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LE SCAPHANDRE ET LE PAPILLON: AUTOPATHOGRAPHY, THE LOCKED-IN SELF AND SCHNABEL'S CINEMA OF EMBODIMENT

"'Sais-tu que B[auby] est transformé en légume?'"[1] With this question ringing in his ears (it having been overheard and subsequently reported back to him by a friend), Jean-Dominique Bauby, sometime editor of French fashion magazine *Elle*, is apprised of the account circulating via the Parisian rumour mill of the calamity that has befallen him. This follows a catastrophic stroke that leaves him quadriplegic, yet fully conscious and cogniscent, a survivor living with locked-in syndrome. This incident, featuring in both Bauby's written memoir *Le scaphandre et le papillon* (1997) and the film adaptation made of it a decade after Bauby's death by American artist and film-director Julian Schnabel, is of signal importance for understanding the project that became *Le scaphandre et le papillon* (both the book and the film).[2] It encapsulates what is arguably Bauby's most difficult challenge after his stroke: his quest to retain his status as a complete human being in the eyes of the rest of the world; the quest to assert himself in his locked-in state as a thinking, feeling subject, having agency, opinions, and a right to dignity and respect.[3] Through an analysis of Schnabel's film *Le scaphandre et le papillon*, this article will explore how cinema may provide an appropriate medium for autopathography to pursue such a quest.

Whilst *Le scaphandre et le papillon* has attracted the attentions of several scholars, few of these studies focus on the filmed version of Bauby's story. Where they do, there is a tendency to be critical of Schnabel's work.[4] Film historian and critic Jean-Michel Frodon criticises Schnabel's film for its stylistic academicism and a mawkish

treatment of its subject, accusing the film of peddling "le plus navrant trafic de sentimentalité et d'imagerie."[5] Considering the film from the standpoint of disability studies, Tess Jewell criticises it as an able-bodied person's representation of a narrative of disability, arguing that the film's manner of representing Jean-Do denies him agency.[6] Tarja Laine's discussion of the film concentrates on how it positions spectators, holding that spectatorship operates here in the mode of "entanglement as a mode of 'being with,'" replicating a more general spectatorial dynamic in cinema.[7] Laine's notion of an 'entangled' relation between spectator and protagonist seems to suggest a less antagonistic representation of locked-in syndrome than Jewell finds. Yet the prescriptive assertions Laine makes on the ethical inappropriateness of certain kinds of 'entangled' spectatorial response to Schnabel's film (particularly responses of empathy and pity) suggest otherwise.[8]

In these readings of Schnabel's film, Bauby's locked-in self and his story are, to different degrees, positioned adversarially *vis-à-vis* the film-maker and the film's spectators. The latter are implicitly depicted as potentially harmful agents who may fail to properly understand or appropriately connect to the film's subject. In the discussion that follows, mindful of Bauby's own very evident cinephilia (to which his memoir amply attests[9]), I shall offer an alternative reading of Schnabel's *Le scaphandre et le papillon*, in which the film-maker and the viewing public are not (potential) obstructions to the transmission of understanding about the locked-in self; rather, they are vital accessories to that process. Through its exploitation of the technical possibilities of the cinematic medium, Schnabel's *Le scaphandre et le papillon*

will be shown to operate as what Michel Foucault would term a transformative "technology of the self": one that (as we shall see) continues work begun by Bauby, and also opens our minds to the breadth of possibilities autopathography offers.[10]

The concept of self-writing as a technology of self is one that Foucault developed in the last phase of his career, as part of his on-going investigations into how human beings historically develop into individual subjects (possessing the social recognition as well as attracting the social scrutiny that this entails).[11] These explorations lead him to study the ancient Greek ethos of "le souci de soi." This name designates a multifaceted approach to life: a mode of being and a set of practices driven by the guiding principle "qu'il faut s'occuper de soi-même."[12] Such attention to the self is a pro-social practice, upheld as a social duty. Foucault describes how this code assumes a great influence and scope, pertaining to numerous aspects of human life and endeavour:

> Il a pris aussi la forme d'une attitude, d'une manière de se comporter, il a imprégné des façons de vivre; il s'est développé en procédures, en pratiques et en recettes qu'on réfléchissait, développait, perfectionnait et enseignait.[13]

This caring attentiveness to the self is promoted particularly in the spheres of health and education. It involves practices understood to promote well-being (such as certain forms of physical exercise or learning), and also a scrupulous self-scrutiny. This targets one's mental as well as physical state: reflective activities of various

kinds "permettent d'être en tête-à-tête avec soi-même, de recueillir son passé, de

placer sous ses yeux l'ensemble de la vie écoulée."[14] Significantly, the writing of the

self features strongly amongst these practices: "autour du soin de soi-même, toute

une activité de parole et d'écriture s'est développé, où sont liés le travail de soi sur

soi et la communication avec autrui."[15] The involvement of others in such activities is

crucial: their participation (as senders and recipients of letters about the self, as

interlocutors in verbal exchanges, or as sources of counsel or practical advice) is

what allows for progress to be made in this work on the self. In these collaborative

practices, or techniques, of attending to the self, Foucault sees the emergence of a

new art (*technē*) of existence. Conjointly, "a new experience of the self" evolves too,

as Foucault explains in his essay "Technologies of the Self."[16] The crucial insight here

is that the self recognises itself as malleable: the self is *altered* by the techniques that it

applies to itself, which have ameliorating effects on its self-understanding, health,

fitness, and more besides. A technology of self is thus a system comprising diverse

techniques and behaviours for bringing about improvements to the condition of the

self. Accordingly, Foucault's term "technologies of the self" designates the various

systematised practices that he has uncovered which all lead to the "training and

modification of individuals."[17]

Foucault's findings culminate in a broader theorisation about ameliorative

technologies of the self extending far beyond the realm of ancient Greece. His

insights have significant implications for how we understand the practice of writing

the self, particularly that form of self-writing we call autopathography. Foucault

shows how, by instantiating an active reflection on one's personal health and state of being, the act of writing the self can be a dynamic form of self-expression that may, in the process of its production (indeed, *by virtue* of that process), bring about a modification of the state – physical or mental – of the individual whose condition the autopathography recounts. Moreover, Foucault's theory also implies that, at the point when its narrative is shared with others, the act of producing an autopathography can contribute towards social recognition: social recognition of the experience undergone, and also of those who undergo it, as their social ties are strengthened by their communications with others about their self.

Yet Foucault's focus in his work on technologies of the self is not limited to self-writing: it includes a broad range of cultural practices in ancient Greek culture that all involve attention to the self. Thus Foucault's insights can usefully inform the study of other cultural practices or forms, including the cinema, where these evince similar concerns with the self as can be found in some autobiographical writing.

These findings are particularly important for the following study of Schnabel's *Le scaphandre et le papillon*. Firstly, by drawing attention to the *collective and collaborative* nature of the acts that he describes as techniques of the self, Foucault shows that the self does not come into an altered state of being all by itself, or even through the other, but rather through *others*. Secondly, he paves the way for cinema (itself a traditionally collaborative medium, usually requiring the self to work in partnership with others) also to be understood as a potential technology of the self.

This strengthens the case for considering Schnabel's *Le scaphandre et le papillon* as an autopathography centred on Bauby's self. Although Bauby did not live to have the opportunity of collaborating with Schnabel and see *Le scaphandre et le papillon* become a film, it is nonetheless possible to consider him as one of the film's co-creators. Bauby's memoir contributes substantially to the film's screenplay, providing a significant portion of the voice-over narrative used in the film. Furthermore, since we know that the Foucauldian concept of care for the self denotes a set of self-directed practices which are undertaken in part by the self, and in part by *others*, it is possible, despite the fact that Bauby had died before Schnabel planned to make his film, to consider the efforts of Schnabel and his film crew as continuing the active process of *souci de soi* that Bauby begins in his written memoir.[18] Indeed, there is a case for seeing Schnabel's film as conferring a transformative benefit on Bauby's self (and, by extension, the selves of others who also experience locked-in syndrome). For Foucault, practices that materialise the ethos of care for the self bring about social recognition for the subject in question (let us note that social recognition for somebody's existence and their qualities as a person does not automatically cease when that person dies). Accordingly, it is possible to see the transformative effect of a Foucauldian technology of self as being precisely to bring about this recognition, particularly in cases where it risks otherwise being denied.

For those with locked-in syndrome, the evidence indicates that this is a very real concern. Published research on patients with locked-in syndrome (LIS) suggests that social recognition is crucially important to their well-being:

> Reports on their quality of life show that what matters to LIS patients is not so much their physical bodily state or integrity but their relation to other people and that they remain recognized as a person to be engaged with.[19]

Bauby himself indicates the very real potential for a dehumanisation of the locked-in self to occur in his memoir, which records not only how others speak of him as being a "légume," but also how the author uses similar terms to describe himself, referring to himself as a "zombie" and "un bout de papa."[20]

Against this backdrop, any work that autopathography may do to remind us that the locked-in self remains a human self and a sovereign subject with an individual identity takes on a vital importance. This article contends that Schnabel's *Le scaphandre et le papillon* reveals how the cinema is particularly well-placed to undertake this work. Schnabel's film will be seen to exploit the representational possibilities opened up by the medium of film to accentuate Jean-Do's ongoing status as what Kyselo and Di Paolo call a "centre of subjectivity": a full and individual subject, one with distinctive preferences and viewpoints; someone who is like us and yet distinct from us.[21] In this way, Schnabel harnesses cinema as a technology of self to deliver an autopathography that creates a protagonist whose

subjectivity is not so much 'entangled' with that of the viewing subject (in ways that may be ethically compromising) as quite self-consciously shared with others, and reaffirmed by them, thus allowing for Jean-Do to enmesh himself with these others on an equal basis as part of a wider community of sovereign subjects. The use of a distinctive set of film-making techniques in the shooting of *Le scaphandre et le papillon* is crucial to this achievement: its cinematography and *mise en scène* force the audience to engage with and recognise the specific characteristics of Jean-Do's locked-in subjectivity.

From its opening frames, *Le scaphandre et le papillon* foregrounds alternatives to the classical modes of cinematic representation through its repeated use of x-ray images of human bodies which serve as the backdrop to the opening credits.[22] The audience are subsequently confronted with a variety of unusual visual devices that have drawn critics' attention.[23] Schnabel demurs from employing the usual mode of cinematic representation which dominates the classical mode of narrative realism. In classical cinema, films are shot in such a way as to impart the illusion that audiences 'look in' as outsiders, distanced, unseen and unimplicated, on an entirely separate and self-contained diegetic space which constitutes the (realistic) world of the film – a world to which, nevertheless, they 'magically' enjoy a privileged access.[24] In a somewhat unusual move, Schnabel makes use of the techniques of subjective cinema, which punctures this illusion, bringing the viewer into the film world and overtly situating the spectator's audiovisual experience of the film and the accompanying film world *within that world itself*. An important technique is what

cognitivist film theorist Edward Branigan calls "subjective narration," which involves creating the impression for an audience that what we are perceiving as viewers coincides with what a particular protagonist within the film perceives at that moment.[25]

This impression is glaringly apparent in the opening scene of the film, which takes place in a room at the specialist hospital at Berck-sur-mer on the northern coast of France, where Jean-Do is being treated. The viewer initially sees nothing but a pure black screen, and hears muffled voices uttering unintelligible words. The black slowly lifts vertically to reveal the briefest glimpse of an out-of-focus green room, which soon becomes invisible as a flood of white light invades the screen. The image fades out as flickers of light start to appear, but the image is at first without discernible objects: there are only colours. Slowly, the room reappears, still blurred, although not uniformly so across the frame (this effect results from the use of a Lensbaby or similar distorting lens). Two figures emerge on the left side of the image, clad in green medical uniforms; to the right of them are a television set attached to the wall and a large blurry bunch of red roses. This unclear image quickly disappears behind a pink object (a matte), which appears in the foreground and obstructs the view, which fades to grey. A fade-in restores the (now unobstructed) image. The male medic occupying the centre of the image is in clearer focus than before; the rest of the room remains blurred. This medic, now framed in a closer shot, stares, wide-eyed and seemingly excited, directly into the camera, and we hear a voice (that we assume to be his) announce that "regarde, il se réveille!". A

colleague is sent for, and the medics become more animated, approaching closer to the camera, stooping over it (it is positioned below them, and is angled upwards, so their figures encroach, appearing grotesquely large in extreme close-ups) and giving instructions: "M. Bauby, gardez les yeux ouverts!" Thus, Schnabel introduces us to his film's protagonist, but until he is named, it is as if the spectator is occupying this role. This effect is created by an inventive panoply of cinematographic techniques, the most noticeable of which is the use of point-of-view (POV) shots: these involve framing the narrative from the protagonist's perspective by positioning the camera so as to give the impression that the viewer sees the happenings of the film world from the same spatial perspective as the protagonist does. The creation of this effect relies on a tendency identified by Branigan for spectators to "experience some aspect of a camera – [for example] its […] position – in relation to a human trait."[26] A camera perceived in such a way can be said to be "'anthropomorphic'", and the extent to which we recognise it as such "is connected both to our embodiment in a world and to our feelings of involvement with characters in their world."[27] Gazes into the camera, considered taboo in classical film style, reinforce this anthropomorphic quality. They occur frequently in the opening minutes of the film, as new medical professionals enter the field of view, each one addressing Jean-Do, the camera, and simultaneously us as the audience.

Another type of POV shot conveys a sense of the protagonist's physiological or emotional state. George M. Wilson calls this a "subjectively-inflected shot."[28] Here, the image content does not represent anything that would be objectively visible in

the filmed world; instead the content of the image is marked as subjective in some way, and it is understood to correspond to the vision, or manner of vision, of the protagonist. This might be an exaggerated vision (the looming medic whose face is disproportionately large is seen as threatening); an inner vision (perhaps a dream); or else a confused vision of the world as it may appear to someone who is physiologically impaired (as a result of intoxication, for example). Again, we as viewers are put in the position of apparently 'sharing' the protagonist's subjective vision, whether it results from a physical state, or a state of mind. The blurred vision of the hospital room in the opening scene of the film thus conveys something about Jean-Do's physiological state, suggesting that his ability to focus his eyes has also been affected as a result of his stroke. Similarly, the deliberate over-exposure of the image during the opening scene where Jean-Do awakes from his coma to create a brief 'white-out' effect also assimilates the viewer's visual perception to the protagonist's subjective vision – for a man just awakening from weeks spent in a coma, the sudden influx of bright light is blinding. Finally, with the arrival of the doctor whom the medics send for once they notice Jean-Do's return to consciousness, the best-known technique of subjective cinema is introduced: the voice-over, as Jean-Do attempts to interact verbally with the doctor, only to discover that he cannot speak, at which point the audience realises that his utterances are non-diegetic and audible only to them.

What do subjective filming techniques add to *Le scaphandre et le papillon*? For Frodon, they are grating, gratuitous and mark out the film as a tiresome *exercice de style*. Yet

what if these qualities are precisely those that the film needs if it is to explore in depth the specificities of locked-in subjectivity? For Branigan, the anthropomorphic camera "simulate[s] some feature of human embodiment."[29] In the reading proposed here, the obtrusive techniques of subjective narrative cinema are not gratuitous, but essential: they are required so that Schnabel can create a cinema of embodiment, whereby the possibilities and limitations experienced by Jean-Do's locked-in self can be recognised by his audience. Developing this argument will require a closer examination of the subjective narration techniques used in Schnabel's film.

There are numerous different film-making techniques available to the film-maker who aims to produce subjective cinematic narration, and Schnabel exploits many of them throughout *Le scaphandre et le papillon*. Introducing not only Jean-Do as a protagonist, but also the film's conceptual approach to rendering information about his subjective state, the opening sequences of the film are especially rich in these. Subjective narration remains a prominent technique as the film progresses: for the first fifteen minutes or so, we only see the world of the film through POV shots. This has the effect of foregrounding not only Jean-Do's subjectivity, but his body. Co-locating our visual perspective with that of the protagonist, Jean-Do, the POV shot is necessarily concerned with embodiment; indeed, all the subjective narration techniques in the film construct a particular relationship between the viewer and the protagonist, centred around the human body. Spatial and subjectively-inflected POV shots make the body a point of identification between viewer and protagonist, thus giving us the impression we are 'trapped' in Jean-Do's body, with its limited outlook

on the world (and contrasting with the unshackled and all-seeing perspective we are used to inhabiting as viewers in classical cinema). Consequently, the opening sequences, especially, make for difficult viewing. Given the thematic concerns of *Le scaphandre et le papillon*, whose protagonist himself experiences his new embodied state in locked-in syndrome as an imprisonment, this claustrophobic cinematography may seem appropriate. However, part of what makes such sequences jarring or difficult to watch is that they do not appear 'realistic.' As Vivian Sobchack explains, the problem is that using spatial POV shots to create a cinematic unity of embodiment between viewer and protagonist fails to convey the *fullness* of the protagonist's embodied experience.[30] Instead, it results in an excessively immanent representation of that protagonist's position in the film world, a consequence of a category error involving a "misalignment of subjectivity and material embodiment."[31] This problem, of mistaking *material embodiment* as a sufficient equivalent for *subjectivity*, arises regardless of the state of the body in question. Consequently, subjective narration techniques that rely on identifying the viewer's spatial position with that of the protagonist are conspicuously inadequate to render subjectivity – hence the rarity of their use in contemporary western cinema.[32] The sense of confinement generated by subjective cinematic techniques that constantly align the viewer's body with the protagonist's may strike viewers as similar to Jean-Do's experience of locked-in syndrome. However, it is important to realise their limitations: even though the film specifically treats the kind of embodiment experienced in locked-in syndrome, such cinematic devices alone will nevertheless be incapable of fully rendering Jean-Do's singular subjectivity.

Fortunately, to render Jean-Do's subjectivity, Schnabel does not depend exclusively on cinematic techniques that invoke the *material* body of the protagonist: the less tangible *sensory* aspect of embodiment is evoked too. Schnabel's choice to engage with human embodiment in *Le scaphandre et le papillon* via an exploration of the senses also leads to a coincidence between his preoccupations and those of phenomenological film theory.

Embodiment is a vital part of the film experience for phenomenological film scholars such as Laura U. Marks , Vivian Sobchack, or Jenny Chamarette.[33] They contend that the embodied status of the film spectator must be recognised, as a pre-requisite for the vital acknowledgement that spectators' responses to films are *embodied* responses. This recognition overturns the notion of a rigid separation between the worlds of the film viewer and the filmed self.

In her *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*, for example, Sobchack observes that the meanings of films are in part sensory meanings, actualised only via the presence and response of a sensorily receptive viewer.[34] Informed by the findings of neuroscience, Sobchack draws attention to the synaesthetic quality of the senses. For the spectator, the *sight* of an object on screen triggers an involuntary recognition of that object's appeal to other senses (touch, smell, taste, hearing) through a synaesthetic process hardwired into the brain. Because such responses are rooted in a sensory stimulus offered by the image of an object belonging to the film world, the

spectator has a sense of being conjoined through the senses to the film protagonist who encounters the viewed object. In this way, an embodied, inter-subjective relation is created between on-screen protagonist and viewer. Subjectivity is built at the interface between film and viewer, with the human body as the site for this interface. The embodied viewer 'fleshes out' these on-screen protagonists: we viewers take *our* sensory cues from the sensory stimuli that *they* encounter, and in return we lend them *our* sensory responses. Sobchack's example of this phenomenon comes from Jane Campion's *The Piano*, in which the female protagonist has her finger cut off (in a close-up shot) by her jealous husband. For Sobchack, this triggers a visceral response in her own fingers, one that is susceptible to being reproduced in all *The Piano*'s viewers, and which can be explained by the innate "corporeality of the spectator's consciousness."[35]

This instance of the film viewer being called upon to share a film protagonist's pain recalls a similar sequence occurring nearly ten minutes into *Le scaphandre et le papillon*. Having woken from his coma, Jean-Do is visited by his neurologist, who delivers his diagnosis and prognosis for Jean-Do's condition. We are still in the regime of subjective narration, and close-ups of the looming neurologist delivering his devastating news in direct address to the camera are shown in a canted POV shot from Jean-Do's bed. Almost as an afterthought, he contemplates the poor state of Jean-Do's eye. At this point an intrusive finger swiftly jabs right into the camera, as the neurosurgeon announces his conclusion that Jean-Do's right eye will need to be occluded. In a very similar way to Sobchack's example from *The Piano*, this sequence

from *Le scaphandre et le papillon* appeals to our sense of touch through our sense of sight: we recoil from the jab of the threatening finger, just as we do from the needle which, five minutes later, is shown performing the occlusion, apparently from 'inside' Jean-Do's eye. As we recoil, our sense of sharing Jean-Do's response is accentuated as the voiceover transmits his powerless yet terrified reaction to this intrusion. These occlusion sequences illustrate how a shared sensory response can create a powerful intersubjectivity between protagonist and viewer. The conjoined subjectivity created at this early stage in the film between protagonist and viewer through a shared, and apparently simultaneous, sensory response is essential for the work which Schnabel's film will ultimately do to reaffirm Jean-Do as a sovereign subject, re-inserted into the social body from which he feels his locked-in syndrome excludes him.

My discussion of how Schnabel's emphasis on Jean-Do's embodiment works to bind him into the community of viewers on equal terms has so far treated his embodied state in a negative sense, focussing on the limitations of Jean-Do's quadriplegic body, and on the cinematic techniques used to render an impression of these limitations to the viewer. However, Schnabel offers a decidedly more complex vision of Jean-Do's embodiment than this. There are three orders of embodiment present in the film, of which material embodiment of the kind discussed earlier is just one, and each is associated with its own distinct set of cinematic techniques.

The first form of embodiment that we encounter is the one discussed above: the present reality of Jean-Do's state of material embodiment as a locked-in patient, with a focus on his near total loss of motor capacity. Yet – as phenomenological thought reminds us – embodiment is a condition of the mind, as well as the body. Accordingly, Schnabel's film shows (often through the use of striking visual imagery) that Jean-Do, even whilst living with drastically depleted physical capacities in his present state of embodiment, is nevertheless able to access two further orders of embodiment: his *remembered* embodiment, and even more significantly, his *imagined* embodiment.

Schnabel's film intermittently paints a picture of a glamorous and carefree past, befitting the image of an editor of a major fashion magazine. Beyond the dazzle of the fashion world which Jean-Do is shown to inhabit, there is a noticeable emphasis on physical activity: in a segment which narrates Jean-Do's memories of the person he was before his stroke, spectacular images represent him as a highly accomplished downhill skier, swiftly and expertly descending a near-vertical mountain slope. Another recollection relates a trip to Lourdes with a former lover. Jean-Do, we learn, had been hoping for a sex-filled "week-end de cochon," but his lover is more seduced by the appeal of chastity. The only outlet for his physical energies is a nocturnal stroll we see him take around the centre of Lourdes. Tracking him through deserted streets, the camera picks out the solitary figure of Jean-Do in long shots that emphasise his movement against the stillness of his surroundings. Here, the highlighting of the protagonist's mobility and appetite for physical movement seems

to serve as a counterpart to the exclusive use of POV shots at the start of the film, in which motoricity is emphasised through its absence.

If sequences depicting Jean-Do's remembered embodiment still seem to privilege the motor aspect of the embodied state, the same does not apply to Schnabel's cinematic translations of Jean-Do's *imagined* embodiment. In the many sequences exploring his imaginings, the spectator is often forcefully reminded that, as Sobchack has discussed, there is more to the state of embodiment than inhabiting a moveable carnal frame (or even a *scaphandre*): embodiment involves a *sensory* capacity too.[36] Once again, it is the cinematic techniques of subjective narration that are used to convey this message, with POV shots and subjectively-inflected shots now serving a different purpose. In sequences showing Jean-Do's fantasies or rêveries, these devices convey his enduring sensory capacities and appetites, for he retains at least partial capacities in all five of his senses (Jean-Do's paralysis is not total, meaning he still retains his sense of touch, as shown by the incident in the film where he moves his face in response to a fly landing on his nose in the gym). Jean-Do's enduring sensory embodiment is conveyed through images that appeal very specifically to his (and our) senses of touch, smell, and taste.

Two scenes in *Le scaphandre et le papillon* are particularly rich in such images. The first occurs just over one hour into the film, and takes place in a restaurant, where taste, smell and the sense of touch are all evoked as Jean-Do indulges a fantasy of sharing a sensual and erotic seafood banquet with his amanuensis, Claude. This fantasised

meal starts with the arrival on Jean-Do's table of a white plate, shown in glistening close-up, on which oblongs of smoked salmon are artfully arranged. The imagined quality of this scene is signalled by the sound of a piano playing soft classical music. The close-up shot reveals the firm texture of the fish, conjuring up the taste and feel of the food. With evident enthusiasm, Jean-Do starts eating, as plates of fish and shellfish continue to arrive at his table, but he soon notices Claude across the room, and beckons her over. The camera tracks her closely from behind as she crosses the restaurant, framing her tightly-clad form from the shoulder-blades down to her bottom; a cut ensues and we now see her from Jean-Do's perspective. The frontal medium close-up shot corresponding to his view of her reveals the low cut of her tight dress, a hint of cleavage and an engaging smile, suggesting that her form is as pleasing to him as it had been made to appear to us viewers in the previous shot. The sensuality of the food is thus eroticised (the two will eat oysters together), reminding us that Jean-Do remains in possession of more than one kind of appetite. Jean-Do's offer of an oyster to Claude, which he slowly places in her mouth with his spoon, cues a quickening of the tempo, as more sumptuous platters of glistening oysters and lightly grilled fish arrive. These images conjure up for us the taste and smell of the seafood. There is particular emphasis on the *feel* of the food: the next morsel that Jean-Do offers Claude she will take with her fingers, and Jean-Do will follow her in dispensing with cutlery; the camera now alternates close-up shots of the protagonists with extreme close-up shots of the seafood platters, inflecting these dishes with the same enthusiasm that the protagonists show in eating them. More subjective shots now come into play, as a POV shot from Jean-Do's perspective

shows Claude languorously feeding him with another delicacy from the table. Soon they will break off eating to transfer their enjoyment of the sensations of taste and touch to each other, kissing sensually across the table, until Jean-Do sits himself back down, and his rêverie (and the music) stops.

Jean-Do's sensuality is not always so tightly associated with his sexuality, however, and the film shows us that his sensitivity to sensory stimuli can exist outwith the pronounced sexual urge so clearly on display in the restaurant scene. Synaesthetic images offer a powerful statement of Jean-Do's unimpeded sense of himself as a sensorily embodied human being, as illustrated in a scene occurring some thirteen minutes after the restaurant scene. This time the rêverie apparently comes to him unbidden, seemingly stimulated by the sight of a marble bust of the Empress Eugénie, the hospital's original patron, during a journey through its corridors. Again, sensual, subjectively-inflected shots are used to translate Jean-Do's fantasy as he imagines the Empress made flesh. We see an image of a slender, dark-haired, smiling woman wearing a Second Empire costume of tight-fitting bodice over a corseted bust, and long flowing skirts in pale blue silks worn over a bustle. As she walks down the hospital corridor, a low-positioned camera tilts slightly upwards and tracks the woman from behind. It lingers not on her body this time, but on the shimmering material of her skirts in a close-up shot that leaves viewers time to share in Jean-Do's fantasy and enjoy its multisensory appeals. Our sense of hearing is stimulated by the (unrepresented) swishing sound of the silk; our sense of touch by its smooth texture. That this vision represents an act of Jean-Do's imagining is

highlighted by the next shot, which shows him standing and looking fixedly at a marble bust of the Empress inside a glass case, whilst a reflection in the glass shows the Empress, dressed in blue as before, and materialised in corporeal form by Jean-Do's imagination, approaching along the corridor towards him.

Using a variety of film-making techniques to generate haptic imagery rooted in Jean-Do's subjectivity, Schnabel draws the viewer into the sensual imaginings of this locked-in protagonist, whose sensory potential endures, even in the face of extreme limitations to his motor activities. In so doing, the film director exploits the compelling power of cinematic images to engage us viewers as "cinesthetic subject[s]," in Sobchack's terms: human beings whose thoughts and cerebral responses all take shape in the context of our embodiment, be it motor or sensory; actual or potential.[37] The use of these cinematic techniques compels us to recognise in Jean-Do an equal, subject to the same desires and imaginings that we can imagine as part of our own experiences. We are compelled to this recognition because: "our lived bodies sensually relate to 'things' that 'matter' on the screen and find them sensible in a primary, prepersonal, and global way that grounds […] later secondary identifications [with on-screen protagonists]."[38] Our response enables us unhesitatingly to restore Jean-Do to his position within the social body, the very thing which some of his acquaintances question.

In this way, Schnabel's film accomplishes some of the work of a Foucauldian technology of self, for it deploys a set of practical (cinematic) techniques to bring

about a cultural artefact that represents a shaping of the self (not a recording of it),

one that ultimately ameliorates the self's position in social terms, relying on the same

collaborative ethos that Foucault discerned in technologies of the self operating in

ancient Greece. Yet at the same time as it counters the dehumanising discourse

which would label a locked-in patient as a "légume," Schnabel's film also insists that

we respect the specificity of locked-in subjectivity. The excessively constraining

subjective POV shots in the first part of the film serve not only to emphasise Jean-

Do's motor incapacity, but also to obstruct our habitual responses as film viewers.

Although by the end of the film a sense of conjoined subjectivity between viewer

and protagonist is generated through the sensory appeals of Schnabel's images, his

excessively immanent subjective narration at the outset of the film stymies the kinds

of identifications with film protagonists that are habitual in cinema. Initially we are

denied a sense of entanglement with the main protagonist and forced to inhabit a

form of embodiment that we cannot recognise. The intriguing implication of

Schnabel's overall approach to filming *Le scaphandre et le papillon* is that the viewer's

participation in realising Jean-Do's subjectivity, and subjecthood, is desirable, but

our viewing must not take place on our habitual terms. To properly recognise Jean-

Do's locked-in self, we must depart from our usual mode of spectatorship.

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[1] Jean-Dominique Bauby, *Le scaphandre et le papillon* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1997), 88.
[2] *Le scaphandre et le papillon*, directed by Julian Schnabel (2007; Paris: Pathé Distribution, 2008), DVD.
[3] I differentiate between the author of the memoir *Le scaphandre et le papillon* and the representation of this author in Schnabel's film by referring to the latter as Jean-Do, and the former as Bauby.
[4] Exceptions are studies by Megan Craig, "Locked In," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* n.s. 22, no. 3 (2008): 145-58 and Enda McCaffrey, "The Intertexts of 'Seeing' and 'Non-Seeing' in Schnabel's *Le scaphandre et le papillon*," *French Cultural Studies* 22 (2011): 345-57.

[5] Jean-Michel Frodon, "*Le scaphandre et le papillon* de Julian Schnabel," *Cahiers du cinéma* 624 (Juin 2007): 34.

[6] Tess Jewell, "Blinding the Screen: Visualizing Disability in *Le scaphandre et le papillon*," *Mosaic* 46, no. 3 (2013): 109-24. Curiously, Jewell's analysis of how Jean-Do is represented as a disabled person concentrates almost exclusively on his visual impairment, with the paralysis that characterises his locked-in syndrome receiving comparatively little attention.

[7] Tarja Laine, "*The Diving Bell And the Butterfly* as an Emotional Event," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 34 (2010): 297.

[8] Laine, "*Diving Bell,*" 301.

[9] Amongst many references to cinema, Bauby mentions films by Jean-Luc Godard and Alfred Hitchcock, and baptises a part of the hospital 'Cinecitta', after the famous Italian film studios. See Bauby, *Le scaphandre et le papillon*, 33-35, 84.

[10] Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton ([Amherst]: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 16-49.

[11] Michel Foucault, "Le sujet et le pouvoir," in *Dits et écrits 1954-88*, ed. Daniel Defert, François Ewald and Jacques Lagrange, vol. 4, *1980-88* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 222-43.

[12] Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, vol. 3, *Le souci de soi* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 62.

[13] Foucault, *Histoire*, 62.

[14] Ibid., 71.

[15] Ibid., 72.

[16] Foucault, "Technologies," 28.

[17] Ibid., 18.

[18] Space does not permit analysis of Bauby's memoir alongside exploration of Schnabel's film, but Bauby's work reveals numerous instances where the narrator uses the technologies available to him to attend to, and try to improve, the situation in which he finds himself (particularly his social situation). The chapter entitled "Le légume" offers perhaps the clearest examples, very reminiscent of Foucault's account of practices associated with *le souci de soi*. Bauby, *Le scaphandre et le papillon*, 87-89.

[19] Miriam Kyselo and Ezequiel Di Paolo, "Locked-In Syndrome: A Challenge for Embodied Cognitive Science," *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 14 (2015), 537.

[20] Bauby, *Le scaphandre et le papillon*, 75-76, 87-89.

[21] Kyselo and Di Paolo, "Locked-In Syndrome," 530.

[22] One particularity of x-ray images is, of course, their particularly selective (and thus depersonalizing) representation of the human body; representing only its most solid structures (particularly bones), they cannot convey any sense of sensory embodiment, unlike many of the visual images Schnabel uses later in his film.

[23] See especially Frodon, "*Le scaphandre et le papillon*," 34 and Laine, "*Diving Bell,*" 295-300.

[24] For a canonical (although not undisputed) reading of the classical mode of cinema, see Daniel Dayan, "The Tutor Code of Classical Cinema," in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, ed. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, 7th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 106-17.

[25] Edward Branigan, *Point of View in the Cinema: A Theory of Narration and Subjectivity in Classical Film* (Berlin: Mouton, 1984), 76.

[26] Edward Branigan, *Projecting A Camera: Language Games in Film Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 36.

[27] Branigan, *Projecting A Camera*, 36, 39.

[28] George M. Wilson, *Seeing Fictions in Film: The Epistemology of Movies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 149.

[29] Branigan, *Projecting A Camera*, 37.

[30] Vivian Sobchack, "The Man Who Wasn't There: The Production of Subjectivity in Delmar Daves' *Dark Passage*," in *Subjectivity*, ed. Dominique Chateau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 69-84.

[31] Sobchack, "The Man Who Wasn't There," 71.

[32] Ibid., 81-83.

[33] See Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) and Jenny Chamarette, *Phenomenology and the Future of Film: Rethinking Subjectivity Beyond French Cinema* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[34] Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts*, 53-84.

[35] Ibid., 72.

[36] Ibid., 58-84.

[37] Ibid., 67.

[38] Ibid., 65.