrounding area. In Version B I used a medium-long shot to describe the same event. This shot size presents the surrounding area which illustrates lack of public participation and undermines the political objective of the song through revealing that few members are singing and establishing that no-one knows the song lyrics by memory. This aims at implying that the reduced number of participants had forgotten the social and political values that the song protests about.

c) Structure

The structure appears divided into two sequence shots. The overall intention is to highlight the elements used through out the narrative to undermine the significance of the General Strike.

The first shot lasts over four minutes. It presents several events and characters within one uninterrupted shot. The objective is, on the one hand, to raise awareness on the spectator about the process of omitting and structuring information to represent and event. On the other hand, it discredits the General Strike. For that purpose, I have chosen to disclose incongruent statements and actions by the characters. Furthermore, I have provided visual evidence of the reduced number of participants. Finally, I have established that the remaining attending public have engaged with the incoherent character's statements.

First, the shot presents character A and D competing for public attention. Character A makes incongruent and irrelevant statements about Fernando Pessoa. Character D confronts character A, first by singing through the megaphone, and after by addressing him directly. The repeated conflict for public attention between these characters becomes a comical act which may remind us of the past clown scene in sequence 1. Their actions and statements undermine the seriousness of the event.

Second, character B and other off-screen characters force a woman to declare repeatedly, first to our camera, and later through the megaphone, that she is hungry, in exchange for money. Character B and the off-screen characters are attempting to expose social injustice and poverty. However, they are manipulating a person in need to make their claims and achieve their objectives. Their actions are exploitive and ethically questionable. All this diminishes the seriousness and political objectives of the General Strike. Furthermore, during this event, character A continues to proclaim incongruent statements. However, some public members express approval of his claims by applauding. People applauding incongruent arguments discredits not only the public but the event itself. The crowd by applauding and engaging with the event indicate that they feel represented by the speaker's inconsistent speech. This signifies that the crowd and the event are also inconsistent.

The third and last section in this shot highlights lack of participation in the event. Once character B and the Hungry woman exit frame the composition clearly reveals the reduce number of participants scattered in the event area. Furthermore, when PCP Man makes his claims we can only identify one off-screen supporting voice. Later, when he celebrates the Portuguese communist Party, PCP, only one character enters frame to support him. Another woman claps also in support standing behind character D. This also illustrates lack of public participation for hardly any member of the public participates in the event. Conversely, on this section PCP Man makes the following declaration: "Political consciousness, who has it?". This question sums up many of the signifying intentions of narrative Version B. The incoherent statements and

event representations that we have witnessed through out the narrative intend to signify lack of political consciousness. This aims at undermining the General Strike as a means for the working class to defend their rights.

All three sections in this shot sequence present several events conflicting with each at the same time. The events develop in the foreground, background and off-screen planes of action forcing the viewer to focus their attention in one source of information. This implies omitting the others. This intends to raise the spectator's awareness of the unavoidable process of omitting information during the filming process.

The last shot in narrative Version B represents the counterpart of the last low-angle shot used in Version A. As stated, the low-angle perspective conferred the shot content certain unique qualities due to being the only shot used in the narrative that presents these characteristics. The same happens to shot 24 in Version B. The shot begins with a medium-shot of two women discussing the government's inefficiency. One of the women refers to the word "deficit". At that moment the camera reacts against the word and moves away abandoning the character's conversation. The panning was not motivated by following a subject in movement. The camera responded emotionally like a character to the word "deficit" through rejecting the event content and moving away in search of another event. This is the only panning of this type used in the narrative which draws attention to the camera intentionally. The camera scans the space horizontally until settling on another event area. During the process the movement of the camera continuously reveals and omits new spaces and events. We notice another camera crew filming in "our" direction. All these elements converge to raise awareness of the process of selecting and omitting information during the *act* of filming.

The final event presents, like in Version A, character D singing. However, unlike in Version A, the shot clearly reveals the surrounding space and highlights the reduce number of participants. Due to the undermining information that has been consistently disclosed through out the whole narrative, the drum beats

represent the march of a funeral. The funeral of the values and ideals that establish the General Strike as a mean for the working class to fight together. The composition also accentuates that very few people seem to know the song lyrics. Several people resort to read the lyrics from a piece of paper and we can hardly hear any voices singing apart from that of character D. This suggests that the reduced number of singing participants not only have forgotten the song lyrics but also the values that the lyrics manifest. Thus, the last phrase, “Long live the workers and long life the General Strike”, intends to signify a farewell to those past forgotten values rather than the celebration of the General Strike as a mean to defend working class rights like it was established in Version A.

Chapter 9

Conclusion on research analysis

9.1 Introduction

The analysis on narrative construction has been focussed on researching the concepts of omission and structure. The main purpose of this research was to establish how the process of omitting and structuring event information may condition event representation and its subsequent signification. Event information encompasses images and sounds that, were acquired or could have been obtained from the historical world, during the *act* of filming. The volume of images and sounds captured during the filming stage is designated as raw material: a limited source of non-organised event information. Raw material comes from the historical world and therefore event information is the result of a historical event; that is the spatial, temporal and physical context that the event inhabits, in the historical world, during the filming process. This represents an infinite source of non-organised event information. Omission refers to the process of removing visual or sound event information during the filming stage

or during narrative construction. Structure consists of organising non-omitted raw material into a narrative form.

In order to undertake this research I have constructed two different narrative versions of the same event and from the same raw material. The content of both narrative versions together represent almost the totality of the raw material available for constructing the narrative. For this reason narrative Version A mostly presents event information omitted in Version B and vice-versa. The objective was to research and study how the process of omitting and structuring event information, in accordance with the filmmaker's narrative intentions, may induce different representations and significations of the same event.

It is important to highlight that in order to achieve the conclusions disclosed in this chapter it was necessary to undertake the research analysis during narrative construction presented in chapters 6, 7 and 8. I would also like to underline, once again, that the conclusions stated in this chapter refer only to a research undertaken on the narrative construction analysis of an Observational documentary. Other technical and creative strategies could have been implemented to document the same event, and each one of them may present other parameters such as interviews, voice-over narrator, non-synch sound, re-enacted sequences, 2D and 3D animation or music. This means that there are many other technical and creative possibilities for applying omission and structure choices when representing an event. However, as stated in chapter 5.2. I have chosen Observational documentary so that I can focus the research analysis on its specific representation parameters. Therefore, it should be clear that the results presented in this chapter do not intend to incorporate or embody all forms of event representation.

As a summary of the results achieved through the research analysis the following preliminary conclusions have been established:

A. Representing an event results from processing event information. This process consists of implementing omitting and structuring choices of event information. These decisions condition how the event appears represented and

its subsequent signification.

B. Omission and structure of event information are applied in accordance with the filmmaker's narrative intentions.

C. The filmmaker's options to accomplish their narrative intentions are determined, first, by the innate qualities of the historical event during the *act* of filming, and second by the innate qualities of the raw material, during narrative construction. Innate qualities refer to whether the content of visual or sound information from the historical world meets or not the filmmaker's narrative intentions. This entails whether a filmmaker, via omission and structure, is able to transform or modify an action or a speech into satisfying the narrative intentions. This might involve choosing a particular composition or sound recording option during the *act* of filming or it may entail altering the meaning of a character's speech in the raw material during narrative construction. That what people say or do during the historical event can restrict the filmmaker's possibilities for acquiring event information or for constructing a narrative. Thus, innate qualities encompasses the filmmaker's possibilities for transforming event information, via omission or structure, into meeting their narrative intentions.

D. In terms of omission I have identified two types: partial and total.

Partial omission refers to removing non-autonomous sections of event information. An autonomous source of event information represents a single event able to produce an independent unit of event information about the historical event. For instance, this could imply a single speech from a character or an action. Single events represent an individual scene in the narrative. The filmmaker might represent a single autonomous event through an individual shot or by combining a group of different images. Therefore, a non-autonomous unit of event information refers to a specific visual or sound section integrated in the single autonomous event. This could entail part of the speech or action of a character. Total omission points to omitting complete autonomous sections of event information or scenes.

E. A filmmaker undertakes partial or total omission, first, during the filming stage and, and second, during narrative construction.

F. During the filming stage filmmakers undertake partial or total omission of event information via composition or sound recording. The source of event information is the historical event. As stated this represents an infinite source of non-organised event information.

G. During narrative construction a filmmaker applies total or partial omission of the event information contained in the raw material. This refers to the images and sounds acquired during the *act* of filming. This corresponds to a limited non-organised source of event information.

H. Narrative construction entails organising partially non-omitted event information, from the raw material, into a particular structure. Structure implies an order since a narrative begins with an event or series of events and ends with another. To construct the narrative the filmmaker implement two types of structure options in terms of event information: the scene structure and the overall structure.

I. Scene structure encompasses the organisation of visual or sound event information representing an autonomous event in terms of signification. This may entail a single shot or a sequence of shots depending on the filmmaker's narrative intentions. As I have referred on point D. a scene refers to a single block of autonomous event information.

L. Overall structure entails organising the selected scenes into a particular order. This implies the organisation of single blocks of autonomous event information into a particular structure. This represents the specific order in which all non-omitted event information appears disclosed in the narrative.

After having established these preliminary conclusions it is appropriate to disclose a detailed account of the concepts of omission and structure.

9.2 Omission

Having disclosed an appropriate overall introduction of the concepts of omission and structure it is now possible to consider the concept of omission in detail and separate from structure.

9.2.1 Omission during the filming stage

During the *act* of filming the filmmaker undertakes partial and total omission of event information simultaneously. They implement omission from an unlimited source of event information: the historical event. Any historical event is constituted by an infinite universe of non-organised smaller or larger units of event information. For example, the General Strike event consists of an infinite number of possible units of event information. There is a wide range of sound and visual information available for representing it: speech, singing, people talking, actions, demonstrations, objects, gestures, expressions, buildings or ambient sound. Each one of these elements can be inserted into a larger context or can be subdivided into smaller event units. The possibilities for extracting event information from the General Strike event are endless and it depends on the filmmaker's omitting choices.

a) Partial omission during the filming stage refers to acquiring sections of event information via composition or sound recording. The event information recorded through the camera or the microphone is limited and partial for the filmmaker can always find omitted event information outside the visual and sonic technical range. Opting for a shot size or a concrete sound for recording implies always omitting off-screen and off-microphone event information. Every technical decision involves an unavoidable omission.

b) Total omission during the filming stage refers to the omitted off-screen and off-microphone event information. This refers to all the event information that the camera or microphone equipment is unable to acquire during the *act* of filming. For instance, a close-up shot eradicates spatial content about the event. It omits

the surrounding event area. Instead it focusses the audience's attention on specific units of event information. For instance, through a close-up a filmmaker may reveal the facial expression of a character, or an object, such as the shot used in narrative Version A to illustrate the red carnations during Zeca Afonso's singing scene. A long shot, instead, reveals spatial information about the event. This is the case of the first four initial shots in Version B disclosing the reduced number of participants and drawing attention to the small scale of the event.

This suggests that a shot size acts out as a "container" with a limited capacity for storing image and sound information. There is always an omission of event information for the event still exists outside the frame and independently of the filmmaker's technical options for representing it. Cinema's technical qualities restricts the filmmaker's ability to acquire complete event information from the historical event limitless source. Filmmakers are only able to obtain specific sections of event information. This illustrates cinema's fundamental technical restriction in representing the three dimensional historical world that the event inhabits.

Cinema's technical qualities, during the filming stage, forces the filmmaker to make specific decisions in terms of event information. Since the event, as stated, represents an universe of non-organised event information, these restrictions, via omission, provide the filmmaker with the opportunity of organising a specific version of the event, his own. The subsequent organization corresponds to the filmmaker's experience and point-of-view of the event.

9.2.2 Omission during narrative construction

During the construction of a narrative the filmmaker implements partial and total omission in terms of the event information available from the raw material. This represents a limited source of event information, since raw material consists of a limited number of sounds and images.

Omission during narrative construction originally intends to satisfy the filmmaker's narrative intentions. The process of omission, whether partially or totally, allows the filmmaker to focus the spectator's attention on concrete event information such as a statement, an object, an expression or an action. However, these choices are conditioned, as I have already referred in the introduction, by the innate qualities of the raw material. This refers to character's speech content or other event actions. That which people say or do, in the raw material, may restrict the filmmaker's possibilities for representing the event. The same world a filmmaker represents constraints the decisions for representing it.

a) Partial omission —. This entails removing partial sections of event information from the narrative. The principal objective is to transform specific sections of visual or sound information into meeting the filmmaker's narrative intentions. I have identified two types of partial omission during narrative construction: partial omission from a shot and partial omission from a scene.

— Partial omission from a shot. This entails removing a section of visual or sound information from a single shot in order to satisfy the filmmaker's narrative intentions. The filmmaker can apply partial omission for a number of reasons such as reducing the length of a shot or modifying the signification and meaning of a specific event. For instance, In shot 15, sequence 1, Version A, I have omitted the woman's statement: "look at that son of a bitch". This omission prevented from negatively conditioning the audience's expectations about a future event: character A's subsequent speech in sequence 2. This shot was used, in Version A and B, as a temporal and spatial transition between sequence 1 and 2. However, in Version A I chose to omit this speech information in order to avoid discrediting the event as intended by the filmmaker. In Version B, due to opposite narrative intentions, I have included this information.

— Partial omission from a scene. This encompasses omitting a complete shot or group of shots from a scene from the narrative in order to meet the filmmaker's intentions for representing the event. These shots do not act as a

complete unit of meaning. They do not represent by themselves a complete event or scene. They only represent a portion of information about the scene. They must be linked to other shots in order to fulfil their signification. For instance, in Version B I have omitted shots 11 and 12 which appear in Version A. These shots illustrate red carnations during Zeca Afonso's singing sequence. The omission intended to undermine the togetherness and fellowship qualities of the event as intended for Version B. These shots do not represent the complete event by themselves. They must be linked to other shots in the narrative in order to produce meaning about the event. In this case, these shots belong to Zeca Afonso's singing scene. By removing them I do not eradicate the whole information about the event but only a portion of it. This is why omitting these two shots also corresponds to partial omission.

Partial omission follows narrative intentions in accordance with the innate qualities of the raw material. This means that sometimes the raw material does not allow the filmmaker, via omission, to modify the meaning of its content. In this case the filmmaker is forced to undertake total omission of event information.

b) Total omission - This alludes to completely eradicating from the narrative autonomous units of event information. This could mean to omit a single shot constituting a complete scene or a group of shots representing a scene.

—Total omission from a single shot-scene. In this case the information contained in the shot must refer to a single autonomous independent event. For instance, omitting shot 13 in Version A from narrative Version B, implies a total omission of event information. This shot content describes an event of protest and public togetherness. During the shot a group of people shout: "Socrates listen! Workers are fighting!". The information in the shot by itself represents a single scene.

This does not mean that the shot is not related to a larger event context. First, it belongs to the General Strike event. Second, it belongs to the spatial context

where the unionists sing a Zeca Afonso song. However, the shot content is able to produce by itself complete concrete meaning and therefore it represents an autonomous unit of event information. The shot content does not need, like in the case of shots 11 and 12 in Version A referred above (illustrating red carnations), to be associated to other shots to complete its meaning and signification.

—Total omission from a scene. This entails omitting a group of shots representing a scene. For example, in Version B, sequence 1, shots ten to twelve present a group of people dressed-up as clowns in the event area. The objective was to discredit the seriousness of the event. In Version A, sequence 1, I have omitted this group of shots due to opposite narrative intentions. This corresponds to total omission of event information since this group of shots represent an autonomous scene. If I had omitted only one of the shots it would only refer to partial and not total omission for these shots would continue to produce the same meaning in the narrative.

— Reasons for undertaking total omission. I have identified several reasons for undertaking total omission of event information:

First, filmmakers may undertake total omission when via partial omission they are not able to transform specific sections of visual or sound information into meeting the narrative intentions. In fact, Version A presents a volume of event information that was completely omitted in Version B, and vice versa. This indicates that there is a great amount of event information that only meets the narrative requirements of either Version A or B. For instance, Version A, in sequence 2, shots 23 to 25, presents character B and C's statements. Version B, due to narrative intentions, had to omit this content. The reason is because I could not transform either of these character's coherent discourse, via partial omission, into becoming absurd or inconsistent declarations that could undermine the event as intended for narrative Version B. The visual and sound information disclosed in these shots does not provide the filmmaker with that possibility.

Second, normally, during narrative construction, the filmmaker must completely omit most of the raw material available for constructing the narrative. Due to practical and logical reasons the filmmaker is unable to include all the raw material available in the final narrative. In a documentary production, during the filming stage, a filmmaker normally acquire a great volume of visual and sound event information. For example, for a one-hour edited film a filmmaker may end-up recording forty or fifty hours of raw material. This is the case of Frederick Wiseman who claims that he ends up using only three per cent of the material available fro constructing the narrative.²¹⁶ This means that most of the event information will be completely omitted in the final narrative. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that an exhibition slot for a fifty hour documentary narrative exists in any mass media channel in the world, and therefore the film becomes more “palatable” to viewers, distributors and broadcasters at a shorter length. Watching a fifty hour non-stop narrative would present enormous difficulties for an audience in undertaking narrative comprehension since a human being is unable to sustain attention during such a length of time. In fact, Aristotle had already established this principle: that narrative must have a length approach accessible to human memory.²¹⁷

Third, the filmmaker may also apply total omission due to technical reasons. This means that a filmmaker, during narrative construction, may consider a group of shots or sounds technically insufficient for achieving narrative intentions. The images might be out of focus or the sound may be poorly

²¹⁶Frederick Wiseman: “I edit the movies. I shoot between 80 and 120 hours, and I end up using 3% of the material. Films are very edited. A movie like *Belfast, Maine* (1999), which is exhibited in this festival, has 3,600 cuts, which is a huge number of cuts in a documentary. There is a scene with 11 minutes with 270 cuts. The films are very edited.”

Wiseman, Frederick interviewed by Markun, Paulo. *Roda Viva*, Television program transmitted in Cultural Television, issued in April 2001 on the occasion of Frederick Wiseman's Retrospective at the *6th Edition of the International Documentary Film Festival It's All True*. Sao Paulo. Brazil. <http://www.rodaviva.fapesp.br/materiabusca/244/federick>

%20wiseman/entrevistados/frederick_wiseman_2001.htm. 2001 (consulted in 03/01/2011)

²¹⁷Cf: Aristotles, *Poetica*, 1451a

recorded or incomprehensible. There is always bound to be a number of images and sounds that present technical problems or difficulties. Normally, this content will be completely omitted from the final narrative.

Fourth, the filmmaker may consider some of the raw material redundant or repetitive. Filmmakers might have several images and sounds containing the same event information. This means that some visual or sound content becomes redundant since they have other available images or sounds to convey the same event information. For instance, when evaluating the raw material available for representing the General Strike I have identified a number of repetitive images. They mostly refer to L.S and E.L.S describing the event area. Some of these images were used in narrative Version B. Shots one to four in sequence 1, Version B, correspond to these type of images. During the evaluation I have found other shots containing the same event information. For this reason they were considered redundant and they were omitted completely from the narrative.

9.3 Structure

After having disclosed a comprehensive account of the concept of omission it is now appropriate to consider the concept of structure in detail and in relation to omission.

9.3.1 Structure during narrative construction

Constructing a narrative in order to represent an event implicates organising non-omitted event information into a particular structure. This refers to the visual and sound information available from the raw material. This is of crucial importance for both narrative construction and narrative comprehension. The filmmaker in order to represent the event must present event information in a particular order. In fact, audiences receive the narrative in the order presented.

Structure implies, therefore, both organising event information within a particular scene and organising the overall volume of scenes into a particular order. As stated structure choices intend to satisfy the filmmaker's narrative intentions. However, it is important to refer again that the possibilities for organising event information are conditioned by the innate qualities of the raw material.

a) Scene structure of event information

This entails organising the event information contained in a scene. If a scene appears represented in a single continuous shot the filmmaker cannot organise the event information in the structure for obvious reasons. This means that in order to employ scene structure of event information the scene must consist of two or more shots. For instance, shots 16 to 12, in sequence 2, Version A, present character A's speech content. These shots as a whole constitute a scene. Through implementing partial omission and structure choices I have managed to omit and re-order character A's absurd speech content and transform it into a coherent discourse as intended for narrative Version A. Seven cuts had to be used in order to achieve this:

In Version B, I have revealed character A's incongruent declarations:

After character A questions:

“There is no money, there is no money? Why is there no money?”

Version B reveals his absurd proposition of kidnapping Cristiano Ronaldo to bankrupt the BES (Bank of Saint Spirit):

“So what do we do? We steal Ronaldo and send it to Afghanistan so that he plays football in front of Bin Laden. Then, BES goes bankrupt for their warranty is fucked!”

In Version A I have also disclosed the same question in shot 18:

“There's no money, there's no money? Why is there no money?”

but then I omitted the proposition of kidnapping Cristiano Ronaldo exposed in

Version B. Instead, in Version A, I cut to shot 19 where character A appears to ask another consistent question:

“Owes to whom? Say it! To whom? I want to know. What country? Germany, France, to whom?” And a man replies: “ to China. Now is to China, man”

Therefore, on the one hand, I have omitted the inconsistent proposal about kidnapping Cristiano Ronaldo, on the other, I have selected another piece of coherent speech information which follows in a coherent manner the character's previous statement. Through joining these two pieces of speech information together I was able to construct a logical and coherent statement which did not discredit the character's declarations or the event as intended for narrative Version A. However, I was able to transform character A's speech content because the innate qualities of the raw material allowed us to do so. This means that character A's speech content provides the possibility of omitting and structuring his speech content so as to modify its meaning and signification.

This is not always the case. For instance, I did not manage to transform character B and C's statements into meeting narrative intentions for Version B and they had to be completely omitted from the narrative. This means that through omission and structure I was not able to modify these characters' coherent discourse into becoming an incongruent or absurd declaration as intended for Version B.

b) The overall structure of event information

As stated above, structuring information also implies the organisation of the overall volume of scenes into a particular order. This entails the assembly of blocks of scene-information into a specific order. The resulting narrative aims at communicating the filmmaker's point-of-view and experience of the event. Thus, the choices involved intend to meet the filmmaker's narrative intentions. This means that the choices implemented to construct the overall narrative structure are also going to condition the event representation and its subsequent

signification.

For instance, narrative Versions A and B, for comparative analysis purposes, have been organised into three sequences. Each version presents different narrative intentions. Version A means to produce a coherent and positive representation of the event. It intended to attribute popular, fellowship and togetherness qualities to the event and to celebrate the General Strike as a means to unite the working class in defence of their rights. These qualities attempted to confer public significance to the event as a whole. Version B meant to produce a negative and incoherent representation of the event. The narrative focussed the attention on the lack of public unity and participation, the small scale of the event and on the inconsistency of the character's statements. All these elements converged to undermine the significance of the event.

In order to achieve their respective narrative intentions I have applied different structural choices of event information:

In Version A the scenes have been organised in an order in relation to each other's content.

Scenes complement each other's event information so as to reinforce each other's signification intentions. For instance, in sequence 2, Version A relates all the character's statements by associating each other's content to one another. The sequence is organised into five scenes, one for each character. I initiate the sequence with a general statement by character A introducing the public dissatisfaction with present government policies. The subsequent character's arguments and declarations further develop the general statement through illustrating specific reasons for the public discontentment. Each speech content ads new information and further develops previous arguments complementing each other's. As a whole, all speech content together, represents a left-wing political perspective on the issues being debated. The event information appears organised in the narrative in a coherent manner representing the concerns of the participants and the objectives of the General Strike.

In Version B, structural choices do not establish a connection across the

different content like in Version A. Scenes do not complement each other's event information. The narrative does not create the same expectation as Version A which serves to engage the spectator. Each scene plays out as single separate block of event information.

For instance, in sequence 2, Version B presents three scenes, one for each character. Their declarations are not only inconsistent or even absurd but they also bare no relation to one another. They do not complement each other or represent the interests and concerns of the General Strike. Character A proposes kidnapping Cristiano Ronaldo and undertaking a cannabis revolution. Character E accuses the government of trafficking babies and undertaking black magic rituals with children. Finally, character D accuses the police and the government of introducing heroin in the housing estates in order to sedate resident movements and tenant associations. The speech content does not present a political perspective. The event information bares no relation to each other. Each scene acts out as a separate block of information which discredits the significance of the event and the participants.

As a whole Version B lasts 11 minutes and 35 seconds. It presents 24 shots and 10 scenes. Version A lasts 8 minutes and 11 seconds. It encompasses 32 shots and 11 scenes. Thus, both narrative versions present a similar number of scenes. However, the difference on the number of shots used on either version indicates that I have implemented a greater amount of partial and total omission and structure choices in Version A so that I could meet the narrative intentions. On the other hand, Version B lasts 3 and half minutes more than Version A. This suggests that a greater amount of event information was only suitable to undermine the event.

– I could have only reached these conclusions through having access to the omitted raw material. Otherwise, it would not had been possible. It is only the filmmaker who has access to this omitted information. Conversely, in terms of structure the spectator don't have access to the decisions made when watching the film. This is why their knowledge of the narrative construction and

subsequent representation and signification is incomplete since they do not have access to either partial or total omission choices. They are only able to acknowledge and process the non-omitted event information disclosed in the narrative in a particular order. This confirms the importance of having access to omission and structure choices in order to further develop our understanding of narrative construction and event representation.

Final Conclusion

This thesis has focussed the research on the process of narrative construction in documentary from the point of view of the filmmaker. The main object of research has been the process of omission and structure of event information involved in representing a historical event.

The research undertaken, through bibliographical research and a case study, has established that documentary narratives, independently of the mode or strategy used by the filmmaker for representing the historical world, unlike in fiction, result from the process of omission. This process consists of organising, via partial and total omission, a limitless source of non-organised event information, the historical event, into an organised limited volume of images and sounds: an audiovisual narrative representing the filmmaker's personal experience.

The following Final Conclusion integrates and reflects the results achieved through the research implemented in the First and Second Part of this thesis.

The First Part designated as the Theoretical Context entitles the bibliographical research undertaken and submitted in chapters 1 to 4. The Theoretical Context introduces and discusses different historical perspectives and film theories with regard to the process of representing the historical world in documentary.

The Second Part, submitted from chapters 5 to 9, corresponds to a case study of a documentary filmed and edited by myself. This case study entails an in depth research analysis, from the point of view of the filmmaker, on narrative construction and event representation. The research entitles the construction of two different documentary narrative versions of the same event and from the same raw material in accordance to the narrative intentions stated in chapters 6 and 7. The main object of this case study has been the research of the concept of omission, introduced in chapter 5, through undertaking a comparative detailed research analysis on the narrative construction of both narrative versions.

I have organised into five separate topics the following final conclusions. On each topic I summarise, discuss and reflect the concept of omission with regard to the process of representing the historical world in documentary and in relation

to the historical perspectives and film theories introduced in the Theoretical Context.

1. Cinema's technical qualities: designed to undertake omission

Cinema has been established as a technical and creative medium able to produce a two dimensional audiovisual representation of the historical world that we inhabit.

Most film theory has established that cinema's qualities in representing the world consist of specific technical restrictions and limitless creative possibilities. My proposal is that these qualities, in documentary, have been designed to undertake omission. In fact, in documentary, it is the concept of omission which defines the parameters that constitute and embody these restrictions or creative possibilities.

The camera or sound recording equipment, as Rudolf Arheim, Jean Mitry or Sergei Eisenstein have stated, appears restricted to represent that which is technically visible or audible and not that which results from human experience: the interaction with the world we inhabit through our own senses. These restrictions outline cinema's fundamental inability to record images or sounds as a filmmaker sees or hears them in the historical world since in fact cinema, like Jean Mitry has stated, when representing an event “replaces the homogenous reality of our continuum perception, with a series of discontinued fragments”.²¹⁸ A process through which the director “reconstructs” their experience of reality into a technical format. This means that a camera cannot reproduce the human experience of seeing but it can, however, represent that experience into an audiovisual format. Hence, the camera or sound recording equipment is unable to acquire the filmmaker’s experience of the event but only images and sounds which can represent that experience. On the other hand, cinema's technical attributes, like Dziga Vertov had stated, confer the filmmaker the means to perceive and learn about the world in ways which they could not achieve

²¹⁸Mitry, Jean. *The Aesthetics and Psychology of Cinema*, p168

through their own senses or experience. A camera can reveal details about the world which are not immediately perceptible to the human senses. Furthermore, the cinematic elements provide filmmakers with infinite creative possibilities to learn about and represent the world they inhabit.

These technical restrictions and creative possibilities represent an act of omission. In fact, the concept of omission outlines cinema's fundamental restrictions and creative possibilities as the main source for representing the historical world in documentary. Cinema's technical elements first and foremost force filmmakers to undertake omission of event information. This represents cinema's greater restriction for representing the world. It is not just a question, like Formalist film theory has argued, that cinema can only represent a two dimensional illusion of a three dimensional historical world.²¹⁹ In fact, nowadays, new technologies allow the filmmaker to represent the world in a three dimensional format. The greatest technical restriction that cinema imposes in filmmakers is that in order to represent the world, regardless of the technology they use, they must implement omission for a camera or sound recording equipment is always restricted to acquire specific sections of visual or sound information about the event they represent. Cinema's technical means are unable to capture and represent an event as a whole.

In documentary, during the act of filming, filmmakers implement partial and total omission simultaneously. Shots act out as a kind of “container” with a limited capacity for storing visual or sound information about the event they represent. Every technical decision, choosing a shot type or recording a sound, involves an unavoidable omission of event information for the historical event continues to exist outside cinema's technical range and independently of the filmmaker's ability for representing it. This is because a historical event represents an infinite

²¹⁹However, it is worth noticing that the development of new technologies are now offering filmmakers the possibility for representing the world using a three dimensional technical format. This technology can raise new issues with regard to the process of representing the three dimensional world that we inhabit. Nevertheless, as I have stated, the purpose of this dissertation is to focus the research on the process of omission and structure of event information and not on the technology implemented for representing. For this reason I have considered that this technology should be the object of further discussion in a specific research study.

source of non-organised event information. The possibilities for extracting images and sounds from the historical event are limitless.

During narrative construction a filmmaker must also implement partial and total omission in order to represent the event. Filmmakers execute omission from the raw material. This represents a limited source of non-organised event information: a specific number of images and sounds acquired during the *act* of filming in order to construct a narrative and represent the event. The subsequent event representation results from organising non-omitted raw material into a narrative form. This process involves omitting most of the raw material available for constructing the documentary narrative since in fact the final narrative representing the event embodies a very small percentage of visual and sound event information from the original source, that is the historical event. In documentary, the overall process of representing the world, consists of implementing creative and technical decisions in terms of partial and total omission of event information.

Conversely, cinema's infinite creative potential for representing the historical world results also from undertaking omission. It is not just a question, like Vertov had poignantly argued, that cinema provides documentary filmmakers with new technical means to further their understanding and perception of the world. It is the fact that cinema's technical means provide filmmakers in documentary with infinite possibilities for acquiring images and sounds from the historical world.

A documentary filmmaker captures images and sounds to construct a narrative and represent an event. A shot type or sound recording option means to attain and store specific visual or sound information regarding the historical event. Since the historical event represents an infinite universe of non-organised event information the possibilities for extracting images and sounds from that universe are also limitless. However, the possibilities are unlimited because cinema's technical qualities allow the filmmaker, in documentary through omission, infinite possibilities to represent the event. During the *act* of filming a filmmaker can implement numberless compositions and sound recording options in order to

obtain event information to represent the event. The possible images and sounds that a filmmaker can produce or extract from the same historical event are numberless. This process always implicates an act of omission. Conversely, during narrative construction, a filmmaker can also implement endless choices for representing the event. The possibilities for organising and omitting raw material are also infinite. Images and sounds, like Mitry and Pasolini have stated, cannot be considered stable terms based on fixed values of constant unvarying meaning like words. They cannot be grouped into a lexicon or grammar for they do not obey to fixed values like signs may do. For this reason the possibilities for conferring meaning and signification to images and sounds, via omission, during narrative construction are boundless. Each documentary may allocate different meaning to different elements in accordance with the filmmaker's intentions. In every film, signs and codes have to be organised by the filmmaker under certain rules and parameters, so that the audience can understand what they signify. And with each documentary or filmmaker, rules and parameters for narrative construction might change, and so will the signification and meaning of the visual and sound elements that constitute the narrative. This process in documentary involves undertaking partial and total omission from the images and sounds contained in the raw material, and subsequently, the organisation of non-omitted event information into a particular structure.

Hence, every filmmaker in documentary, when representing a historical event, is technically restricted to undertake omission. However, it is through omission that a filmmaker has access to an infinite source of creative possibilities for representing the world. Via omission, cinema's technical qualities grant the filmmaker endless possibilities for capturing events, during the *act* of filming, and for combining images and sounds into a structure, during narrative construction. Due to the fact that, via omission, cinema's creative possibilities are boundless this provides each and every filmmaker with the opportunity of producing a different representation and subsequent signification of the same historical event. Each filmmaker is able to extract different images and sounds

from the same historical event and combine them in a different order to represent the same event from a different perspective and signification. This suggests that, in documentary, cinema's technical elements have been designed to implement omission and it is the process of undertaking omission that outlines and illustrates cinema's fundamental restrictions and creative possibilities for representing the historical world.

2. The technical appearance of reality: the credibility of omission.

Representing an event in documentary implies constructing a credible technical appearance of the event's past existence in the historical world. However, the authenticity of images and sounds acquired during the *act* of filming do not necessarily guarantee a credible representation of the event during narrative construction. Seymour Chatman has stated that representing a credible technical appearance of a historical event is not just a question of what the event "is" but also of what the event "should appear to be". Chatman's arguments underline the fact that in order to represent a convincing technical appearance of an event we must satisfy certain cultural expectations. This is a very complex issue for different cultures may have different guidelines or conventions for conferring credibility to cinema's technical representation. Haskell Wexler's credibility issues, stated in chapter 1.1, with regard to *Brazil: A Report on Torture* (1971) might not be applicable, for instance, in an Asian culture. However, other credibility issues may arise in Asia which are disregarded or unimportant in a Western culture. Hence, accomplishing a credible technical appearance of reality may change in accordance to the cultural expectations where the film is publicly exhibited.²²⁰

²²⁰On the other hand, we may ask or inquiry, outside of this thesis' research objectives, of certain cultural parameters or values which may embody universal qualities in terms of representation and public receptions. Due to the obvious complexity and depth of this subject these cultural qualities should be object of research and study in another dissertation.

For these reasons Jean Mitry has argued that there is no film strategy or theory which can be considered more suitable to represent the world. The credibility of representation cannot rely on whether documentary filmmakers apply Soviet fragmented montage, Hollywood's "invisible" technique or Bazin's long-take and depth-of-field film theory conceptions. They are all equally suitable or unsuitable to represent a historical event. Every one of Nichols' documentary modes can be equally appropriate to represent an event since no strategy or documentary mode can necessarily guarantee a credible representation of an event. There is no correct formula that a filmmaker can apply which can to ensure an authentic representation of the historical world. This is because the "quality" of the technical appearance of reality depends upon the cultural context where the film is publicly exhibited and on the technical and creative decisions involved in representing it. Since cinema's creative possibilities are limitless it is not a question of the documentary mode or strategy chosen to represent an event but of the personal choices implemented by the individual filmmaker to apply that specific strategy. This extends the concept of omission as an essential feature for representing the historical world in all documentary narrative forms.

Representing a historical event involves undertaking omission during the *act* of filming and during narrative construction in order to organise event information in the form of a narrative. Credibility issues with regard to representing the historical world arises from the information disclosed or omitted in the narrative. Every technical and creative choice implemented by the filmmaker, such as a shot size or a cut when editing a sequence, means to acquire or organise event information so as to represent it. In documentary the whole process of representing an event implicates making choices with regard to event information. Filmmakers capture images and sounds to attain specific event information. From those images and sounds designated as raw material the filmmaker constructs the narrative and represents the event. The whole process implies processing event information through undertaking omission. First, partial and total omission during the *act* of filming, and later during narrative construction.

Thus, credibility issues in documentary emerges from the omission choices implemented for representing the event. Those omission decisions confer specific meaning or signification to the events or characters represented in the narrative. Spectators judge the credibility of the representation, within their own cultural context, with regard to the information that the narrative communicates about the event. Furthermore, like Edward Branigan has stated, we have to take into account that audiences do not remember *how* a story is told for it is extremely difficult for a spectator to memorise choices in terms of lighting, sound design or camera composition. Audiences remember the representation of an event in terms of sections of information. This event information appears organised in the narrative in the form of discontinuous fragments of images and sounds joined together into a structure. This suggests that the viewer judges the credibility of the technical appearance of the representation with regard to the omission process undertaken by the filmmaker in order to construct the narrative.

There are no rules or set of conventions which can determine the way we represent the world for the possibilities are endless since modes or strategies vary in accordance to the individual filmmaker who applies them. Nichols's documentary modes confirm that narrative strategies are in continuous evolution. In fact, their evolution depends on the filmmakers' needs to accomplish personal expression. Modes or strategies illustrate how throughout history documentary filmmakers have searched and continue to search for new ways to express their personal views of reality and to expand the boundaries of cinema's creative potential.

It is for this reason that no strategy or film theory can necessarily guarantee an authentic representation of a historical event since on each strategy the documentary filmmaker can implement an infinite number of partial and total omission choices. Those personal decisions may condition how the event information appears disclosed in the documentary narrative and therefore the credibility of how the event appears technically represented.

3. Narrative construction: organising and communicating the filmmaker's experience through omission.

Narrative appears in all human discourse as a means for acquiring and organising information, and communicating information to others, and therefore as an instrument for obtaining knowledge and expressing it. From this perspective, narrative is a means for the transmission of information which implies organising thoughts and data into a structure. Hence, narrative, like Abbot and Branigan have stated, can be understood as an strategy for perceiving, understanding, organising and communicating experience to others. A strategy for the transmission of specific information that describes our experience and therefore a means for making our individual life experience understood by others.

A documentary narrative consists of a sum of events organised into a structure since a film narrative always begins with an event or series of events and ends with another. In fact, Seymour Chatman and others, had already established that in order to perceive and communicate, our minds seek structure. Structure is unavoidable and fundamental since in order to understand the information of a particular event we need to organise that information into a particular comprehensible order. Otherwise, we are unable to understand its meaning or communicate it to others.

David Bordwell, in his very influential and comprehensive study of fiction narrative, *Narration in Fiction Film*, understands narrative as a process for cuing and channelling the viewer's construction of the story. This results from the interaction between syuzhet and style which can be understood as the role in narration that syuzhet or style might play in cuing the audience's narrative comprehension. Bordwell has divided the act of narration into two main tendencies: hollywood's "invisible" canonic narrative form which subordinates style to syuzhet's narrational needs and the "others" or any "other". This is because even though Art Cinema, Soviet Cinema or Parametric Narration have their own individual characteristics that differ from each other, all three forms of

narration find their own identity in their deviation and/or opposition from its Hollywood counterpart. Hence, they all confer, in different degrees, a protagonist role to style subordinating partially syuzhet's narrational needs.

In any fiction or documentary film narrative a filmmaker must implement syuzhet and style interaction in order to represent an event. This entitles the relationship, for instance, between a type of composition or *mis-en-scène*, the style, and the information that the shot composition conveys about the storyline, the syuzhet. This process, as Mitry and Pasolini have argued, consists of conferring specific meaning and signification to the elements that constitute the narrative: a concrete number of organised discontinued fragments of images and sounds.

Syuzhet and style interaction serve the documentary filmmaker as a vehicle to create their own set of parameters or strategies in order to communicate personal experience.²²¹ However, the decisions involved in allocating specific meaning and signification to a particular syuzhet and style interaction, in documentary, consists of acquiring and organising event information in a particular order through omission. A shot acts out as container of visual and sonic information about the historical world. Filmmakers implement choices of syuzhet and style interaction with regard to the information that they want to convey or not about the historical event's past existence. Choosing a shot size or recording a sound implies a simultaneous partial and total omission which intends to obtain or totally omit specific information about the historical event.

A documentary filmmaker can combine syuzhet and style in endless ways in order to communicate experience and express meaning. However, the purpose of the options involved in this interaction is to communicate information about

²²¹However, it is important to underline that this is not always the case. Propaganda films during War World II confirmed the use of cinema to represent the ideological interests of the regime in power. In fact, nowadays, many documentary filmmakers do not have complete control over their narratives. TV channels and sponsors often impose, in exchange for funding or exhibition rights, certain narrative norms or content issues. Therefore, due to the need of satisfying institutions or regimes's interests, many filmmakers, throughout the world, might not always be able to present their views or experience of the event represented. However, as stated, this does not represent the research purpose of this thesis. In fact, these issues, with regard to censorship or satisfying institutions or sponsors' interests, seem appropriate to be object of study in another dissertation.

the historical event. My argument is that in documentary, when representing the historical world, it is omission that conditions the choices involved in creating a specific interaction between syuzhet and style. Nichols' documentary modes illustrate a concrete number of syuzhet-style interaction strategies which have been created through omission to represent a personal perspective of the historical world.

Thus, in documentary, the purpose of syuzhet and style interaction consists of omitting and organising visual and sound information into creating a narrative form. This process consists of organising the filmmaker's experience of the event represented into a comprehensible structure. Since filmmakers acquire raw material from an unlimited non-organised source of event information, the historical event, narrative in documentary involves organising that non-organised universe into a limited organised narrative form representing their experience of the event.

This process of organising the filmmakers experience begins during the *act* of filming since acquiring images and sounds, through omission, implies organising the historical event's infinite source of information into a limited volume: the raw material. During narrative construction, the filmmaker continues to organise their experience of the event via total and partial omission of the raw material. Thus, constructing a narrative entails organising a limited volume of non-organised event information into a particular structure. The resulting narrative discloses the filmmaker's personal experience and represents their personal point of view of the event

Omission in documentary narrative construction, and therefore syuzhet and style interaction, intends to satisfy the filmmaker's narrative intentions. These intentions ideally, and for the research objectives of this thesis, attempt to communicate the filmmaker's experience of the event. However, as I have already referred, filmmakers might not be able to represent their experience of the event for they may need to satisfy an institution's agenda or an exhibition channel's requirements. However, regardless the filmmaker's intentions,

omission and structure choices in terms of event information always obey and intend to satisfy the narrative intentions since in order to construct a narrative the filmmaker must have an overall intention with regard to the representation of the event.

In documentary the filmmaker's options to accomplish their narrative intentions are determined, first, by the innate qualities of the historical event during the *act* of filming, and second by the innate qualities of the raw material, during narrative construction. Innate qualities refer to whether the content of visual or sound information from the historical world meets or not the filmmakers' narrative requirements. This entails whether a documentary filmmaker, via omission and structure, is able to transform or modify an action or a speech into satisfying their narrative intentions. This might involve choosing a particular composition or sound recording option during the *act* of filming or it may entail altering the meaning of a character's speech in the raw material during narrative construction.

For instance, via partial omission and structure, a filmmaker might be able to transform a character's dialogue or action into meeting their narrative requirements. However, there may be the case of actions or dialogues that cannot be modified, via partial omission, to meet the filmmaker's objectives. In this case the director is forced to implement total omission of event information since via partial omission of the raw material the filmmaker was unable to meet the narrative intentions.

Thus, the innate qualities of the acquired event information may condition the filmmaker's possibilities for applying omission or structure choices in order to satisfy the narrative intentions. Innate qualities define whether specific event information is suitable or not to satisfy the filmmaker's narrative intentions. That what people say or do during the historical event can restrict the filmmaker's possibilities for acquiring event information or for constructing a narrative. Thus, innate qualities encompasses the filmmaker's omission or structure possibilities for transforming event information into meeting specific narrative intentions.

However, innate qualities do not have fixed values to evaluate whether the raw material is suitable or not to satisfy certain narrative intentions. In fact its values changes in accordance to the narrative intentions. The same raw material may present different innate qualities in relation to different narrative intentions. A specific volume of images and sounds may contain certain innate qualities with regard to the narrative intentions of an institution's agenda or an exhibition channel's requirements. The same raw material may present other innate qualities with regard to the filmmaker's intentions for representing their personal experience of an event.

For instance, the research analysis in chapter 6 to 7 presents two different narrative versions from the same raw material. Each narrative version has a different narrative intention for representing the General Strike event. This means that the innate qualities of the overall raw material available for constructing the narrative are different for each respective narrative version. Version A intended to confer credibly to the event and Version B intended to discredit the significance of the event. Even though it is the same raw material the innate qualities are different for each version since the narrative intention are also different. For this reason I had to omit totally, in Version A, most of the event information disclosed in Version B, and vice-versa. On each case I was forced to undertake total omission because the innate qualities did not allow me, via partial omission, to transform the raw material's visual and sound event information into meeting their respective narrative intentions.

This means that innate qualities condition the act of omission and with regard to satisfying certain narrative intentions. However, it is the narrative intentions, in the first place, that allocate specific innate qualities to the raw material.

4. Narrative comprehension: the audience's cinematic experience through omission.

As stated a film narrative always begins with an event or group of events and ends with another. This is of crucial importance for undertaking narrative comprehension since an audience, like Metz has stated, has no control over that order or how long the narration takes to unfold. This means that the spectator has only one way to watch the film: non-stop, from beginning to the end. Filmmakers, in fact, undertake narrative construction taking into account that a spectator cannot skip a scene or go back to re-watch a portion. However, that it is not completely accurate since it is important to notice that nowadays audiences are able to watch cinema through a varied number of technological means or devices such as the internet, mobile phones, tablet computers, laptop computers, video players or media discs. Each one of these devices allow the viewer a greater amount of control over the process of watching a film narrative. They are able to stop, rewind and re-watch a portion as many times as they wish. Nevertheless, what I meant to state is that filmmakers still construct documentary narratives so that their films are watched in the order and in the time that the narrative takes to unfold. Documentary makers do not construct narratives taking into account that audiences may alter the order or the time that the narrative may take to unfold. Thus, structure is of capital importance for narrative comprehension since filmmakers construct and organise their narratives baring in mind that the audience should watched the documentary representation respecting that order and time.

Conversely, Münsterberg, Eisenstein and Bordwell have stated that meaning and signification does not exist by itself in the narrative “object” constructed by the filmmaker until an audience interprets its content. Audiences play a crucial role in completing narrative signification through undertaking narrative comprehension. The spectator through interpreting the information contained on these visual and sound fragments confers specific meaning to the narrative elements. Therefore, event representation and its subsequent signification

results from the audience interpreting the filmmaker's technical and creative omission choices implemented for representing the event.

As stated by Edward Branigan, viewers do not remember *syuzhet* and style interaction since it takes a great deal of effort to memorize *how* a story is told. It is very difficult for a spectator to remember lighting set-ups, sound design or composition options. This means that spectators do not process event information necessarily in the order that the filmmaker discloses it in the narrative. According to Branigan, viewers do not spread their attention equally throughout the narrative but they work their way through back and forth in an uneven manner searching and organising sections of event information into a particular structure. Through this process the viewer intends to organise the information disclosed throughout the narrative into a comprehensible structure.

Furthermore, like Bordwell and Branigan have stated, a viewer has a personal wide repertoire of schemata. Each spectator has their own experience and expectations about the event, their own personal knowledge about the subject and their own experience in undertaking narrative comprehension. An audience consists of a great variety of individuals. Each person is capable of undertaking a different process of narrative comprehension in accordance with their own individual characteristics. Therefore, each spectator is able to produce and confer different meaning and signification to the same cinematic elements and based upon the same source of representation: the non-omitted raw material disclosed in the narrative structure via omission.

This seems to indicate that an audience manipulates the event information disclosed in the narrative in a similar way to the filmmaker's when representing an event: through omission. Audiences work their way through the narrative in an uneven manner and re-organise in their own personal way, and according to their own individual characteristics, via omission, the event information contained in the narrative in order to satisfy their own individual needs for comprehension. This process seems to emulate, up to a certain extend, the process of omission undertaken by a filmmaker to represent a historical event.

Both filmmakers and audiences seem to resort to creating narrative forms, via omission, in order to understand, organise and communicate their respective experiences. This seems to indicate that omission determines not only the choices involved in representing an event but also part of the process involve in narrative comprehension. Just like each filmmaker, via omission, is able to produce a different representation of the same historical event, every single spectator, via omission, is also able to produce and confer different meaning and signification, from the same source of representation to the different elements that constitute the narrative.

Therefore, filmmakers, via omission and structure, can condition audiences' narrative comprehension but they cannot predict with precision the spectator's reception of narrative content. However, having access or not to certain event information can modify and influence the spectator's knowledge and opinion of the event represented. In fact, as mentioned in the Introduction, I have produced with Joana Cunha e Costa a study on public reception which appears attached in the Appendix. This study intends to serve several purposes. Firstly, to establish if the narrative intentions stated in chapter 6 and 7 were satisfied or not by an audience. The results do not contradict globally the intentions stated for each narrative version. However, not all the spectators came to confirm the same narrative intentions. The study confirms, in the first place, like Edward Branigan has argued, that audiences receive and process event information in accordance to their individual characteristics and for this reason each viewer can interpret the same narrative source differently. Hence, this research does confirm that each viewer can produce and confer different meaning to the same narrative elements.

Second, this study also confirms that the omission of event information implemented for constructing narrative Version A and B has conditioned the audience narrative comprehension in accordance to the filmmaker's narrative intentions. Thus, this confirms, within the cultural and geographical context of the study, that I have successfully accomplished, up to a certain degree, conditioning the viewer's interpretation of the representation of the General

Strike event as I had originally intended.

This research study, presented in the Appendix, has achieved valuable results with regard to the public reception of the filmmaker's narrative intentions. However, these preliminary results intend to stimulate a broader research program on public reception with regard to the process of omission, and event representation. From here, there would be two main future research objectives. The first one would be to analyse the process of omission implemented by the filmmaker to represent the event from the point of view of the audience. The second objective would be to study and research the process of omission undertaken by the audience itself during narrative comprehension and in relation to the filmmaker's narrative intentions. This would imply to study how the spectator implements omission in order to undertake narrative comprehension.

Subsequently, the final objective would be to undertake a comparative research analysis between the results obtained from both stages: the public reception of the filmmaker's omission and the audience's omission strategy for narrative comprehension. This would lead to a further understanding and knowledge of the filmmaker's and the spectator's personal strategies for comprehending, organising and communicating their personal experiences of representing an event and watching an event represented.

5. Cinema: the experience of omission

Every choice involved in film making, as Wiseman, Maysless or Wexler have argued, is subjective and restricted to the filmmaker's experience or point of view of the event. Each decision involved in composition, lighting or editing represents a personal subjective decision. Representing an event in documentary emerges from the filmmaker's mediation with the world and therefore from the director's interaction with the event. This interaction represents the subjective experience of the filmmaker.

Experience is unique and limited to the filmmaker's own existence. A documentary filmmaker can only experience their own experience of the historical event. They cannot experience historical events as other filmmaker's would. It is for this reason that filmmakers had argued that they can only represent their experience of the event as closed as possible as they had personally and subjectively experienced it. The only process to communicate that unique experience in documentary is via omission. Thus, each filmmaker can produce a different representation of the same historical event since each filmmaker has by nature a different experience of the same event. Hence, the act of omission involved in representing an event is subjective since it manifests and represents a limited and unique experience that only the individual can experience. Therefore, subjectivity in documentary making indicates that a filmmaker can only represent their own experience of a historical event (or satisfy an institution's agenda or other similar interests) but not the experience of other individual-filmmakers.

Furthermore, the filmmaker's personal experience is limited to their natural capabilities. A documentary filmmaker cannot experience, through cinema's technical qualities or via their own senses and intellectual capacities, a historical event as a whole but only sections of event information via omission. This is because any historical event provides an infinite source of experience and knowledge for it represents a limitless source of non-organised event information. An infinite universe that can be continuously subdivided into smaller or larger units of event information. For example, the General Strike historical event, object of the research analysis in narrative construction, consists of numberless units of event information. There is a wide range of sound and visual information available for the filmmaker to represent it: speech, singing, people talking, objects, demonstrations, expressions or ambient sound. Each one of these elements can be inserted into a larger context or can be subdivided into smaller event units. The possibilities for extracting visual or sound event information or for undertaking experience via omission are boundless. It is for this reason that cinema's creative possibilities are limitless for cinema's technical

elements provide infinite omission possibilities to represent an event. Each filmmaker may have a different experience of the same General Strike event and every director is able to produce a different representation of the same strike event. However, no-filmmaker can “reproduce” another individual filmmaker's experience for each experience is subjective, personal and unique.

The fact is that the historical world exists independently of the filmmaker's existence and therefore also independent of the filmmaker's ability to understand, perceive or represent it. Every time documentary filmmakers represent historical events the world reminds them of the countless ways in which they can experience it and represent it. A filmmaker is unable to perceive, learn, understand or experience completely this infinite source for knowledge, information and experience. This means that a director cannot incorporate in their narratives the endless points of view or information available about the historical event because, in the first place, they have not even learned about them. Directors' film making experience is limited to their own personal interaction with the event. They are not able to experience all aspects of their characters' existence but only sections of it. It is from those sections of historical event information converted into raw material that a documentary filmmaker may represent their subjective representation of the event in the form of narrative.

The same issues apply to the audience since watching a film is also like making a film an experience. Audiences, like filmmakers when representing an event, they understand, organise, and communicate their cinematic experience to others via omission. The audience's experience is partly limited by the information disclosed in the narrative. However, each spectator have their own individual characteristics for undertaking the experience of watching a film. This suggests that watching a film can also represent, like the historical event, an unlimited source for experience and information since each spectator can produce different meaning and signification from the same narrative elements. The possibilities for an audience to produce and confer meaning and signification to the narrative constituents are limitless. Simultaneously, watching a film represents an unique limited experience to each spectator since, in fact,

each viewer is restricted to their own personal experience of the film. A viewer, just like in the case of the filmmaker, is unable to “reproduce” the experience of another spectator. They are only able, as the filmmaker, to express and communicate their personal cinematic experience to others via omission.

This suggests that representing an event in documentary and undertaking narrative comprehension represent an act of omission of a limited experience: the experience of the individual-filmmaker's interaction with the world and the experience of the audience's interaction with the film narrative. It is limited only to their own individual existence and restricted to undertake experience via omission. However, the creative possibilities to experience via omission are boundless. Just like every filmmaker can produce a different representation of the same historical event, every member of an audience is able to confer and produce different meaning from the same source of representation. With each new experience the individual filmmaker and audience can enjoy an infinite source of omission possibilities.

On the other hand, the unavoidable subjective omission choices involved in film making and narrative comprehension are not only the result of the filmmaker or the spectator as individuals but also of the filmmaker or the spectator as culture-beings. Like Roland Barthes has argued on his compelling reflections in the *Empire of Signs*, we are all as individuals partly the product of the culture we inhabit, and partly the product of our experiences, education and social context of our upbringing. This social, political and cultural context unavoidably conditions the filmmaker's knowledge and opinions of the world and therefore, their subjective omitting choices involved in representing an event or undertaking narrative comprehension.

This indicates that the representation of the historical world is not only the outcome of the director's personal vision or the audience's personal interpretation of the narrative content but also the result of a variety of social-political and cultural values that contextualises and conditions the event the filmmaker intends to represent, the decisions involved in representing it and the

process undertaken by an audience to understand those decisions involved in representing the historical event. This suggests that the same world filmmakers represent and audiences watch represented determines the omission choices involved in representing it and in understanding its representation. Therefore, the same world being represented conditions how it is represented, understood, organised and communicated it to others via omission.

In my opinion, partial and total omission not only outlines cinema's crucial technical restrictions and creative possibilities in representing the world or understanding how the world is represented but also illustrates the possibilities and restrictions for undertaking and communicating human experience. This suggests that cinema's technical qualities in documentary have been specifically designed to implement omission so as to communicate the filmmaker's subjective experience of the world. From this perspective omission in documentary can be considered a necessary human feature to understand, organise and communicate the filmmaker's experience through creating narrative forms. It is for this reason that I consider documentary, when representing the historical world that we inhabit, a means for experience through omission.

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DVD Strike: Version A and Version B

Note: the date of filming that appears at the end of Version A and B is wrong.

The shooting was done in 24th of November of 2010.

A complete storyboard, shot by shot, of each respective narrative version appears in the appendix