



ROBERT BEAVERS

SOTIROS

A sequence of notes

TEMENOS

Each film is a step towards a more solid and clear time element.

The path of light that enters the room and moves along three walls appears only during a few winter weeks, on the infrequently clear days between noon and one o' clock. This movement of sunlight underlies each of the three films and is progressively condensed; twenty-five minutes, ten minutes, slightly more than six and a half minutes. (This is accentuated by the nearly equal number of images in the second and third films.)

The camera tends to follow or counter the movement of light. Where the highlight has ended on the wall above the beds in the first two films, it begins in the third. It is not a contradiction; rather, the sun's angle has changed slightly; when the light enters the room towards the sinks, the mirror reflects it to the wall opposite. From this point, the light completes its circle, and the reflection continues as 'the words' in the camera's counter-movements.

The energy released by the moving camera changes the meaning of the film cut. It changes both the function of the spectator's sight and the projected light.

A pattern of camera movements away from fixed points becomes a measure of the interval. The pattern *rests* upon the screen as the film is projected. If the camera movement is into the film cut, an opening is made into darkness or light; it negates, in part, the closure of the film cut or at least carries it differently.

Near Vassae and the temple of Apollo Sotiros, the highlight moves along the horns of a goat as it turns: an almost circular camera movement within the room. There is the sound of a key turning in a door.

*Sotiros
Responds*

(1-3)

A shadow passes over the white highlight of the street; the river, Evrotas, can be heard above the sound of its surface. A shepherd climbs the hill, the pillow, *He said*; view towards the bottom of the hill with a surface sound of the pillow turned at an angle. Footsteps. Movement to the window, sound of the river; the shepherd is sitting against a rock at the bottom of the hill, movement from the bed to the window. The camera: light is moving in the room.

(9-24)

The total sound is limited neither by an object or person in the image, yet the basic acoustic is taken from the room, and the volume of individual sounds increases or decreases in a movement parallel to the image. Walls both limit and carry sounds; like the relation 'inside-outside', there is no absolute barrier between the outdoor sounds and the interior.

The voice, *He said*, is silent and set in the context of the room until the end of the first film; out of the same dialogue is drawn the melodrama of the second film and the reflected voice of the third.

The silent statement does not express but presents an image or series of images. Expression is closer to metre and sound; stillness and silence are closer to the object.

The first silent statement is held in grey: *waves, blind-man against the wall, highlight on an asphalt street*:

(14-17)

horizontal camera movement, static, movement in the frame.

- (25-28) The second statement is similar: *tree, red, street scene*: vertical camera movement, static, short horizontal movement towards the end of the image. The monochrome frame of saturated red has 'replaced' the blindman.

- (30-33) Respiration: the breath's diastol-sistol is parallel to the outside-inside, open-close, light-shadow of the image. The curve of the grey wall in front of which the blindman stands fills the entire frame. The silent roundness is there even when its outlines are not shown, — like the unconscious pleasure of full breath.

Another grey wall appears in *Sotiros (Alone)* translated into a different language far from the blindman's dignity.

- (40-54) While something is being made, boundaries and viewpoints are in flux; possibility includes the presence of opposites. The human quality and its psychology arise out of the image afterwards. The worker bends over a space that will become both floor and ceiling. *He said*, contains this place: *the wall of rushes, a village square crossed by a truck, a movement across the marble table-top and coffee cup, shadows of automobiles crossing the highlighted street, a space of blue, the head turning near.*

Perspective: the opposites of near and far negate each other's mystery like the negation of green by red in projected light and leave the Present transparent as a drop of water. (66-67)

From different directions along Harilaou Triamourpi Street, one sees an arrow sign (...ropolis 29), the Priamos windows and neo-classical facade, buildings opposite these windows, the grey wall, etc. In this setting the blindman remains in harmony with the silent statement; his sense (its physical absence) is near to thought. (9-85)

Surface sounds of writing and of the chair moving against the floor. Six images held in green between the darkness of the chair's shadows and the luminous full frame of the window shutter.

He said, "A cloud in the shape of...", the light concentrated on the door, writing; *"... a worker moves out of frame, Evrotas."* he said. (87-92)

The titles draw the dialogue towards the image and the film's limits, this voice in which each figure shares.

The next statement seems to contradict the earlier ones; its person and tense are different from the others, containing an image recalled from the first Vassae location and a figure within the room. His face is touched by the same light as the door, and his stillness creates more silence than if the room were empty. This word appears again in the second and third films. (94-98)

The shifting pattern of camera movements becomes a pendulum turning in the solidness of projection. The pattern, its curve, passes through the image.

(99-110) The movement of clouds is reflected alternately as light and shadow on the pine trees and in the room. The sound of automobiles is heard inside, upwards to the ceiling, and as an uninterrupted procession of vehicles in the street.

(111-113) *He said, "Waves until the highlight: A blue sky into which rises the emblematic white corner." (Ambiguously first seen as the corner moving upwards, — hesitation — then recognized as a camera movement downwards.)*

(119-123) If the image evokes a statement, it also allows a way of listening to sounds that are usually ignored like an unknown language. The sense of each sound, — its direction, volume, echo — speaks of its own space and is reflected in the image and its movement.

The room becomes a silent conductor through which a multitude of particulars move into relation.

The dialogue of the image continues to develop. *He said, "The full frame of red is closed by the shutter" (the red which is in the camera) "...the movement of one hand extends gently and holds one coin (the image of it) for another." he said.*

(124-141) The surface hiss of water is heard through the wall with the distant sound of bells chiming; the camera mov-

es from the sinks to the window. *He said, "A worker bending over; the Evrotas reflecting a cloud and surrounded by trees; the empty sink."* The doors open near the blindman: echoes of the water draining.

One understands that Film is not the image-sound but what is reached in (and through) the image-sound. Awareness becomes silently transparent; a separate life is projected: $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ means 'the place' and in ancient music, the limit of each interval; $\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ καὶ $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ the final precision in time is Space.

He said, "A doorway with green reflected in the shadow, the sheep eating leaves from a fig tree, the blindman."

(134-137)

The atmospheric clarity, the nearness of distant objects seen in Greece, shares the same quality for its sound.

The ringing sound of a glass echos in the camera movement from the sink to the opposite wall of the room. The Kafenion: a coffee and glass of water rest on the table; the silhouette of a fan is projected above a conversation in which the middle figure shows the size of an object with his hands. Part of the conversation rises upwards then descends along the door; the shadows of a handshake turn and part. The pleasure of afternoon light rests in its luminous vacancy.

(138-139)

(140-145)

Enter the waiter and greetings of old men. *He said, "A knoll with sheep, automobile shadows travelling across the street, the Priamos facade."*

(147-151)

The voice of the film, the dialogue of its images, speaks

more directly than performance. Its simplicity merely appears elliptical.

(152-175) The context of the statements fluxuates towards the exterior; the Evrotas is first seen in the distance and is reflected in the camera movement upwards to the ceiling of the room. The sounds of an action, — the rubbing of cloth, footsteps, the opening of a closet and vibrating wire hangers — are heard between the silent image statements and the extended presence of the river.

(183-199) Then the titles loose their connection to the preceding statements: the sound of conversation enters from the unseen hallway adjacent to the room and is alternately heard between the tearing of paper. "Gastarbeiter" are talking in an Italian dialect about money or some other complaint. "Wir arme Leute." The voices are heard indistinctly and are dominated by the nearer sound of the paper: *He said*, becomes one side; the other, *he said*. — a conversation juxtaposed to a corner of the room.

If one looks at a particular incident, its phrases may vary while its outline remains the same as numerous others. This unspoken form can be observed with a calm and unifying sympathy; an equivalent pattern of little fates within the film's image and sound grows until it becomes the unexpected and fully natural result, — not in the sense of Memory's subjective chronologies, but towards its invisible presence.

(200-205) The value of projection begins with a movement of light to the screen; yet there is a second level, counter to

the first, of shadows in the image, — the movement of darkness in light — and even a third level, of light and complementary color in the shadow. The turning footsteps of Sotiros, a fool gesturing to himself, are projected down upon the reflected brightness of the street. The bed turns at an angle, recalling the opening images of the hill and shepherd.

He turns in the square to the sounds in the unseen hallway; a parallel movement in the room from the windows to the door. The camera tilts again: the sound of birds. *"His footsteps..."* interrupted by the chirping birds and the counter-movement from the door to the windows, *he said*. The sound of footsteps in the distance. *He said, "The trunk of the olive tree turning, waves..."* Light from the dark blue sky reflects brightly on the white frieze and pilaster *"... the shadows of footsteps crossing the street, the same quantity of shadow as the glass of water and cup of coffee."* *he said*.

(207-222)

A projected image contains the camera angle and the angle of projected light to the screen.

The sunlight rests diagonally on the wall above the beds; the footsteps are heard approaching. Seen from above and in the distance, a figure stands near the threshed wheat. The faint sound of his call follows and echos. *He said, "The green shutter, surrounded by white outside, by black inside. Red."*

(224-230)

He said, The silence of the titles differs in itself from the silence of any other image, the one leads into the other and prepares the space for the voice of the image.

- (233-240) A movement on both sides of the shutter, between the dark interior which suggests sound, and the white exterior close to silence; the final statement, the final location. A movement across the green chair, its shadow and sound, to the exterior and sound of the birds.

(Alone) = not alone.

The new relation of image and sound in the Self is the measure.

A first image of shaving is followed by others: the leg, the faucet, the chin, etc. My hand turns the tripod handle from left to right, the eye turns from right to left; the two parts are one movement in the Self.

Sotiros
(Alone)
(1-10)

The tripod holds the center as a pivot of the plot; it turns between what is said and is heard. The context moves from the Greek to the German, yet like the tripod itself, a point of balance is formed from these different directions.

From the background of *Sotiros Responds*, the sounds now have an active part in suggesting the psychic placement of each scene-fragment. The clockwise movement of light gathers the new actions, with which the six quotes from Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* become a single Voiced highlight moving in the room.

The "dark" images of shaving, of cut branches, etc. are contrasted to the green-white highlights around the sink, faucet and glass. The sounds of water reflect light, even the sound of a single drop...

(10-25)

ἡ τε τοῦ ἔτους ὥρα καὶ χώρα καὶ φύσις
τοῦ θεραπευομένου σώματος

and the music heightens this intense physical atmosphere from which the film generates its fullness in the body.

All of the exterior views — the field, the street scenes, an alley, and later, the forest and pond — complement the *Wozzeck* quotes.

“... langsam—! Eins nach dem Andern!”

The Self is not a self-portrait.

(26-44) Parallel to the tripod and its horizontal movements are the images of a foot extended into the light, then of a leg wound, a finger touching the edge of the frame, and finally the leg standing. These images of the leg are like the small Greek votive offerings which show the part of the body that has been healed, — usually an ear, a leg, genitals or eyes. In ancient times, they were made of marble, now they are metal foil, but the shape and size have remained nearly unchanged for more than a millenium.

The eye moves from its inner corner to its outer corner beyond the edge of the frame. The figure at the table is writing...

(46-47) “Er kriegt noch mehr Zulage! Tut Er noch Alles wie sonst?: Rasiert seinen Hauptman? Fängt fleissig Molche? Isst seinen Bohnen?” The grey walls and the street with tram tracks are filled by the matte till the entire frame is black; the spectator listens to the above quote in this darkness.

The vertical black matte is a passage from the interior binocular fold of the spectator towards the screen and equals the (negative?) force within Sight which unifies the image.

The Self is balanced between an image of an ear listening within the frame and the listening of the spectator to the image-sound; as between an eye turning in the frame and the depth within the spectator's sight.

(48-59)

The sound of rubbing begins in the folds of a finger and is placed on the highlight of the leg. The sound of the film is not what would be heard if the same sound were heard by itself on a magnetic tape; only when a quality in the image animates the listening does it become the Sound.

The finger-tips are seen from the inside of the hand, an image of tact; yet, as they move towards the center of the frame the focus is interrupted by a jaggedness, when the eyes must adjust to the single point where the hands will touch.

(59-80)

On close observation the dialogue of any two figures is like a meeting of finger-tips; the reflexion extends and intermingles before the hands actually touch. The dialogue exists in this immaterial balance between left — right, movement — counter movement, speaker — listener.

The psychomachia of dark images and light: a shadow of the head turning, figures crossing an alleyway, the hand upon the knee, etc. are opposed to the translucent colors of flesh, which are held close to the surface of the frame by the matte.

The luminous yellow of certain images comes from the sunlight as it enters the matte and skin; there is a con-

tinuity of light, matte and skin, — a quality of growth and destruction.

Light has become one color.

(81-82) "Ich rieche Blut!" Berg's phrase is heard with an image of ashes, — the ruin of an old smokehouse at Wallfahrtskirche Strassengel.

(86-88) Because the matte is part of the frame yet not of the Image, it creates a space through which the sound is projected in the Self, e.g. the sound of a closet door is heard with a matted image of the leg; a silent shadow of the leg follows, then the door is opened into the matte as the sound of metal clothes-hangers vibrates.

(90-93) "Heiland! Ich möchte Dir die Fusse salben —" The fingers touch; the sound of the hangers vibrates through the matted image of the grey house-front. A hand comes into frame and rests upon the knee; it is like the hand on the tripod.

The space which is nearest to the senses contains a psychic character, a kind of second face in front of the actual one. It is this character which projects itself during intense emotion and not the senses.

(101-103) The reflected light and shadow is held on a piece of paper as a second screen within the frame; when torn and thrown aside, the "projection" moves to the wall; the dark forest path carries this action to the matted

image of the torso, over which the sound of the paper is heard.

"Ich wasche mich mit Blut! — das Wasser ist Blut... Blut..." The camera pans down from the pines to their reflection in the pond, and the sound continues downwards into a drowning.

(106-107)

The action resolves in **the** final quaver rhythm of Berg's opera. **Listening to this** sound carries one back to the beginning; the elements which have been united depart like the ripples on water: the hand leaves the tripod and reappears as a triple shadow, the final turn towards stillness, towards disappearance.

(112-115)

(116-120)

Space = voice and echo.

*Sotiros
in the
elements*

(1-5)

Unlike the preceding films, the third begins with a sound before the first image; it is the same acoustic repeated in its clearest order.

(6-8)

The eye-glass lens concentrates the light within its shadow; it turns upon the white wall of the final location of *Sotiros Responds*. The sound of a key is heard in the clockwise panning of the room, followed by the blindman with the matte over his eyes and again the eye-glass shadow as a projection of sight. *He said, When...* the sound of the Evrotas in the frame of the white wall... reflected in the reverse panning, right to left, of the room.

Words are attracted to the space of the image; in reaching the film they separate into a pattern.

(9-19)

The closely heard sound of rustling sheets extends through the next eleven images: the grey wall, a tree trunk and its shadow, the eye turning, the wall and inside, the ederdown, *return...* . It permits the series to include an unexpected image of the olive tree... *there... he said.* In the light of the room...

The titles now do not create a silence; they are part of seeing-into-reading. Beyond the first film's closed space or the second film's dialogue is the transformed image - - sound (and word-sound), the brightness of which is felt in the rhythm of the film's total Voice.

Each use of the matte reveals a different sense: one suggests an eye-movement or is related to the binocular

fold, another is towards sound or touch. (e.g. The shadow against the white wall is edited to the figure in the curve of the grey wall behind the blindman.) (23-24)

The film draws closer to the ear; what is heard is the relation of sound to the suggested movement. The *elements* from the earlier films, animated by the combined matte and title or the matte and sound, are transposed into new phrases; the hand appears in the turning from one side of the frame to the other, — touching the sound and surface. (25-26)

The meaning of each word is defined by its placement in the film.

At the angle in the room between the window and sink, the full pressure of the sound is heard as the water rushes from the faucet into the drain; then a single drop, like the window tassel, is both heard and seen, — lachryma in the hollow of the tree, *still* in the faucet, ... *litz* in the light of the room. (40-45)

The drop continues to lengthen in the faucet, while the sound echos — *red*. The window cord and tassel are like the path of each drop... *ber*, reflected in the mirror, recalling the saturated color of the first film's statements and the blood motif of the second. (47-49)

Each phrase contains images of Greece and of the room, yet the sounds place the balance towards a particular Tense. The sound of each drop of water in the above film-phrase suggests the interior and the Past, just as

the outdoor sounds and images of Leonidion dominate the next moments, — exterior and Present.

- (58-60) The image is no longer measured by a simple turn of the matte from left to right or right to left. Now the matte turns to the center of the frame, where it nearly disappears, then into the next image in which the matte continues turning. The 'blindness', which is part of the binocular fold, sustains the movement as it joins the image of leg, tree and key.

Counter to the turning of the matte at the middle of the frame is the path of the automobiles, the donkey and Sotiros. Each one crosses the square diagonally **and** equals the diagonal of light and shadow in the room.

- (72-75) Even the chair and table, animated by a sound, become part of the exterior: the sound of sheep turns upon the table leg, the root-like tree trunk and in the ear.

- (102) The camera moves across an object; in projection this becomes a turning of the object towards the spectator.

The key = each word, forwards and backwards.

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