

## Beckett's Film: Perceiving Deleuze's Time Film through Stiegler's Negentropic Film

Hengameh Kharrazi<sup>1</sup>  | Shahriyar Mansouri<sup>2</sup>  | Kian Soheil<sup>3</sup> 

1. PhD Candidate, Department of English Language and Literature, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran. E-mail: [h\\_kharrazi@sbu.ac.ir](mailto:h_kharrazi@sbu.ac.ir)
2. Corresponding Author, Associate Professor of Modern Irish Literature, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran. E-mail: [s\\_mansouri@sbu.ac.ir](mailto:s_mansouri@sbu.ac.ir)
3. Assistant Professor of English Language Language and Literature Department, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran. E-mail: [k-soheil@sbu.ac.ir](mailto:k-soheil@sbu.ac.ir)

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### ABSTRACT

Gilles Deleuze argues that in Samuel Beckett's *Film* the perception of self by self, though agonizing, opens onto a promising vision: for one confined to the personal reduction of life, it discloses a transcendental expansion of LIFE. In cinematic perception, this transformation marks the shift from the classical cinema of movement, where protagonists made films, to a modern cinema of time, where the camera becomes the protagonist, inviting actors, like the audience, to watch the film enriched by its transcendental perspective. This article shows what appears in Deleuzian time-cinema as a proliferation of life, by sustaining the audience's belief in transcendental time as a horizon of perpetually emerging life-events, is, in fact, an entropic eventization of the audience's memory, a process that, according to Bernard Stiegler, entails the loss of *savoir-faire*. Thus, the revelatory shock-images in Beckett's *Film* signify an entropic loss of memory's ground, becoming pathological shocks that require therapeutic care and invention of new life-therapies, anticipating a negentropic reinvention of time the transcendental camera must watch and read its film from. Here, *E* is seen as a therapeutic camera, healed out of transcendental time through *O*'s analysing the pharmacological shock.

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### **Introduction: A New Camera After Dis-Automatization**

In *The Greatest Irish Film* (Beckett's *Film*), Gilles Deleuze explains what Beckett reveals as the inescapability of self-perception, as inspired by Irish Bishop Berkeley's *esse est percipi*, "to be is to be perceived" (Deleuze, 1997 23), has triggered a revolutionary change in cinema. The shift is from a cinematic perception in which the film unfolds through the protagonist's (re)actions, to the split-other, the camera, which no longer merely films the actor passively but also captures the entire external reality that correlates to his life, though remains virtually inactive. The camera creates a transcendental time that expands into the entirety of his being-in-the-world, proliferating the protagonist's life with too much sense from outside, insofar as it can "replace, obliterate and re-create the object itself" (Deleuze, 1989,12); for Deleuze, this constitutes a genuine metamorphosis in the entire reality of memory. However, this article argues that this transcendental push exerts immense pressure on the protagonist, O. His vision is like a balloon pressed by a fist, which suddenly pops out from the other side in a more intense form. I interpret this moment through Bernard Stiegler's concept of pharmacological shock: when a shock exerts too much pressure, one possible outcome, beyond mere leveling off, is the emergence of a therapeutic need to care for such a massive loss of life-knowledge (*savoir-faire*). This loss is then embodied on the other side as an excess of technical thought, or technics of the self. In *Film*, this overfilling of O's eye with E, as transcendental camera, leads paradoxically to the invention of a new camera and a new film, born out of disbelief that has been forced outward.

This article argues that *Beckett's Film* reveals the power of disbelief through O's collective seeing-intervals and the extended time devoted to them, opposing Deleuze's claim that O becomes imperceptible in transcendental time. Though this may seem paradoxical for some as follows — "O systematically and thoroughly eliminating all sources of perception while 'preparing' the room for his passage to nonbeing... a remarkably pure (and highly comical) form of centering subjectivity" (Schwab, 2000, 123)—it is read here not as contradiction but as the natural outcome of transcendental cinema: a negentropic cinema.

The fact that Beckett presents the technical eye as part of human memory reveals a crucial yet often forgotten aspect of evolutionary development, one that is often overlooked beneath the subjective filter of human perception. "Technics is the unthought" (Stiegler, 1998, ix), even though this inescapable and inevitable component of human memory is "the what invents the who just as much as it is invented by it" (Stiegler, 1998, 177). The camera eye in *Film* thus exposes how human life itself is cinematic and invented through such non-living, inorganic, technical record, and that films simply project how life is technically constituted. Now, according to Stiegler, the technical evolution of life can take two distinct pharmacological paths\_ either toxic or therapeutic\_ manifested in Beckett's *Film*, as this article shows, through Deleuze's transcendental memory and Stiegler's tertiary memory, respectively.

### **Film: Revelation of Lost Virtual Self**

Beckett presents the threat of self-perception through the protagonist, O, who tries to escape from a camera, E, which, although positioned outside his body, is O himself, as indicated in Beckett's script, part of his bodily organ, his eye. He symbolically shows how this camera-like eye is part of what we see through, yet completely forgotten, as we habitually think we see only through our organic eyes. In this way, this forgotten second eye is brought into attention, an organ already part of the body, yet functioning differently, like an inorganic machine that records an inorganic mode of seeing alongside our natural vision. This split within O's vision is deliberately marked on his face, with one eye covered by an eye patch, indicating that the patched eye is the camera eye, E. Thus, the inescapability of self-perception is shown as inseparably inevitable, like a second eye through which one is unavoidably forced to see. Apart from the eyepatch on O's face, this second eye is revealed through the contrast of shots: E's eye is rendered in clear, precise images, while O's appear blurred and indistinct. This indicates that E's inorganic eye is not simply a naturally assumed eye, but a differently functioning one, like the technical eye of the camera, that sees with greater strength and capacity. It further shows O's dependence on E's eye for a stronger and more accurate grasp of the world, making O's inescapability from E all the more inevitable.



This additional eye becomes agonizing for O, who insists on relying on his eye and seeing according to his will, even if it yields only a blurred image. Though limited, it remains a vision shaped by his desire. This is why E's eye becomes a constant and inseparable threat to his perception, as O is forced to see himself from E's point of view, producing a self-perception that is wholly unrecognizable and estranged from what he is accustomed to. The unbearable agony in Film lies in the fact that, O can evade the perception of others' observing eyes, but he cannot escape his eye, as this "pursuing perceiver is not extraneous, but self" (Beckett, 1984, 163), now replaced with E, which sees differently and independently from him. Despite this existential agony of self-perceivedness, this second eye becomes the revolutionary promising eye in Beckett's Film, for this allows what Deleuze knows as modern cinema to emerge, from "what was so terrifying: that perception was the perception of the self by itself, "insuppressible" in this sense" (Deleuze, 1997, 25).

Likewise, the camera-eye in modern cinema replaces that of the actor, preventing the film from unfolding through the protagonist's eye as in classical cinema, and instead allowing it to unfold through its independently different sense of time-consciousness. Beckett's display of human perception as a split self that turns back on itself is thus translated into cinematic perception. O, as the actor, no longer creates a film as a perceiving subject for the audience; instead, he is reflected by his cinematic double, the camera, so that the film becomes the camera's film, E's film. As Deleuze observes, "It is a very special kind of cinema which has acquired a taste for 'making the camera felt'" (Deleuze, 1986, 74).



What, then, is this inorganic eye within human perception, that does not function like the natural-eye but like a camera, one that has long been part of human vision yet remained unnoticed, that takes over the act of seeing, from O and from us? And how does this second eye make the camera something different from the typical camera known until now within cinematic perception?

To answer the first question, Deleuze proposes an alternative time-consciousness that perceives the totality of the past in its pure form, that is without being filtered through personal, interest-driven perceptions. Selective memories, shaped by what holds significant for an individual, remain interconnected even as they blur or drift away from reality. Yet out of this blur, events can separate from their vague personal links and reemerge with the full and precise details of the past. They can then relate to other events that previously seemed disconnected from or irrelevant to our subjective perception of our memory. As a result, the experience of memory expands, encompassing events we had not selected because they seemed of no use. Thus, without any empirical intervention or subjective abstraction, "We really leap into being, into being-in-itself, into the being in itself of the past" (Deleuze, 1991, 57). In this way, memory, instead of being reduced to what serves personal interests, merges with other events, disconnected yet real, because it participates in the whole past, not just a filtered version. This is what Deleuze calls transcendental memory, which "grasps that which from the outset can only be recalled, even the first time: not a contingent past, but the being of the past as such and the past of every time" (Deleuze, 1994a, 140). However, despite this pure past recalling real events, it is always relegated to the unconscious, since individuals tend to live according to their self-interested visions. Yet there is no escape from this "pure past", that is, a productive unconscious of the past that

exceeds the calculations of present needs and habits” (Pearson, 1999, 102), as it inevitably returns to human perception, rendering the reality one constructs for oneself both nonsensical and paradoxical. Now, is this not what an artist does using this second eye more for experiencing the “discontinuity of temporal shifts and the appearance of vacant and disconnected spaces” (Riley, 2008, 60), through which they begin to think, see, and express in a different light?

Thus, O experiences inorganic time through the seeing-intervals, where life-memory is suspended and nothing occurs—a caesura marking his end, absence, forgetfulness, or death. What typically constitutes a life—perceptions, affections, and (re)actions—is absent; O’s actual life becomes empty. With actual memory suspended, it loosens into the virtual, where once-familiar events reappear differently among multiple time-images, rendering memory out of joint and forcing O to think deeply in time. The transcendental time he now inhabits is too vast and unfamiliar to reframe his past, for while he once filtered the world to his interest, the second eye records the world as it appeared before such filtration. Transcendental memory, then, is O’s encounter with world-memory in its full multiplicity, before subjective selection. This totality forms the unconscious ground of his memory, compelling him to rethink his life. The experience is threatening, as his life loses its truth within world-memory—revealing that “each actualized experience possesses an essential forgetfulness” (Bryant, 2008, 111); yet promising, as it liberates him from his unreal, self-referential memory. In this process, O approaches *LIFE* as Deleuze defines it: a “pure immanence, an immanence that is no longer immanence to anything other than itself” (Bell, 2016, 8)—a life unbound from interest, open, heterogeneous, and as vast as the world beyond one’s perceptive centre.



Dislocated from his usual-accustomed to life, O’s life gets “out of joint and presents itself in the pure state” (Deleuze, 1989, 271), that is a disturbing experience but it is pure as he can shift from a life of survival to live the whole world and his “nonpsychological reality” (Deleuze, 1991, 56), accepting his being an inhabitant of the world, like the couple and the old flower-woman who are like O at the end of Film, shocked out of their empirical time into what E shows them, a virtually invisible experience, never actually seen on screen. O bumps into the husband, the husband is about to vituperate, but is stopped by the woman’s single word, “shhh!”, the only word used in this silent film, for the sake of preventing any action from forming and instead leading into the virtual film. The old woman is shocked out of her ecstatic moment with her flowers and collapses. All have moved beyond a life that is

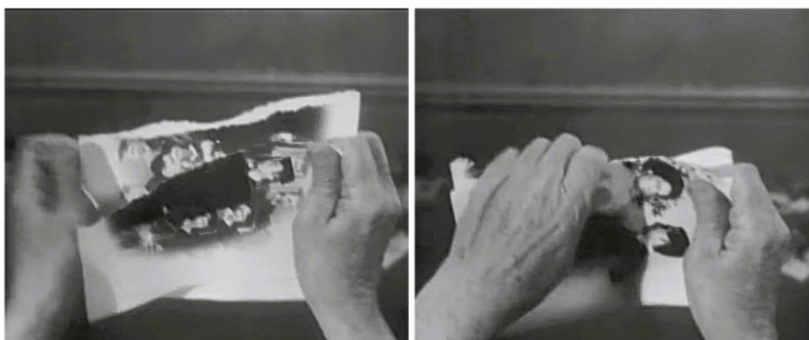
too subtractive, one that “subtracts from the thing whatever does not interest it” (Deleuze, 1986, 63), into what does not interest them, from the loss of the whole world-memory to gaining it. O is also dislocated from his personal affections as he tears apart all the photos. They seem like a lie to him, becoming nonsensical when measured against another feeling he senses: his experience of how the world-memory feels. The feeling does not “relate the lived to a transcendent subject = Self but, on the contrary, is related to the immanent survey of a field without subject” (Deleuze, 1994b, 48).



The way O is affected by the world generates sensations too varied to be channelled through his central emotionality; instead, he is filtered through the intricate criss-cross of feelings that may arise in all macro- and micro-events. This is an intricate composition of feelings, since each crosscut to other events generates nuanced micro-feelings in turn, producing an ever-proliferating sense of the world. Every event can make a different sense and their transversal merging with any other events even irrelevant, always causes world-memory to feel differently to a person. This LIFE creates “an I FEEL” (Kennedy, 2000, 103), understood as “a totally physiological sensation, one felt beyond or prior to subjectivity” (Kennedy, 2000, 103). Living within the world-memory recorded in us makes our feelings so detailed and impersonal that it becomes difficult to feel in the way we intend. We no longer have personal feelings, what Deleuze calls perceptions and affections to distinguish them from percepts and affects, what he describes as the creation of a unique “compound of nonhuman forces of the cosmos, of man's nonhuman becomings” (Deleuze, 1994b, 183), of an individual's feeling-with the world. So, For O, “Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them” (Deleuze, 1994b, 164). O becomes an artist, a creative, skilful seer, contemplating the world in all its “relationships of counterpoint join planes together, form compounds of sensations and blocs, and determine becomings” (Deleuze, 1994b, 185). His previously one-way feeling of the world, which made both himself and the world feel in a single way, transforms into “percepts as ‘new ways of seeing and hearing,’ [and] affects as ‘new ways of feeling’” (Cross, 2021, 97).

Open to new ways of seeing, hearing, and feeling has created shock-images in Beckett's Film, like they have seen a too powerful image they cannot bear. This happens because life is not any more tied to their self-interested memory which are embodied in their perception-affection-reaction images, what Deleuze sees in Bergsonian human role is making the whole

pure images of the world “appear for and in relation to the brain/screen as a centre of action” (Thomas, 2018, 125), but life gets into transcendental memory, and there appear optical-sound images, which are too powerful images, for they fracture their empirical memory into their world-memory which is not their own, implicating the present life with a virtual depth, all those overlooked events that are considered “events out-of-field” (Deleuze, 1989, 23), now all expanded onto endless possibilities they could or could have changed into, so as their eyes get pure of what they are accustomed to see, they see the too real image of everything, as “visual and sound nakedness, crudeness and brutality which make it unbearable” (Deleuze, 1989, 3). Out of interest, memory do not “link up with either a motor image or a recollection-image which would re-establish contact” (Deleuze, 1989, 54), but any-image-whatever. This too powerful image is the most real revealed onto memory, but one can escape the revelation of real time and continue their life as their individual solutions to the problematic of life, or to draw upon the overlooked problematic of life, the too unbearable, and change it into a possible world and life for oneself. One’s life is not separate from the world-memory, by attending to it and making new relations and creating new singularities within it, what Deleuze calls an individual’s differentiating/actualizing capacity which is “constituting differences between differences within the system” (Deleuze, 1994a, 117), both this world reaches its different possibility of actualization as a new solution for its loss of ability to present new senses to renew belief in itself for its inhabitants, and also, individuals produce themselves through qualitative leap into such differentiating visions and feelings loosened out of their one-way perception, so the world solution becomes their solution, making a possible potentiality of world-memory their possibility of real self. The production of real self is dependent on the production of distinct relations and singularities in the world-memory. so, instead of escape, O, this way, would assume a role in the world-memory, as a differentiator, whose role according to Deleuze is “discovering the ‘differently different’” (Deleuze, 1994a, 314). Therefore, does this not change life as a creative art of survival, where one makes one’s self-interested world out the chaotic world-memory, into an art of living, where one makes the world renewed to renew oneself?



This brings us to the second question: how does the emergence of a ‘second eye’—an opening into transcendental time within human perception—transform the camera’s role in

cinematic perception? In time-cinema, the camera becomes the protagonist's inorganic eye. The former cinematic eye, once belonging to the actor and serving as the perceptive–affective–active centre of the film, now changes its function. Formerly, the camera merely recorded what the protagonist saw, producing a film that modelled how to convert the threatening “nonhuman becomings” (Bell, 2016, 219) of world-memory into a form suited to the protagonist's—and, by extension, the audience's—interests. In contrast, time-cinema makes the protagonist a seer, perceiving—along with the audience—what the camera reveals. As one among the viewers, the protagonist sees world-chaos in its full virtual depth, where “every territory, every habitat, joins up not only its spatiotemporal but its qualitative planes or sections: a posture and a song for example, a song and a color, percepts and affects” (Deleuze, 1994b, 185). Acting ceases, and seeing begins—extracting from the unbearable fractures of coexisting memories within transcendental time a possible singularity, a new sense within world-memory, one never before actualized, but this film shows how the world could be differently different. Artists and filmmakers, endowed with heightened powers of différenciation, can transform this overwhelming reality into singular differences, generating revolutionary modes of vision. They perceive unthought singularities more keenly, cultivating “a science of visual impressions, forcing us to forget our logic and retinal habits” (Deleuze, 1989, 18–19), which “henceforth outstrips our sensory-motor capacities” (Deleuze, 1989, 18).

Thus, filmmakers can recreate a life drawn from transcendental memory—the forgotten source in which audiences have lost belief—thereby restoring to them the deepest and most real part of their memory. This transcendental memory holds endlessly differentiated Ideas derived from countless events and encounters; yet, as Deleuze notes, “in themselves and in their virtuality they are thus completely undifferentiated” (Deleuze, 1994a, 279). The filmmaker's task is to actualize this undifferentiated virtuality into a new form of lived experience. Confronted with this revelation, the audience stands in awe before a life returned to them—the lost memory that once lingered as an unconscious threat now emerging as a luminous, though unbearable, vision granted by “a cinema of revelation” (Deleuze, 1989, 192). Through film, the life they have not lived is lived for them and given back as a split memory—once unthought, now transformed into a possible life the filmmaker perceives and re-creates: a reality never actualized as a life common to the audience's eyes, yet virtually present in the world as new percepts and affects, a different conjunction of time. What once appeared illusory is healed through cinema into a creative life that, as Deleuze writes, “supports them through the illnesses of the lived ... Perhaps one day we will know that there wasn't any art but only medicine” (Deleuze, 1994b, 172-173). In this sense, cinema becomes a revelation of possible life drawn from transcendental memory—restoring belief in the world, for “if the world has become a bad cinema, in which we no longer believe, surely a true cinema can contribute to giving us back reasons to believe in the world” (Deleuze, 1989, 201).

### **Film: Toxic Revelation**

O's last photo shows a stark contrast from the first 6 photos, as it is not simply a continuation of his empirical memory, displayed through the successive stages of growth from infancy, childhood, adolescence, graduation, military service, marriage, to fatherhood. Rather, it situates him within a broader perspective that exceeds what is merely depicted in the packet of photographs. It emerges instead from the intervals where O's time is drawn into the memory of whole time, a memory most of which does not belong to him, yet within which he is compelled to remember himself. So, "a different type of image can appear: a pure optical-sound image, the whole image without metaphor, [which] brings out the thing in itself, literally, in its excess of horror or beauty, in its radical or unjustifiable character" (Deleuze, 1989, 20). Therefore, the last photo is starkly different. Here, he is no longer paired with his family members but instead sees the too-powerful virtual image of reality through E, who is now newly coupled with him as his second eye. He becomes the audience of E's film and of the temporal cuts it creates that, for Deleuze, act like a caesura promising metamorphosis. After such a caesura, which "constitutes the fracture in the I" (Deleuze, 1994a, 89), O's life is no longer the same, for he "seizes [thought] from the outside, as the unthinkable in thought" (Thomas, 2018, 234).



However, paradoxically, what appears so enlightening and revelatory at the same time shows O with a grim, lifeless expression. In Stiegler's sense, O in the final shot is automatized by E's transcendental time of world-memory, which inserts in him "automatic protentions that short-circuit every faculty (of knowing, desiring and judging)" (Stiegler, 2018, 100), so his own "subjective imagination is short-circuited by objectivated e-machination" (Stiegler, 2018, 100). this enriching caesura turns into a loss of "knowledge of how to do (*savoir faire*), knowledge of how to live (*savoir vivre*), and knowledge of how to think (*savoir penser*)" (Steigler, 2020, 187), and how to see. This means that the Deleuzian caesura which restores O's belief in the world also takes the form of what Stiegler calls disruption, which is "one such suspension of all previous ways of thinking" (Steigler,

2019a, 15), as it replaces his time-consciousness with that of another, causing him to forget his capacity to see, leaving him caught in intervals of seeing–waiting, where nothing occurs but empty staring. This visually reveals the Deleuzian promise of liberation in differentiating life possibilities through O’s mature, reflective expression extending into vast transcendental time, is in fact “a structural and intermittent disadjustment” (Stiegler, 2016, 176) occurring within his memory—what Stiegler describes as “the generalized liquidation of noetic: *energeia* in all its forms” (Stiegler, 2016, 215).



The caesura inflicted by E which causes suspension in O’s individual critical abilities to think on his own is, in Deleuzian sense, a productive disruption equaling to metamorphosis, since it forces him out of his distorted, fabricated life, and instead sees the virtual reality outside. As one usually clings to what one constructs for oneself, just as O clings to his life-memory, holding the packet of photographs until the very end of Film, it is difficult to break someone free from their enclosure except through a shock. And this shock must be powerful enough, like what seen in Film, taking the form of an epiphanic revelation in which O is persuaded to place more belief in what is revealed to him than in his life-memory, experiencing a “shock wave or the nervous vibration, which means that we can no longer say ‘I see, I hear, ’but I FEEL, ‘totally physiological sensation’” (Deleuze, 1989, 158). In this sense, a true film shocks the audience by making them feel that a missing life has been revealed to them and becoming their new percepts and affects. The audience’s grounds of memory are thus forever metamorphosed by this new belief as it becomes forever one such event in the audience’s memory of whole totality of time, similar to how, from the room scene onwards, E becomes for O his very ground of memory which he thinks from and what begins as seeing or hearing E as a separate film ultimately becomes inseparably O’s very body and mind, his ‘I FEEL’. So, E becomes O’s transcendental memory to live from, “the cinematographic I THINK: the whole as subject” (Deleuze, 1989, 158), as the real protagonist.



For Stiegler, this means the audience loses trust in their ability to produce memory and world-memory. What is shown in film, which opens their eyes “to powerful and direct revelations, those of the time-image” (Deleuze, 1989, 23), emerges as an overwhelming epiphanic shock that becomes their new ground of memory, and thus the basis of their life. This means that the audience’s memory ground becomes the condition for unbound possibilities of Ideas drawn from transcendental time, expanding their restricted memory ground, limited to a partial grasp of life, into an eventful world-memory, for “time itself becomes the “subject.”” (Bryant, 2008, 203) and “the subject belongs to its Ideas” (Bryant, 2008, 203) However, in the Stieglerian sense, time-cinema, while enlivening the audience’s long-dead unconscious memory of world-memory with new sense-events, simultaneously deadens their very memory ground. This occurs through the audience’s own natural, unbound desire for events, a desire that, while seeking life, ultimately becomes “the death drive, also called the drive to destruction” (Stiegler, 2019a, 244). Similarly, in Film, O’s memory collapses into a silent film when confronted with other virtual possibilities of his life-memory, losing his film within “a fundamentally entropic tendency of unbound desire” (Stiegler, 2019a, 244). He becomes a kind of empty actor and is extinguished, “as the movement of the rocking chair stops and the character dies” (Deleuze, 1997, 25). Deleuze himself acknowledges O’s death as a prerequisite for this process when he asks: “Is this not precisely what is needed, to cease to be in order to become imperceptible...” (Deleuze, 1997, 25)? So, the destruction of O’s memory is undeniably the very thing Film is about, although a new economy of attention, a new relationality for living in the world, life as a new economy of sharing, is enlivened with him but for Stiegler this becomes “a diseconomy of sharing, that is, a destruction of those who share by the means of what they share” (Stiegler, 2019a, 18).



Therefore, the loss of the audience's *savoir-faire* is more radical in time-cinema than in classical cinema. If O is taken as the protagonist of classical cinema, his life-memory does not necessarily function as the memory ground for the audience. We, as viewers, recognize that this world is not our world-memory, but a life personally created by the protagonist. Although we may imitate his belief as a model for life, we know we are following a personalized, individual existence. By contrast, time-cinema transforms the audience's ground of memory by renewing their world-memory with a new sense, from which they should always think their memory from. The sense of which remains always open to differentiate into other relations within the audience's world-memory, thereby affecting how this world-memory can be actualized in their thought and experience. In other words, once a time-film reveals part of the audience's virtual reality, the ways in which they can actualize possible lives are profoundly transformed, reflecting a complete metamorphosis in the foundation of their memory.

Knowing Beckett's *Film* as a template of time-cinema, we can see throughout "a disruption of the very process of eventization (of 'what happens, 'what takes place...)" (Steigler, 2011a, 1), leaving O and the others "reeling from shock" (Steigler, 2015, 39) at what they have seen. In a state of stupor, they lose their capacity for thought yet are seized with awe before this different world. E, as the time-cinema's transcendental camera delivers shocks to the eyes through exposing them to endlessly cross-cutting disconnected images in time, unsettling the habits of perception they had relied upon until now. This, precisely, is what Stiegler calls the state of shock: not revelatory, but a kind of stupor, in which the eyes move as if seeing, yet are overwhelmed by saturation. In time-cinema, this saturation appears positively proliferating because of "the instability that comes with the point of saturation, and it is this unstable state at the edge of chaos that allows for the possibility of new affects" (Bell, 2016, 220). For Stiegler, however, this saturation of the eye with an excess of discrete images operates differently: "cognitive saturation induces a loss of cognition, that is, a loss of knowledge, and a confusion of minds, stupefying consciousness so that it becomes increasingly unconscious" (Steigler, 2013b, 87).



Such discretization of images “to create shocks and destruction...and through that to paralyse thinking and nip any alternative possibilities in the bud” (Steigler, 2015, 39), jolts the viewer out of the logical continuity of their vision, as they undergo “a vast process of the grammatization of the visible” (Steigler, 2002, 148–49). What is seen does not simply end once it is out of sight, but once as a viewer you have seen what Stiegler calls image-objects or objective-images, the reality of your mental images is transformed, and trained in a particular way, as he states, “without the objective image, despite one might think, there is not, has never been and will never be a mental image: the mental image is always the return of some image-object, its remanence — both as retinal persistence, and as the hallucinatory haunting or coming-back” (Steigler, 2002, 148). On this basis, he warns the audience to be more attentive to discrete images, since when one’s mental images are disindividuated, memory becomes dissociated, and affections alienated or appropriated, which causes “a general state of affective saturation, leading to a disaffection and a disaffection of psychic and collective individuals through the generalization of dissociated milieus” (Steigler, 2014a, 55).

For Stiegler, time-cinema marks the end of the audience’s ability to produce events: to see themselves as possibilities beyond the totality of the time they inhabit and to create events that address what their world-memory lacks. In other words, they can become the virtual reality for the world-memory, providing it with the *savoir-faire* it requires in the absence of an epoch, rather than allowing the world-memory to serve as the possible virtual reality for their absence of belief. Failing to become the virtual reality for the world-memory, we fall into the chaotic entropy of life, which naturally tends toward death and dissociation, unless it is structured by living organisms, what constitutes negative entropy, “the organisation of matter through which life avoids ‘the rapid decay into the inert state of “equilibrium””” (Moore, 2013, 20). From this perspective, the production of films can be seen as a form of negative entropy, or negentropy: they embody knowledge of how life can be sustained amid the vast chaos of the world.

### **Seeking a Life/Film as Expression of True Negentropy**

In time-cinema, negentropy emerges through merging with the world. It is not a matter of letting the world unfold unseen, unthought, and unfelt (which would leave it untamed and render one’s life irrelevant), but of entering every event of the world, even at the cost of

becoming dissociated and fractured by whatever this world-memory contains. However, this allows time-protagonists to have their negentropic impact, to adeptly think, see and differentiate/actualize the endlessly-differentiating unthoughts into a new mode of thought, and presents this as a life to the audience. In classical cinema, the protagonists' negentropic savoir-faire in organizing world-memory involves shaping the multiplicity of differences and variations, despite their richness, to serve their interests, and presenting the audience with one such life they have made useful.

However, for Stiegler, none of these lives are truly negentropic, since the protagonists are shaped by world-memory rather than by what they exosomatize—that is, what they invent for themselves, events that have never existed in any actual or virtual form within world-memory but are uniquely their own: their technical events for the world. Time-protagonists treat world-memory as the source for actualizing a potentially possible life; yet the life or film they produce results in “a liquidation of the adoption processes that invent us as humans” (Moore, 2013, 31), obliterating any technics of life. As Stiegler observes, Deleuze is “blinded to the difference between the (negentropic) destruction of harmful forms of order and the (entropic) destruction of (negentropic) structures of society” (Moore, 2013, 26). For Deleuze, the destruction of self by world-memory enables life's renewal through differently possible re-assemblages within virtual reality; for Stiegler, however, the destruction of such virtual reality is what enables the adoption of our virtual singularities—our technics for life—understood as “singular appropriations—that is, diachronic appropriations” (Stiegler, 2011b, 111) of world-memory. This distinction may suggest that movement-protagonists, by producing individual life-events, embody the savoir-faire of world-memory. Yet their savoir-faire remains confined to their own world and fails to contribute to “the individuation of a world constituting an associated milieu” (Stiegler, 2013a, 39). By appropriating world-memory for personal interests, they reduce the virtual potential of life. True savoir-faire, in contrast, requires orienting thought toward how the world-memory's interests are best served, making it individuate through one's decisions and the exosomatized theorization of life-memory.

### **Stiegler: Therapeutic Film**

According to Stiegler, negentropy, as a form of life, means preventing events from deciding for us what should be remembered; otherwise, we inevitably disindividuate into any possible thought as the ground of our memory, as occurs in time-cinema. We become caught not only by actual happenings but also by virtual, not-yet-actualized senses they generate or may generate in the future, leaving us merely reading a life instead of making one. So, the life we have claimed as ours becomes a dissociated memory, as if we were living and even considering essential the memories, thoughts, and even traumatypes of others. However, For Deleuze, this living with events may appear liberating: when we fail within the boundaries of our personal perceptions and affections, the knowledge of how to live outside them opens a passage outward, allowing life to resume by working through the necessary

lost event it requires, much like the reintroduction of lost events into the audience's life, enabling them to resume living with a renewed element: their renewed belief in the world. For Stiegler, this "may result in traumatypical liberation but in the guise of stereotypes, turning cinema into a political power to harm stupidity by working with it" (Stiegler, 2014b, 30). In other words, while this may appear to release the audience from their personal infinitesimal reality, which is itself a kind of stupidity, it simultaneously imposes another form of stupidity: leaving them passively awaiting the revelation of events and thereby diminishing their critical capacities. Therefore, memory becomes entropic as "hypomnesic milieus without anamnesis are dissociated milieus: they are industrially disorganized, desocialized and desymbolized" (Stiegler, 2010, 82).

For Stiegler, filmic memory is unlike Deleuze's time-cinema, which reveals a transcendental time within world-memory as an essential part of the audience's own memory ground. The time-film reveals to the audience this inorganic outside as the very ground of their memory, where every sense-event or potential within world-memory functions like a biological or genetic component of their own memory, shaping what life can become. Although the memory of transcendental time in film is not a fixed genetic blueprint for life, this has opened a field of endlessly differentiating possibilities that nonetheless provides an orientation, an epigenesis, for the production of life. However, "to this sense of epigenesis Stiegler adds epiphylogenesis" (Colebrook, 2019, 171). In contrast to epigenesis, Stiegler conceives the inorganic outside as organized through tertiary memory, which he describes as "epiphylogenesis, in which memory is housed outside the body through the organization of the inorganic" (Stiegler, 2011a, 206). This means that world-memory does not have a naturally genetic relation to the body, the memory ground, but instead considered exosomatic, that is constituted as a theoretical life-knowledge beyond any form of life, technically added to life and seeks to theorize the entropic inorganic matter of world-memory. This shows that world-memory is not necessarily a genetic correlate of memory development but is instead understood as a culturally constructed form of life, that "rests not only on genetic but cultural memory" (Crogan, 2014, 82). Stiegler describes this as "an artificial selection process that ultimately tends to suspend processes of natural selection" (Stiegler, 2018, 17). Therefore, according to Stiegler, one's ground of memory is also shaped beyond life itself, by means other than life, through processes "that constitute an artificial milieu...through the individuation of social organizations" (Stiegler, 2018, 90), making "our interiority to already be a collective human exteriority" (Colebrook, 2014, 171).



One example of this exosomatic organogenesis is filmic production, which clearly shows the possibility of tertiary memory through the technical production of milieu and image-consciousness, functioning as the “grammatization of the mnemotechnical articulation of experience” (Crogan, 2014, 83). Accordingly, “the technological equipment has become a tightly sealed black box that makes the images before we can make them” (Lindberg, 2024, 3), becoming “a system of editing and post-production of primary and secondary retentions and protentions” (ibid. 6–7). In this sense, in Beckett’s *Film*, E as the film-camera edits the world-memory, which is a matter of “imaginative and selective recombinations of experience” (Stiegler, 2019b, 310), under the guise of revealing natural events as O’s virtually lost memory. For this reason, it becomes toxic, revealing theories as “prostheses conceived and fabricated exosomatically but endosomatically implanted, just as are those prostheses added to the heart or to the ears” (Stiegler, 2018, 76), as exemplified in *O*, where the camera lens itself becomes an implanted prosthesis, showing its film as O’s real vision. However, as it presents itself as a fictioning construct, the film also provides the audience with the same technical support to formulate their own theories and make healing, therapeutic decisions. The film thus shifts from revealing what is missing in us to allowing us to see what is missing in the world-memory that can be added to life. While cinema is the most powerful medium for producing memory and automatization through its “extraordinary belief effect” (Stiegler, 2019b, 309), it can equally become the most powerful medium for “potential ‘positive pharmacological possibilities’” (Crogan, 2014, 92). Thus, there is a direct relation between grammatization, which increasingly occupies more space of memory, making the ground of memory the infidelity of the milieu, and the resulting need to create “new conditions of fidelity in order to overcome the shocks of infidelity” (Stiegler, 2018, 40). This is precisely what *O* attempts to contribute, “the therapeia required by any hypomnesic tertiary retention” (Stiegler, 2018, 223).

With little anamnestic agency remaining in both O’s empirical and transcendental memory, he tears apart the first six photos and the seventh, leaving himself with no memory

at all. He tears even the last photo, despite its promise of creating new lives, to block its sense from entering his memory. He realizes that unless it is expelled from transcendental memory, any sense-event belonging to the whole of time that has constituted world-memory will persist, not only actual but also virtual ones, still retaining the potential to re-emerge at other moments. When connecting with other event-senses, they may become obscure or intensely clear, yet in either case their reality persists and inheres in O's memory. This gives him little anamnestic impact, since he is within an event-composition that connects and intensifies independently, in different ways. He becomes perpetually stuck: even if he wants to stop one event from making sense, he cannot but only see it differently-related to others and thinks about it differently through the differences it makes. Therefore, there is no possibility of healing from any ill-being, if it exists, since its senses are "present virtually as if for all time" (Colebrook, 2019, 172) and always remain a virtual possibility of an actual life, causing O to find from which he cannot free himself, even though it is ill-being.



O has realized this ill-being, as a "being without beings" (Steigler, 2018, 196), that is, a being of time through which he reads his memory, yet one that does not contain himself. The largest split of his memory lies in the event-composition of world-memory, where he searches for his virtual reality to recover the unthought as a forgotten possibility of life. This means that a large part of his memory, which is also the truest, since it reflects the reality of the whole of time as it is, remains unthought, awaiting revelation to him. However, O realizes this as "ill-being, which would also be what remains unthought, untreated and uncared-for [impansé]" (Steigler, 2018, 191). This marks the first step in his individuation, in the Stieglerian sense, the first moment of doubly epokhal redoubling, where he becomes aware of his automatization by the ill-being, the infidelity of the milieu of his world-memory, as he sees it through E's eye. At this point, he begins to consider dis-automatization from E's epokhal redoubling. The re-doubling of O's blurry memory with the more sharply defined shots of E, which Beckett himself describes as moving "from greater to lesser and lesser to greater definition or luminosity" (Beckett, 1984, 171), suggests that E's shots are more luminous, carrying the promise of restoring the thoughts O has missed as essential events

of his memory, intended to shock him into a new belief. Therefore, it is generally difficult for anyone to sustain disbelief in or removal of what constitutes the entire reality of the sense-events of the world they inhabit. but O seeks ways beyond “the shocks of infidelity” ... ‘beyond disruption and stupefaction’ (Bradley, 2024, 243). He refuses to accept this shock as a revelation of reality, but as his loss of *savoir-faire*, and therefore, he is left with no other memory but with his memory of disbelief in the world, along with his alternative therapies, as one who has suffered “this shock to dream otherwise” (Stiegler, 2016, 99). So, he is led to the second moment of “the doubly epokhal redoubling—as the second moment of the *pharmakon*, its curative moment, its normative remediation in the sense that it is inventive of a new system of care” (Stiegler, 2013a, 65).

The only memory O can still believe in is his tertiary memory, the third eye that has witnessed and recorded all the therapies he has envisioned, not as isolated acts but collectively with others in Film, such as the couple and the old flower-woman. These are manifested in the times of thinking-seeing they have shared, born out of their shared disbelief in E’s virtual reality. These collective seeing-intervals, taken as O’s psychosocial affinity, “enables idealization, and does so by way of a social moral being that is itself possible only according to a set of therapeutic life-knowledge prescriptions” (Stiegler, 2019a, 229), which they imagine as therapies to the world’s ill-being. This technical memory functions as a means of healing the reality of the whole of time exposed by E, the naturally occurring events of the world, which makes it impossible to perceive life in a completely different way, but instead requires following their sense-events, waiting for a new Idea to emerge through the new relationality of different differences. However, to be healed from E’s transcendental time, they turn to tertiary technical memory, recalling their disbeliefs in E’s display of the reality of events, remembering this as the loss of their *savoir-vivre*, and remembering their envisioning of therapeutic care for the world E presents, their possibilities of inventing therapies for the world. They become something the world has never conceived, carrying technical unthoughts for it, “as projections of shared protentions, or in other words shared hopes in what therefore does not exist, in fact, but consists” (Stiegler, 2013b, 109-110). Although not yet actualized, these virtual consistences always assert their reality as theories of what life must contain to heal, constantly rendering the reality of world-memory incomplete and urging the production of psychosocial events beyond what appears as existence, “elaborating a theory of belief that is also—as a theory of consistences that hold together on a plane other than existence” (Stiegler, 2013b, 67).

Now, O’s belief in such theoretical virtuality grows stronger than the potential of the world-memory. Although the theories do not present themselves as ready-made lives, like the seeing-intervals O shares with others, empty of actualized events, yet “constituting another ‘order of magnitude’ against the disorder of a *kosmos* in becoming, a *kosmos* that, without this projection of a yet-to-come from the unknown, would be reduced to a universe without singularity” (Stiegler, 2016, 246). The many theorists of life in history, such as Freud, did not invent their theories alone but derived them from such collective therapeutic

care. Only a name like Freud possesses the capacity to transform inchoate, not-yet-actualized virtual consistences into an actual theory of life for all. Perhaps O becomes such a theorist of life/film.

In cinematic perception, this third eye gives rise to a tertiary camera, produced through the disautomatization of the transcendental camera. The transcendental camera once allowed the audience to generate life within the world-memory, presenting transcendental time so that each film appeared as a new, singularly differentiated Idea of life. Yet, when viewed as a whole, film-memory appears as the repetition of the same events within transcendental memory, only in different forms, events which the audience has long lost their belief in, leaving for them nothing but the endless recurrence of ill-events. This is because the audience has invented other singularities for a possible theory of life, shaping a different unconscious taste and pointing toward another theory of film, a yet-to-come, which no longer belongs to the time-cinema. So, the audience has grown a third eye. Likewise, O, as E's audience of time-film, has developed within himself both the expectation and the new grammatization of seeing, adopted through his psychosocial and technical healing of the world-memory, whether in life or in film. Now, this third eye makes O place his strongest belief in the psychosocial Idea or dream of a film. The seeing-intervals are not mere readings of transcendental time, but care-full thinking: the inventive thinking for producing curative events it needs: "To think [penser] in order to care [panser] is to 'try to live'" (Steigler, 2018, 205).

The transcendental camera, which once transformed the audience's vision into that of an adept seer, enabling them to perceive creative event-singularities within the whole world-memory, has now shifted into a psychosocial *pensier/panser*. It has lost its transcendental milieu, having been disautomatized by the audience into their care-full reflection of therapeutic care. In this shift, film has no way other than filming its "new critique" (Steigler, 2011a, 152), "presenting other options, other alternatives" (Steigler, 2011a, 210), opening a new era marked by a "new retentional reality" (Steigler, 2011a, 155). Thus, if it continues to show them the time-film, it no longer makes sense: transcendental-film is hollowed out by the audience's inscription of disbelief within it, replaced instead by the vacant yet care-full promise of a yet-to-come: a new possible theory of life/film. Therefore, the time-film, which once produced a transcendently revealed life by binding the audience's renewal of life to their becoming inorganic within event-singularities, and whose very success lay in creating an epoch of inhumanity, now confronts the audience's parallel recording of its film, something that occurs only rarely and intermittently, since the audience does not typically record anything, but this arises only when the film abruptly shocks them into an epiphany of what this world-memory needs or lacks, enabling them to dream for it the unthoughts that emerge as therapies. This threatening unpredictability of events in the world-memory, manifested as the audience's unconscious memory-composition that promises a singular renewal of treatment in the time-film, is now healed through the audience's unconscious of dreams, still unpredictable, yet organized through their therapeutic dreaming. In this way,

cinema becomes “the archi-cinema of consciousness, of which dreams would be the matrix as archi-cinema of the unconscious” (Steigler, 2018, 8), an unconscious now healed, with a new audience for whom ill-events have become therapies. For this audience, who have overcome the ill-unconscious and transformed “the pharmacological pathology typical of that living thing who can 'want to be sick' into a new metastabilized milieu, or in other words a new space of fidelity” (Stiegler, 2013a, 65), there is no relapse into sickness; what remains for them is only the watching of a therapeutic film. In Beckett’s *Film*, E’s time-film has lost both its epoch and its audience, compelled to produce a new film for a new audience. This marks the end of E’s epoch of inhumanity, torn from the cinematic wall like a photograph and reduced to the dust-mark of what had once been classical cinema, as O closes his eyes to watch the therapeutic film, heralding the beginning of “a new epoch of non-inhumanity conceived as neganthropology” (Steigler, 2016, 100).



Making a negentropic film is a truly demanding task for any filmmaker. The usual transcendental camera they once relied upon has slipped from their hands, and they must now work with a psychosocial camera, which must produce a film for the audience’s seeing-expectations, whose eyes are now trained by their collective “capacity to theorize their practice, that is, to form long circuits” (Steigler, 2013a, 53) [of transindividuation], for addressing the defaults of world/film-memory. These new seeing-expectations appear as the audience’s blank, vacant, disbelieving eyes that reveal the absence of an epoch, “the absence of a time constituted by the common protention” (Steigler, 2020, 295), that is their theories for the future of life/film, indicating that the film-milieu has changed, as the audience’s eyes are now differently trained through their transindividual metamorphosis.

Many would-be negentropic filmmakers have recognized the absence of an epoch and turned their third eye toward a transindividuated seeing-potential, yet they have failed to give it actual form or to present a reality persuasive enough to draw audiences away from the world- or film-memories to which they are habituated, and instead into voluntary engagement with this improbable, unreal theory. It takes time for a filmmaker to emerge who can adeptly attune their camera to the psychosocial reality unfolding on the plane of the audience’s virtual consistencies, translating unconscious negentropic singularities into a cinematic form that promises the adoption of a new epochal prescription—even if such sublimation occurs only “temporarily and locally, that is, intermittently” (Stiegler, 2019a, 228). When it does occur, the filmmaker becomes a truly singular theorist of negentropic cinema, as O may also be. One such figure is Abbas Kiarostami, who, as Stiegler notes, in

*Close-Up*“ has realised the dream of Sabzian – which was to make a film” (Stiegler, 2104b, 31). Yet Sabzian, depicted as both filmmaker and actor, is neither; he is an ordinary man whose aspiration to impersonate Makhmalbaf in order to realize his filmic dream is ultimately fulfilled through a cinematic recording by the psychosocial third eye.

### Conclusion

The perception of self by self\_ the inescapability of self-perception\_ can be understood as the perception of anamnesis, one’s personal composition of memory, through hypomnesia, that is, tertiary retentions: memories not generated by one’s own experience but shared and belonging to one’s technical milieu. This artificial milieu is now seen as inseparably constituting the largest component of memory, constructed beyond life itself through technical decisions that transform the milieu, and accordingly one’s memory integrates with exosomatic organogenesis. This “may come to de-form the soul as a consequence of interiorizing a circuit that it has not itself produced—by requiring the soul to adapt itself to a doxa, that is, to dominant ideas that have not been produced and conceived by those who merely submit to them, rather than share in them” (Stiegler, 2013a, 19). In this way, human becoming within its milieu further leads to disindividuation, as seen in *O*, whose anamnesis ultimately turns into hypomnesia. This condition is profoundly agonistic, signifying the loss of *savoir-vivre*. Thus, if we finish Beckett’s *Film* up to this replacement, we have placed *O*’s anamnesis in a continual state of loss, constantly losing its memory ground, and having no other plan for escaping transcendental time, as becomes evident at the end of the film.

However, in Stiegler’s view, this negative pharmacology can become positive once one recognizes the need for change, leading to the construction of a cured milieu and a transformation of the epoch. Therefore, “the hypomnemata that incline us to forget are also precisely what enable us to remember, hence a cure for the toxic malaise into which they have led us” (Howells & Moore, 2013, 12). Transcendental memory, trapped in the first *epokhal* redoubling by hypomnesia, destroys one’s memory ground, and thus this “becoming is entropic” (Stiegler, 2018, 75). Only when the second *epokhal* redoubling occurs, through the adoption of therapeutic care, does it become possible to project “a negentropic future into entropic becoming” (Stiegler, 2016, 134). According to Stiegler, “the future is negentropic,” invented only after an entropic becoming is healed. If it is not invented, there will be no future, only a negative protention, which for Stiegler is a future that further empties one’s libidinal economy, thus “the protention of nihil, of nothing” (Stiegler, 2018, 37). A negentropic future, however, emerges when, following Stiegler, we ask: “What positivity can we fashion from this negative belief, that is, this negative protention” (Stiegler, 2018, 35)?

Thus, I believe the seeing-intervals that empty *O*—once filled with the grammatization of transcendental time—are transformed into an empty, yet-to-come tertiary time, open to be filled with *O*’s collective invention of care and the thought of positivity. Film, therefore, does not end in imperceptibility, but in “dis-automatization, that is, into the service of the

production of negentropic bifurcations” (Stiegler, 2018, 51). What Deleuze identifies as a template for transcendental time-cinema, may instead be read as a model of negentropic film. O’s shift toward negentropy occurs when self-perception produces a stupendous shock—when his eyes are flattened by the camera’s widening angle: first 45°, then 90°, and finally 180°. Unluckily, it is only through the loss of one eye that one recalls the need to open another eye, and so does O, though not the blurry one that evades the menacing shock to make a private film, for he also closes this eye off. Rather, it is the more resolutely-*visioned* third eye, which, after analysing “the initial pharmacological shock” (Stiegler, 2013a, 35), has seen that what the film/world-memory needs or lacks are his technics and therapies.

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