

HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CINEMA

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It was necessary that the history of cinema, being a young discipline in full development and in quest of its own identity, be bathed in positivism so that a full and credible inventory could be taken of the works produced and of the efforts behind them.

In Italy that was done in an exemplary manner by Aldo Bernardini and Vittorio Martinelli in a titanic filmographic work supported by the added value of a passion which has remained unabated for decades.

However, we feel that now the time has come when a new challenge should be met thanks also to an improved film vision, since we have now been for some years active on the foundation of international communities of scholars working on a common level, the structuring of philology and common rules of filmographic classification are all to be established. At this point, I would like to borrow some considerations made by Fernand Braudel, to whom I have referred several times in the course of my work *Storia del cinema italiano*.¹

*At the risk of being considered an impenitent supporter of a laissez faire policy I maintain that all ways are good to cross history's several thresholds. Unfortunately none of us knows them all, but the historian will start by opening the door he knows best and when he will try to see beyond, he will necessarily have to knock on another door and another one... Each time a new or slightly different scene will come to sight and no historian worth of his name will be unable to juxtapose a certain number of them. For me, history is conceivable only as an infinite number of dimensions with one concrete and multidimensional base beyond which everyone of us remains free.*²

Therefore, a thousand and more objects for a thousand and more stories. This concept must be stressed strongly. Today the workshop of cinema's history is destined to a great development if it is fostered by the various disciplinary experiences.

This is no longer the time for hegemonic statements on one simple concept of history, or one line or one model bound to live only one summer or a few seasons.

Nowadays there is no compass pointing us towards a certain and definite point within this territory, nor is there a discipline or a set rule capable to assert itself and legitimately submit all the others.³

However the ethics of research do exist and to them I personally give a very important role: the ethics passing through respect and appreciation for the work done, even if of different quality, which promote knowledge and are not satisfied with the mere acknowledgement of single data. Slowly, but through a process of constant development, what we could call the international scientific community is in search of procedures and methods both recognisable and acceptable.

A method asserts itself when it is accepted and agreed upon by a group, an institution or a scholarly community. Its strength consists not in its power to impose rules and regulations but in making its proceedings clear and understandable as well as in its moulding power and adequacy in relation to the variety of objects.

Neither the history of cinema nor criticism or philology are born today. We are witnesses and protagonists of a new important phase of cinema's historiography. Although aware of living in privileged conditions, I am personally convinced that our prime task is to proceed without severing the ties or wasting our knowledge, albeit uncertain, elementary, or approximate which have preceded us.

The Lesson of the Fathers

In July 1942, after three years of silence, Georges Sadoul wrote a letter to his friend and historian of cinema Jay Leyda to inform him that he was still alive and in spite of the war, he had managed to save a part of his work using it to write the gigantic *Histoire générale du cinéma*,⁴ which he had begun on August 15th, 1939 and completed on May 9th, 1940 by copying the text and ending the third part.

On May 10th, as you know, our war had indeed begun. It took me to Alsace on the Somme. Then there was the great shock of June 5th. On June 10th we were the last soldiers on the Oise line, defending Paris and on June 13th I was one of the last soldiers looking back at the Eiffel Tower on top of which for a few more hours, the tricolour would still be waving. Painful memories mixing with those of the massacres on the Loire where I was on June 15th 1940.

I found myself demobbed wearing an old blue serge suit, penniless, owning two shirts and a toothbrush, without friends or addresses (I had lost my address book where also your address was written. But what was the use of it in a moment when France was torn in so many parts?)

My only earthly possession was the manuscript of my history of the cinema stuffed in my backpack on which I had slept during the past two months.

I was free in what was called the "free-zone" and was lucky enough to find a small job in the civil service here in Toulouse.⁵

I found it necessary to quote Sadoul's letter for several reasons: because even today his history of the cinema is considered an admirable and masterly monument not only for the conditions under which it was done, but also because it is the first innovative work sharing the spirit of the founding fathers of the *Annales*, and in the meantime trying to keep on the same level as the historiographic works of the great historians of that time.

It was not a case that in those war years Marc Bloch wrote a rough copy of his *Apologie pour l'histoire*⁶ and Fernand Braudel, in a concentration camp, held a series of memorable lessons which were collected and published almost fifty years later under the title of *Les Ambitions de l'histoire*.

Sadoul is the first *pontifex* of cinema's historiography and the first who tried to look at it from a global point of view; the first critic who transformed himself into a scholar and was able to throw a bridge between cinema as an industrial product as well as an artistic event and the history of contemporary world.

Sadoul was the first one to be “field promoted” in spite of all the difficulties of that time, a “proto-historian” of international cinema for merits, vastity of knowledge, abundance and novelty of instruments used.

It was in fact the impending catastrophe that urged him to try and save from oblivion an art born only a few decades before.

The manuscript adventurously saved which in turn saved part of his historical memory of cinema, was the source of all successive historiographic studies including those carried out by the new generations of historians whose work was legitimated by the university world and enjoyed an easy access to the sources as well as a privileged position.

I would like once again to mention Sadoul’s works in the occasion of his presentation of the results reached internationally by the historiography of cinema during the Venice Film Festival of 1964:

Working with basic means, he says, we are the Méliès of the history of cinema. We were the first to begin with much courage and often with foolhardiness to carry out a work (above all my own work) which I consider temporary and approximate.

As far as my books are concerned I hope they will be emended of all printing errors, date and translation mistakes, but mostly I hope that my books will be the starting point to demolish all that has been done so far and build something new.

As far as the majority of our works are concerned, demolishing and re-building will be the task of future generations.⁷

Davide Turconi, when introducing that conference proceedings, and more than twenty years after in an essay on international studies of the history of cinema affirmed: “The history of cinema has yet to be written.”⁸

Certainly the path to the foundation of a respectable historiography and its search of scientific legitimisation is all uphill: from the *Histoire du cinématographe dès origines à nos jours* by Michel G. Coissac⁹ to its contemporary *Naissance du cinéma* by Léon Moussinac¹⁰, to the more or less popular “histoires” of the 30s and 40s often admirable for the writer’s effort such as *Panorama du cinéma* by Georges Charensol,¹¹ or Ettore Margadonna,¹² Bardèche and Brasillach;¹³ from Francesco Pasinetti, who wrote his history when he was twentyfive re-elaborating and up-dating his degree thesis presented five years before at Padua,¹⁴ to Carl Vincent¹⁵ and his contemporaries Angel Zuñiga,¹⁶ Carlos Fernandez Cuenca¹⁷ with his *Una historia del cine* and Marcel Lapierre,¹⁸ all wrote their histories using second hand material written by critics, often clever, on very weak memories and impressions, without solid bases.

In all these cases the writer’s ambitions were rather modest and so were also their possibilities of carrying out a proper field research.

In any case these “proto-historians” of the cinema seem to consider the new form of artistic expression as being conditioned and determined by the social, political, artistic and cultural terrain on which it is developing.

For a certain period of time, as maintained by Marcel Oms in a still actual and very illuminating essay, a certain type of literature drawing its lymph from theorisation and poetic language engulfed cinema and took its place.¹⁹ And for a long time in spite of all efforts, Sadoul being an exception and an example, many capable critics could not turn themselves into historians.

Nowadays the situation is completely different and the wind blows in the sails of both a widespread historiographic awareness and the need, perhaps favoured by the recently celebrated 100th anniversary of the birth of cinema, to draw the first balance and to re-design a number of histories using fresh sources of information as well as new instruments and new knowledge of the relationship between different histories.

The necessity of popularising this type of literature has given birth to a number of summaries and compilations cut out to suit the new author's experience, but regards of the undoubtedly passionate fervour of the research in the historiographic field, few results stemming from the sharing of methods and sources have been achieved.²⁰ Therefore I feel it my duty to draw again the reader's attention to the work of Georges Sadoul and Jean Mitry.

Sadoul is no doubt the authoritative father of modern cinema historiography. From his words and his writings a conception of work as a tiring and enthusiastic adventure drawing near to a possible truth emerges neat and clear: a constant process of re-definition and re-discussion of not quite definite boundaries in constant expansion.

Sadoul is admiringly aware, like all great masters, of the uncertainty and perfectibility of the results achieved, of hypothesis continuously changing and of the capacity to point out the path to be followed through his method and example. His work is all the more admirable as it is carried out without the help of any reference points, consolidated methods or definitive results.

Independently from how firmly his statements and interpretations may hold time, or from the authority of the sources utilised, what is stirring even today is his capacity to question the data collected and his open-mindedness towards the opinions of the international critics, as well as his constant preoccupation to always give a point of view and an interpretation without confining himself to the mere listing of information.

Although Sadoul is moving in a scenery never before imagined by other international scholars, he has no aspirations to complete and total information, and his work never appears to be inspired by Positivism.

Sadoul's vision of the Marxist world, from an historical point of view, is very pragmatically adopted to each situation and is never limited by a conceptual grid mechanically and totally constraining and reducing the interpretation of his thought.

Although the film sources in his possession were very modest, even today Sadoul's work is appreciated for the results achieved by the use of his memories and of all the opportunities given to him by his work as a critic, but above all by his capacity to always look at films and at cinema as a phenomenon both as a militant critic and as a scholar.

In many cases the development reached in this field are measured using Sadoul's work as the starting point.

The spirit of the militant critic, the ideal fighter of the past WWII and Cold War years co-existed with that of the historian perfectly aware of his pioneer's role and apostolic figure.

As a critic, Sadoul was always ready to unsheathe his Durendal and fight for any good cause both in his daily work for *Libération* and as host, inflamed with passion, at ciné-club soirées. He was constantly in search of the Holy Grail in the immense territories opened by post war cinema in film festivals throughout the world, in the Parisian movie theatres and in that magic den accessible only to few people which was Henry Langlois' Cinémathèque. Any opportunity was good for him to charge into battle

against the enemies of some films, fighting with all the weapons at his disposal, sometimes stylistical other times esthetic, economic, ethical or even ideological.

As an historian, possessed in equal measure by a huge hunger which made him digest and elaborate any amount of paper work and movie sources, Sadoul appeared more balanced ready to open himself to different views and prepared to accept ideas foreign to his thought although never renouncing to his ideological orientation.

Sadoul, like many post war critics, called to a daily battle of ideas, made also some colossal blunders (one of the best known was his glorification of Stalinist cinema) and indeed was many times blinded by his political passion but never in his historian's capacity.

Sadoul's work primarily when dealing with silent movies, was carried out in total absence of film material and therefore only through consultation of newspaper sources, books and notes from the literature of the first decades.

But Sadoul's talent appeared in all its brilliance when it came to getting the best out of written or oral sources to place figures and works in the overall picture. He knew how to re-compose the landscape of a certain cinematographic trend, although in a way which nowadays may appear imprecise and full of gaps, facing the problem of relations between figures, of different measures and scale of importance both at expressive, ideological or economical level.

Jean Mitry, who drew a massive help out of his surprisingly active and reliable memory, tried instead a transversal approach to the phenomenon placing inside the same perspective the history of economics, of technical development and the comparative history of language and expression development.

Mitry placed the framework of his experience and knowledge of cinema at the end of a route along which, almost without interruption, the creative activity had grafted itself over the author's, collector's and film archivist's flair.

The research carried out and the direct consultation of texts, the capacity to critically dissect the films had been the base of Mitry's monumental film work as well as the theoretical studies to be found in the *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma*.²¹

Alike Sadoul, Mitry considered it necessary that a new history of cinema should consist of a history of Technique, a history of Industry, a history of Form and finally a history of Art and that they all should be bound together by a web of cultural, economic and psycho-cultural threads.

Mitry, more than Sadoul, seemed to point at a more total idea of history, more dynamic and more pliable, where micro and macro history moved forward at the same pace and together with the history of authors and structures there was also space for a history of evolution of the form, grammar, syntax and also for the exploration of symbols, dreams and changes in the psychology and the mentality of the spectator.²²

Mitry's workshop was equipped with apt and heterogeneous instruments but Sadoul probably had in his DNA a greater number of historian's genes.

The merit of these two historians has been the legitimisation of historical research through their work trying to establish its identity and peculiarity without losing the link with the XX Century history and also the conception of history of cinema without scientific ambitions, but as a limitless territory full of tensions and completely open to all influences. Beside Sadoul and Mitry, others must not be forgotten for various reasons: the contemporaries Jay Leyda – not only for his fundamental contribution to the foundation of the history of Soviet cinema but also for his teachings at New York

University when he started the first true generation of historians of cinema in the US – and for different reasons also Henry Langlois and Maria Adriana Prolo.

All together they have drawn a constellation of fathers of contemporary international cinematographic historiography, notwithstanding the differences in method and in contribution in terms of material work.²³

Their work, example and action have saved cinema's heritage, building the path over which history of cinema has subsequently advanced.

In a way their work and history represents an epochal period of historiography and film archiving and is a demonstration of how a relevant part of history of cinema could be passed on thanks to the merits of a single scholar, depository of collective memory.

The Paradés Gone By by Kevin Brownlow was published in 1968, which was followed in the following decades by a number of works opening the path to a type of historiography acting on several planes and mixing an extraordinary skill in library research with the capability of returning the texts to their proper context thus making them re-live in courageous and avant-garde philological operations through different media events.²⁴

From a certain moment onwards it became evident that, although genial, the work of a single researcher was destined to be inadequate regarding its object and that it was becoming more and more necessary to create a "common ground" to revise and re-visit the history of cinema as well as for a new circulation of methods and ideas.

Perhaps it was not by chance that the most significant result and the most innovative openings in historical work in the last decades come from groups of scholars of different formation although mostly bound together by the work in a film archive.

I am thinking above all of the pioneer work of the *Cahiers de la Cinémathèque* of Perpignan, linked to the Cinémathèque of Toulouse and founded by a group of scholars such as Marcel Oms, José Baldizzone, Pierre Guibbert, Barthélemy Amengual, Jean Gili, François de la Bretèque besides Mitry himself, who all had strong historian's formation.

Since the beginning of the 70s, this journal has privileged from all possible approaches to cinema, the historical line without ever showing an inferiority complex in confronting the historians, the type of problems, the systematic of its projects, the recognition of the history of cinema and its being capable to represent all historical elements of the past. It has therefore contributed to the consolidation and legitimisation of historical research on cinema, focusing on the plurality of directions and the representation of certain social classes or periods of world history to the study of the thought and the analysis of the single works.

Other journals have in time become workshops and meeting points for cinema historians like the Spanish *Archivos*, linked to the Filmoteca de la Generalitat Valenciana, or the Italian *Griffithiana* (founded in the 1970s by Angelo H. Homouda for the Cineteca Griffith and now linked the Cineteca del Friuli and Le Giornate del Cinema Muto), and *Cinegrafie* a workshop journal of the Cineteca di Bologna, *Film History* directed by Richard Koszarski then director of the American Museum of Moving Image in New York, and the latest born *Cinémathèque*, a magazine of the Cinémathèque Française the most open to dialogue with scholars of different discipline origin.

If the journal published by the Institute Jean Vigo is the one which has tried more than any to become a common ground for the encounter between historians and film historians, the other publications have become a meeting point for a kind of research more properly historical and archival, based on text analysis and theoretical observa-

tion. There is also been a progressive opening to the dialogue between different disciplines and the movement towards the historical ground of entire groups of semiologists who are going through a critical period after the splendour of the 70s and the beginning of the 80s.

All these magazines have known schools and privileged observation points where to become acquainted with the emerging scholars in the international panorama, comparing the first results of research in progress with the whole range of film archiving works such as restoration projects or research promoted in occasion of festivals or film shows.

From the early 70s and in scattered order, historians such as Marc Ferro and Pierre Sorlin have approached the movie world.

For the new generation of historians the memory of cinema is no longer born and kept in the individual life but can be brought back recomposed and circulated as a common heritage by the new policy by which libraries and archives are run, by the restoration programs contributing to give new light and best viewing conditions to old texts thus favouring their setting in a more pertinent background.

Together with the aforesaid, other factors must not be forgotten, such as collectors, video cassettes, CD rom and television programs, as well as that new instrument called Internet, whose potentiality can at the moment only be guessed.

If we expect that these works keep their meaning, each generation must question them and read them again after today's restoration techniques have brought them back to the best possible conditions, so that scholars may feel urged to become themselves part of the picture leaving in it their personal work.

From this point of view one has a strong feeling that a new era is beginning for historiography of the present and future cinema.

Common Ground and Horizon

If we think about the possibilities open in front of the present and future historians, we can envisage some perspectives and reference points which may create the future basis of wide range common projects.

1) Let us begin from the audience, a shadowy entity never taken into consideration in the past when critics concentrated their attention on works and authors. Cinema has been, amongst other things, some kind of privileged lay ritual in which the XX Century's man has accumulated the light of the screen and the images transforming them into social and ideological emotion.

I think that only recently work has been done, with original results, on the role played by the audience, on the ritual of vision and on the changes in collective behaviour.²⁵ Even beginning with the earliest projections, the audience was inscribed in the message, making felt its massive presence at every social level, as had never before happened for other art form.

There are stories of individuals, local communities, groups and international audiences all reacting in the same way.

2) Thanks to cinema, the dream of an international language seems to have come true, partly in previous centuries by the use of the magic lantern and the diffusion on international scale of the image market.²⁶

Both the cinema industry and the authors think from this inception in terms of a super-national market with plots and stories having common roots. Very soon, cinema starts drawing its lymph from myth, decanting it and making it re-live under the most varied forms, while the screen light takes the place of the bard's zither.²⁷

3) Cinema has been from its very beginning, the singer of modernity but also a nostalgic dream of a lost paradise of courtly life and primitive worlds.²⁸

What is still to be examined is the relationship both in terms of opposition and concurrence at national and international level, between the views on modernisation coming from countries with a different economic development and what in those nations is being produced for the big screen, i.e. from scientific progress to changes in human and town life.

The screen is the privileged place for the encounter and the clash of ideologies, ways of life, mentality, culture, economic models and society and the historian working on such a huge territory receives a quantity of information for greater than any other source or documentation.

4) The history of cinema must be studied by dividing the whole picture in its different phases, periods and times. The different pace of development between the various parts which the system is composed of suggest that the cycles and the timing adopted so far be revised as the pace of technological progress has never coincided with the development of language and expression. Furthermore, apart from striking exceptions, theory and poetry have never developed at the same pace.

In fact it could be noticed that the development of language reached its height in the 20s with the work of avant-garde groups, while all that happened afterwards was only a return to order and to structures and models already known.

There is always a time lag between the work of the critic and the author's or audience's.

The audience's biorhythm, the curve of collective emotion and the change in pace of social life induced by the ritual of film vision have never been made an object of a separate study.

The breakdown in periods so far adopted arose within the frame of what could be considered a simplifying process, – even if the broad division in two areas such as the silent and the talking movies defines the two main periods common to all schools of thought – but should be re-considered case by case, country by country and problem by problem.

5) Film is a point of aggregation and irradiation on an international scale of supernatural symbols and myths as well as an artificial national identity which are not transmittable by any other cultural or educational medium.

This concept is valid for Hollywood which has always managed to send across for a long period a strong message of “all American” models, figures and moral values which embody the American Dream. But it is also valid for the golden age of Italian silent movies when all around the world the splendour of our ancient glory was shown on the screen and the basic message sent across by the films aimed at re-discovering and re-kindling of our national identity.

6) The screen is the most apt tool for whoever wishes to reassemble the geography and the history of a nation and Italian cinema offers many more opportunities than any other cinema.

But the location of Western movies or other films set in far apart American states implies a different relationship between the representation of space and that of mentality, or between the way of life and individual or collective behaviour.²⁹

In Italian cinema, owing to the polycentric production system, because of the different cultural and economic centres and for its tradition of film on location, real life is in fact the privileged set of a great number of stories and the landscape is an actor and an instrument of primary importance. But the same can be said for other film industries such as those of North Europe, Japan and many others like the African, Asian and South American.

7) Cinema has been and still is a great diary, a hyperbolic *chanson de geste*, a fixing and sedimentation point of history and the collective autobiography of XX Century man, although in the Internet era, the forms of communication of the new media have changed the rules of the game.

Paraphrasing the title of Paul Lejeune's book *Moi est un autre*,³⁰ we could say that cinema man has left scattered around in an almost invisible way but fortunately re-composable, a large quantity of fragments belonging to an autobiography, both real and imaginary, titled "*Moi est l'écran* – I am the screen."

There have been moments when for spectators scattered around the five continents the real life they shared in common was the one created by a little square of white cloth on which a light would disclose the access to universe.

8) Cinema is psychoanalysis' elder brother. The roads and symbols of dreams, as taught by the great French historians in the *Annales* are important and have the material solidity of footprints.

Where and how the dust of our collective dreams deposits itself? How can it be measured? How a certain vision of the world, be it real or imaginary, materialises in a social group or in spectators at a given historical moment? How can a systematic research method be set up by the spectator? Which are the instruments offering the best guarantees? Could it be statistical or quantitative analysis? Or the cross-check research? Or oral historiography? Maybe the letters to magazines written by spectators which have been so popular since the 20s?

9) Cinema is an immense archive, a mine and a storage place of all that can be seen, a perishable monumental memory of great events and unimportant daily actions of which only the smallest part has so far been explored.

Since the Lumière brothers the *cinématographe's* eye has had the whole globe as its horizon and has recorded events with the same amount of curiosity.

Although one should be wary of the all too enthusiastic attitude of that part of the critic which could be labelled as "propmanship," the incapacity to classify material by the proper level of importance and overvaluing therefore every new find, should be approached with curiosity and an inquiring frame of mind considering it, until proof of the contrary, worthy of the maximum interest.

10) Cinema has been since the 20s a determining factor of transmission and transformation of the great intellectual currents.

For many generations both cinema in itself and the direct expression in filming have become the most apt yardstick to measure and to verify its power, the changes of its reference points, the irregularities, the regularities and the alteration of intellectual cycles, the changes of direction, the formation of links and their influence on a national and international scale, the metamorphosis of professional figures, the rebellious, the split and incommunicability between generations, the clashes and the field battles of one against all or team against team and group against group.

Suffice to think about what the Venice Film Festival³¹ has represented for many gen-

erations of critics and what, all in all, even during a period of weakening of cinema's vital lymph, the film festivals continue to represent even nowadays for thousands of neophytes and for all those who wish to receive their professional accolade.

[Translated from Italian by Flavia Tulli]

This text shows passages from an essay soon to be published in the 5th volume of *Storia del Cinema Mondiale* (Einaudi Editore) edited by the author. Many thanks to the editor for the authorisation.

- 1 G. P. Brunetta, *Storia del cinema italiano* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1979-82; 2nd ed. rev. 1993).
- 2 "Au risque d'être taxé de libéralisme impénitent, je dirai au contraire que toutes les portes me paraissent bonnes pour franchir le seuil multiple de l'histoire. Aucun de nous ne saurait les connaître toutes malheureusement. L'historien ouvre d'abord sur le passé celle qu'il connaît le mieux. Mais s'il cherche à voir aussi loin que possible, obligatoirement il frappera à une autre porte, puis une autre... Chaque fois sera mis en cause un paysage nouveau ou légèrement différent et il n'est pas d'historien digne de ce nom qui n'ait su en juxtaposer un certain nombre [...]. Pour moi, l'histoire ne peut se concevoir qu'à n dimensions [...] Au-delà de cette multiplicité, évidemment, chacun reste libre," F. Braudel, "Sur une conception de l'histoire sociale," in *Ecrits sur l'histoire* (Paris: Flammarion, 1994 [1969]), p. 191.
- 3 I fully agree with what Aldo G. Gargani writes in "Le procedure costruttive del sapere," in *Rue de Varennes* (march 1988), pp. 12-17
- 4 The first volume was issued in 1947, the other five, some of which in two tomes were issued throughout a period of thirty years: G. Sadoul, *Historie générale du cinéma* (Paris: Les Editions Denoël, 1947-1975).
- 5 "Le 10, vous le savez, la vraie guerre commençait pour nous. Elle m'a conduit d'Alsace sur la Somme. Nous avons subi le grand choc du 5 juin. Le 10 juin, nous étions les derniers soldats, sur l'Oise, à défendre Paris. Le 13 juin au soir j'ai été un des derniers combattants à voir, derrière soi, s'éloigner la Tour Eiffel où pour quelques heures encore flottait le drapeau tricolore. Affreux souvenirs, qui se mêlent à ceux des massacres de la Loire, où j'étais aussi le 15 juin 1940. Je me suis retrouvé en juillet démobilisé dans un vieux costume de toile bleue, pas d'argent, deux chemises et une brosse à dents, sans amis et sans adresses (j'avais perdu mon carnet d'adresse dans la bataille, et la vôtre avec les autres, mais à quoi alors, dans une France dispersée, ce carnet pouvait-il servir?), avec comme seul bien terrestre le manuscrit de mon histoire du cinéma, qui remplissait une musette sur laquelle j'avais dormi pendant deux mois. J'étais libre, et dans ce que nous appelons la zone libre. J'ai eu la chance de trouver ici, à Toulouse, un petit emploi dans une administration, et j'y vis, attendant, attendant longuement, interminablement," G. Sadoul, *Rencontres: chroniques et entretiens* (Paris: Denoël, 1984), p 11-12.
- 6 M. Bloch, *Apologie pour l'histoire ou métier d'historien* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949).
- 7 "Lavorando con mezzi artigianali noi siamo i Méliès della storia del cinema. Abbiamo cominciato per primi con molto coraggio e spesso con incoscienza a condurre dei lavori (parlo dei miei soprattutto) che considero come delle approssimazioni provvisorie. Per i miei libri mi auguro certo che si emendino tutti gli errori tipografici, gli errori di date, o di traduzione, ma più di tutto che partendo dai miei libri, o dai miei lavori, si demolisca ciò che è stato fatto, per costruire al suo posto qualcosa di nuovo. Per i lavori della maggior parte di noi, il compito di demolizione e ricostruzione si renderà necessario alle generazioni che ci succederanno un giorno." G. Sadoul, in C. Bassotto (a cura di), *La storiografia cinematografica* (Venezia: Marsilio, 1966), p. 16.

- 8 D. Turconi, *Quale storia del cinema? Appunti sulla problematica della storia del cinema in Leggere il cinema. Le storie e i generi* (Milano: Editrice bibliografica, 1987), pp. 19-56.
- 9 M.G. Coissac, *Histoire du cinématographe de ses origines jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Editions du Cinéopse Gauthier-Villars, 1925).
- 10 L. Moussinac, *Naissance du cinéma* (Paris: J.Povolozsky, 1924).
- 11 G. Charenso, *Panorama du cinéma* (Paris: Kra, 1930).
- 12 E. Margadonna, *Cinema ieri e oggi* (Milano: Domus, 1932).
- 13 M. Bardèche, R. Brasillach, *Histoire du Cinéma* (Paris: Denoel et Steele, 1935).
- 14 F. Pasinetti, *Storia del cinema dalle origini ad oggi* (Roma: Edizioni di Bianco e Nero, 1939).
- 15 C. Vincent, *Histoire de l'art cinématographique* (Bruxelles: Editions du Trident, 1939).
- 16 A. Zuñiga, *Una historia del cine* (Barcelona: Destino, 1948).
- 17 C. Fernandez Cuenca, *Historia del cine* (Madrid: 1949).
- 18 M. Lapiere, *Les Cent visages du cinéma* (Paris: Grasset, 1948).
- 19 M. Oms, "Clio de 5 à 7 où considerations sur l'impureté de Clio", *Les Cahiers de la Cinémathèque*, n° 35-36 (automne 1982), p. 56.
- 20 J. Talens, S. Zunzunegui, *Historia general del cine* (Madrid: Catedra, 1996-1998).
- 21 J. Mitry, *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma* (Paris: Editions Universitaires, 1963-1965).
- 22 In interviews and studies on Mitry's historical work is stressed the necessity to focus above all the historical importance of the language invented anew. A wider and more articulated study on historical work and on some of its fundamental problems seems conceived by Mitry almost as an answer to Sadoul's: J. Mitry, "De quelques problèmes d'histoire et d'esthétique du cinema," *Les Cahiers de la Cinémathèque*, n° 10-11 (été-automne 1973), p. 112. The first volume of *Histoire du cinéma* by Mitry was published in Paris in 1967.
- 23 I must pay homage to Leyda for being open minded in placing cinema in the history of the 1900s. Langlois and Prolo made history by saving every kind of material regarding cinema and have showed how history of cinema was part of a wider history of vision.
- 24 From the end of 1960s Brownlow publishes a volume every ten years that will be considered, for its originality of contents, a reference for international research. K. Brownlow, *The Parade's Gone By* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1968); Id., *The War, The West and The Wilderness* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1979); Id., *Behind the Mask of Innocence* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).
- 25 L. Rabinovitz, *For the Love of Pleasure* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994).
- 26 This is the topic of my studies in *Il viaggio dell'icononauta* (Venezia: Marsilio, 1997).
- 27 Many images are recalled from F. Dupont, *Homère et Dallas: introduction à une critique anthropologique* (Paris: Hachette, 1990).
- 28 L. Charney, V.R. Shwartz (eds.), *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
- 29 See R. Campari, "I miti del cinema americano" and C. Gaberscek, "Geografia del western da Broncho Billy a Clint Eastwood," in *Storia del cinema mondiale. Gli Stati Uniti II* (Torino: Einaudi, 1999), pp. 639-668 and pp. 795-833.
- 30 P. Lejeune, *Je est un autre: l'autobiographie de la littérature aux médias* (Paris: Seuil, 1980).
- 31 See N. Ivaldi, *La prima volta a Venezia* (Pordenone: Studio Tesi, 1982).