

Statistics and Cultural Context in Theo Angelopoulos's Camerawork: The Case of the Film *Eternity and a Day*

Ioannis Skopeteas

University of the Aegean

ABSTRACT

This paper applies a statistical style analysis on one of Theo Angelopoulos's most prominent stylistic features, camerawork, in his acclaimed film Eternity and a Day (1998). Then, it contextualizes the results in order to trace Angelopoulos's cultural background and his limits as filmmaker. At the end, through the statistics it is revealed the signature style of Angelopoulos, that is a 'real' complicated space and a concrete piece of time, lasting minutes, with no effects and no editing, which is depicted by a moving camera in a constant process of forming an artificial 'stage' for contemplation. This paper is a contribution to how Angelopoulos further developed film auteurism and the political cinematic modernism of his generation.

KEYWORDS

Angelopoulos
camerawork
cinematography
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statistics
style

Since 1970 and the first feature film of Theo Angelopoulos (*Anaparastasi/Reconstruction*), there have been plenty of academic and journalistic texts commenting on themes and concepts of his cinematic image: the Journey, the Exile, the Political and the Historical, the Myth, the Utopia and the Allegory, the Melancholy, the 20th century tragedy, the history of Greece, the Balkans and Europe. Similarly, and according to the background of the authors, in a considerable number of reports, headlines, articles and reviews, Angelopoulos has occasionally been characterized as poet, *auteur*, philosopher, ambassador of the Greek spirit or the last modernist, as for example, in compilations such as Stathi's (2000) or Horton's (1997). However, Angelopoulos was primarily a film director, a craftsman who plans and supervises the recording and editing of moving images and sounds in order to transmit messages of all kinds. Consequently there have been studies – although much fewer – describing the stylistic elements of Angelopoulos's work such as dominant colours, use of the so-called dead time and other violations of classical narrative, poetic use of sound and music, the importance of the off-screen space, depiction of the Greek landscape, unusual acting and distancing effects, as well as lighting techniques. However, there have been very few works analyzing thoroughly or exclusively one of his most outstanding stylistic elements: camerawork.

As a dominant practice most of the scholars and critics think through Angelopoulos's films in dialogue with other media, texts, and disciplines (e.g. literature, painting or philosophy) mostly emphasizing thematic concerns within political and historical contexts. It is a good time, however, to move beyond transtextuality and thematics and return to the form itself in alternative ways. Moreover, although many studies provide stylistic analyses of Angelopoulos's films, they almost always do so qualitatively. My purpose here is to describe Angelopoulos's authorial style – and more particularly Angelopoulos's under-researched practice of camerawork – quantitatively by adopting what is called Statistical Style Analysis of camerawork elements. The statistical results will be then contextualized in the light of the art cinema of Angelopoulos's film generation and cultural background. In this way, the paper hopefully will register in detail stylistic patterns and decode major aspects of his directorial style.

This paper scrutinizes *Mia Eoniotita ke Mia Mera/Eternity and a Day* (1998), in which camerawork can be described as exemplary among Angelopoulos's filmography. The film is consisted of only 64 shots lasting 125 minutes, while 61 of them employ moving camera. This directly reveals the significance of camerawork and, consequently, the dominant role of the director and the director of photography in the film. Moreover *Eternity and a Day* is the only Greek film ever awarded the *Palme d'Or* at Cannes Festival (in 1998) as well as

several other awards, a fact that makes it a cornerstone of the history of Greek cinema.

THEORISING CAMERAWORK STATISTICS

The term Statistical Style Analysis of Motion Pictures refers to a method first introduced by Barry Salt as early as 1974. Salt followed analogous contemporary attempts in literature and music that were based on statistics, to assess the length and the frequency of several formal elements. Similar terms in discourse about the empirical elements, suitable for a film analysis, are “conventions” (Shklovsky 1994: 133), “codes” (Metz 1974: 28-29, 62-63) or “techniques of a patterned and significant use” (Bordwell and Thompson 1997: 168, 355).

Salt tried to lend some objectivity to film analysis and define comparative directorial styles in definite statistical terms. He worked on several cinematographic elements such as Shot Size and Camera Movement. He counted the frequency in the use of these elements and made tables in which the directorial-cinematographic style of every film under examination was clearly shown. After several experiments, he came to the conclusion that the first 30 to 40 minute part of each film is representative of the rest of the film in terms of the Average Length of the Shots and other counting formal elements. Therefore, it is enough for a researcher to examine only this part of the film in order to obtain accurate results (Salt 1985: 691-703). Incidentally, Salt proved that several previous assumptions by famous critics were not supported by facts and empirical data; rather, they were based on a general false impression offered by viewing the film (for example, he challenged Sarris’s claims that the Hawksian remake *His Girl Friday* [1940] had a greater fluidity of camera movement than the original Milestone’s film *The Front Page* [1931]) (ibid: 700-701). Salt further developed his method in his 1983/1992 book *Film Style and Technology: History and Analysis* and similar work was undertaken by other researchers. Today there is even a special software, called Cinematics, for the collection of such statistics, and the creation of a database with statistics mainly on the Average Shot Length of hundreds of films.

The Statistical Style Analysis offers a method useful mainly for three aims: (1) to offer a quantitative analysis of style, usually for the purpose of recognizing patterns; (2) for the purposes of authorship attribution, in cases of disputed authorship of anonymous or pseudonymous texts; and (3) for purposes of identifying the chronology of works, when the sequence of composition is unknown or disputed (Buckland-Elsaesser 2002: 103). It is, of course, the first reason that motivates this paper.

Camerawork in filmmaking is the part of the production that concerns the process of recording what is in front of the camera lens on light/data-sensitive

material. In other words, it is a photographic practice that takes place during the recording of moving images decided by the director, together with the director of photography and his team. As Lindgren put it as early as 1948, in relation to this photographic practice, the three basic factors that govern the composition of the shot are “the form or the movement of the object itself, the position of the camera in relation to the object, and the way in which the object is lit” (120). The “form or the movement of the object itself” refers to the setting, the acting and, generally, the *mise-en-scène*. Then, the position or the movement of the camera refers to the distance from the object, otherwise called Shot Size (long shot [LS], medium shot [MS], close up [CU] and their variations), as well as to the use of focus and the aperture/depth of field, the height, the angle, and the stability or mobility of the camera, either by simple pans and tilts, or by dolly, crane, steady cam or hand held camera and, in a broad sense, to the use of zoom lenses and of special effects. Also, the lighting of the object can either be hard or soft, warm or cool, filtered or not, of a high/medium/low contrast, of a classical studio 3-point or other direction, and of strong (saturated) or muted (de-saturated) colours.

For the purposes of this Statistical Style Analysis, the elements of camerawork have to be selected and examined thoroughly (Skopeteas 2010: 170-171). Salt used to count Average Shot Length, Shot Size and Camera Movement. In a similar research about *Ideology and Cinematography in Hollywood 1930-39*, Mike Kormack (1994) considered Camera Movement, Camera Distance (Shot Size), Camera Angle and Lighting as the most fruitful elements of cinematography to be analysed. To these, another factor, based on newly developed technology, should be added: the use of digital effects and different-format cameras whose footage is unified by its transfer to single negative film material. In short, the major camerawork elements that lead to a conclusion about style and culture in a film can be considered as follows:

- a. SHOT LENGTH: The length, the duration of the shot from one transition to the next (cut, dissolve, etc), which is an element that concerns both shooting and editing. What is important for this research is whether the shots are Long Takes or not, a fact that directly defines the importance of the role of camerawork in the film as well as its interaction with other stylistic elements. As it is impossible to know if the shots are part of a longer take that has been split up, I register the shots according to their duration in the released print.
- b. CAMERA MOVEMENT: pan right/left, tilt up/down, ped (or crane) up/down, arc right/left, and track right/left/in/out/still. I register the final positions before the point where the camera changes direction. For practical reasons, all horizontal movements of the camera, no matter if they are made by a dolly/track (device with wheels), a travelling (device with rails), a crane, a steady-cam etc are called tracks. Hand-held cameras are noted separately.

For practical purposes, also, I have to include the zoom-lens movements in this category, taking cognisance of the difference between a zoom and a movement in terms of perspective and effect.

- c. **CAMERA DISTANCE:** This concerns the scope of the shot notated according to the part of human figure depicted or the comparison between the main object's size and the total surface of the frame. If the camera moves, a researcher may register all the final distances before it changes direction (for instance, if the camera goes from a medium shot to a long shot, and then to an extreme long shot, I register only the final enlargement and assume the sizes inbetween). For practical reasons, I also classify the medium long shot (MLS) – which is from the knees to the head of the human figure – as a long shot (LS) and the extreme close up (ECU) as a close up (CU). However, I separately register the medium close up (MCU) – from the breast to the head of the figure – because it is an extremely common category in both film and television.
- d. **CAMERA ANGLE/LEVEL/HEIGHT:** The angle of the camera with its vertical axis when it records. The most common angles are the Straight On, Low Angle, High Angle, Bird's Eye View and Worm's Eye View. Moreover, the angle of the camera with its horizontal axis when tilting, is the Camera Level. There is either a Level Camera (when the horizon line is parallel to the frame sides) or a tilted or canted camera, when the angle is oblique. In addition, Camera Height is the viewpoint of the camera according to the level of the horizon line and the eye level of the depicted figure, in short, its height. Due to the artificial perspective embodied in the lens system, if the camera is at eye level, the (illusionary or not) horizon line passes behind the eyes of the figure. If it passes at a lower level, there is a Low Level Viewpoint etc. The viewpoints are: eye-level, high-level, and low-level, of which the most common is the waist-level viewpoint.
- e. **CAMERA FOCUS/DEPTH OF FIELD:** This term includes the use of focus/out of focus and the appropriate depth of field that permits deep focus shots. For practical reasons, I make a distinction between the deep focus (when all is in focus), the medium depth of field and the shallow depth of field (when the nearest background is completely out of focus).
- f. **CAMERA EFFECTS:** This category includes everything from the acceleration or diminution of speed to special filters for effects and image distortion caused by special wide-angle lenses. It also includes the use of special lenses and, in general, lens distortions beyond the average of the widely accepted normal view (for instance, a close up taken by a wide-angle lens is registered in this category, as well as an abnormal use of depth with a very long telephoto lens). For practical reasons, it also includes the production of the image by various camera formats or types, digital effects or a filmed screen/monitor.

Expanding Salt's methods, and since *Eternity and a Day* is an art film with a personal style, this paper does not analyse a part of the shots (namely the first 30 minutes) but all of them, so that more accurate results will be provided. Then, each formal element is contextualized in relation to the narrative of the film, other stylistic elements, and the cultural context of the director and his generation.

CAMERAWORK IN *ETERNITY AND A DAY*

Before moving onto a detailed analysis of the film's camerawork, a short summary of the film's story would be helpful. The narrative of the film refers to the last day of Alexandros, an intellectual and writer, who is heavily ill and has arranged to go to the hospital the day after, possibly never getting out of it. During this last day, he tries to find a new home for his dog, meets the drama of a homeless and stateless child, and remembers the most important and joyful days of his life, that is some sunny days with his now deceased wife and his then newly born daughter. There are repeated flash-backs (in Angelopoulos's way) to these special days that help to explain the present loss of meaning in protagonist's life. The emphasis in the plot is not on action but on the inner life of the protagonist. This exploration of the protagonist's inner life and conflict is directly connected with the major themes of Time and Death and, additionally, those of Love, Poetry, Intellectualism, and Altruism.

The major elements of camerawork mentioned above can be analyzed as follows:

a) Shot Length

Eternity and a Day lasts 125 minutes and 42 seconds and consists of 64 shots. This means that the Average Shot Length is 117.8 seconds, almost 2 minutes. The longest shot (454 sec) is the 64th, the last one, and the shortest (9 sec) is the 23rd, a cut away to the lorry belonging to the Albanian gangsters, as they drive and pass the boy and Alexandros. Apart from the 9-second shot, all the other 63 shots last over the Average Length Shot of a 1990s Greek film (Skopeteas 2008) and therefore, may be called Long Takes as defined by Salt (1992: 234-235). To compare with, the box office hit of the same theatrical season (1998-1999) in Greece, the film *I Diakritiki Goitia ton Arsenikon/The Mating Game*, has 813 shots and an ASL of 6.5 seconds (Skopeteas 2008); and the first film shot in Greece by the most prominent, British nourished and art-oriented director Constantine Giannaris, titled *Apo tin Akri tis Polis/From the Edge of the City* has an ASL of 7.8 seconds (Skopeteas 2008).

Of the three types of Long Take that Salt distinguishes in the history of international cinema (Salt 1992: 231-235) there are all three of them among the 63 long-term shots of *Eternity and a Day*. Indeed, there are:

- three (3) longish shots with a still camera (a style similar to that of George Cukor in the late 30s [Salt 1992: 215, 231]) – shots no 56, 58, 62
- nine (9) longish shots where a sort of deep focus cinematography (as established by Tolland, Wyler and Welles, is implemented [Salt 1992: 234-235] – shots no 4, 7, 10, 12, 14, 32, 33, 36, 64)
- sixty one (61) longish shots (including the nine mentioned above) made with a mobile camera and a normal or a wide angle lens

In total, 26 shots construct 9 scenes, 33 shots form 33 scenes and 4 shots are sequence shots (8 scenes). There does not seem to be any special pacing in the succession of Long and normal Takes (shots) outside the needs of the narrative and the content of every scene and shot.

The Average Shot Length of *Eternity and a Day* is something of a phenomenon in the history of fiction film and is compared only to the documentary mode where the shot has to last as long as the event recorded lasts. In comparison, the ASL of one of the first films with significant camera movements (*The Last Laugh* [1924] by Murnau) is 10 seconds (Salt 1992: 173); the ASL of the film that is supposed to establish the Long Take tradition, *Citizen Kane* (1941) by Welles, is only 12 seconds, with only a couple of shots getting up to around 2 minutes (Salt 1992: 234); the ASL in the 1960s was 7.5 seconds and in the 1980s around 6 seconds (Salt 1992: 268, 296). The ASL of *Eternity and a Day* is only comparable to Antonioni's films of the 1950s, Miclos Jancsó's films of the 1970s and Angelopoulos's previous films, for instance, *O Thiassos/The Travelling Players* (1975), which consists of 131 shots lasting 222 minutes in total, that is an ASL of 102 seconds (Skopeteas 2008). From the directors who are synchronous to Angelopoulos, it is worth mentioning Béla Tarr and Andrei Tarkovsky.

The Long Take with a mobile camera forms the basis for a style well explored by the European masters of the 1950s and 1960s (Bordwell 1997: 13-15). However, there are differences between the work of Angelopoulos and, for example, that of Jancsó, as critics have noted. Bordwell writes that Jancsó is more maximalist, while Angelopoulos's films (before *Eternity and a Day*) follow a tradition of minimalist political modernism similar to those of Godard and Akerman (ibid: 15). Also, Lino Micciche argues that:

The Long Takes in Angelopoulos's earlier films depended on a dialectic contrast between the realism of the pro-filmic event and the artificial style of the image as a result of the intervention of the camera during its representation [...]. This fact brings Angelopoulos's Long Takes in most of his films nearer to Antonioni's Long Takes than Jancsó's ones. (Stathi 2000: 132)

Moreover, as Arecco says:

The Long Take, especially the sequence shot expresses perfectly a special duration [...] that corresponds better than any other technique to the questions of depiction of different levels of the “real”, the active passing of time, the functionally potential enlargement of time [...] and re-establishes the cinematic language. (1985:24-25)

Most of Angelopoulos’s Long Takes seem to keep a degree of independence from the rest of the film. Some of them are like short action stories, as, for example, shot 19 (270 sec.), where the protagonist escapes from the gang’s hide out. There is no link between this shot and the previous or the following ones, concerning place and action, while the shot has its own introduction, middle, and ending. Other Long Takes resemble to independent short chapters or essays, such as shot 29, which involves the poet and shots 53, 55, 57, which take place in a bus. Each of them has a totally different theme and different protagonists and can be deleted without any impact on the storyline at all. In other words, whole integrated messages can be included within Long Takes, and questions can be posed without the film’s central meaning being affected. At the same time, Long Takes are solid and stable pieces of time, based on their pure filmic means of expression; therefore, they provide the basis for Angelopoulos to create an uninterrupted, solid argument, whether political and social (as in all his earlier films) or philosophical and artistic, as in the case of *Eternity and a Day*.

It is also possible to see Angelopoulos’s use of the Long Take as pointing to a Marxist-Left ideology, for such a critical appreciation of reality can advance some levels of the revolutionary process: it is an association with Epic Cinema, similar to Brecht’s Epic Theatre (the Theatre for Instruction), in that the combination of the Long Take with other cinematic elements can lead to a dedramatisation of the cinema experience. Angelopoulos himself partly confirms this: although he claims (in an interview with the writer of this paper) to have studied contemporary Marxist philosophers, especially Althusser, he was introduced to the potential of using Marxist thought in an artistic medium through Brecht’s work and, as a result, his modes of expression are strongly influenced by Marxism. This is definitely in a different way from the one selected by the Soviet Montage School of thought and moreover, far more democratic: instead of imposing the political ideas of the filmmakers on the audience by editing, “by attractions”, and associating various pictures towards a prefabricated social meaning, as the Soviets did, Angelopoulos gives to the audience time to speculate on the social events and come to its own conclusion.

However, a further examination of Angelopoulos’s cultural background would reveal that, beyond Marxism and political arguments, there is also a repressed

penchant for literature writing. Angelopoulos thinks that when he makes a film, he “writes”. In an unpublished interview with the writer of this paper, he claimed:

I never work with different styles, but I use a single form only; the long take is my personal imprint as an author [...] I use always the same form, like Proust and Faulkner. It is a personal perception of timing as well as the passing of time. I let myself write longish sentences whereas the others write shorter ones. It is not very popular nowadays, but it has become my own distinctive style.

Angelopoulos himself has also given various explanations for this mode of shooting elsewhere: “The shot is a memory. The transition from one scene to another within the same shot is a flashback without a flashback” (Ciment 1977: 55); “the decision of working with long takes was not a rational one. It came to my mind as a natural choice; it corresponds to a need to import real time into filmic space; space that becomes time” (Merchant Ivory PR department 2000: 194); “there is an autonomy in every shot; then I let real time play its role; for me, filmic time is like a game with real one; action and an integrated re-action” (Langlois 1971: 43).

b) Camera Movement

In *Eternity and a Day*, there are 61 shots with a mobile camera and three shots with a still camera (shots 56, 58, 62). Among these 61 shots, the camera makes complicated movements or stays still for a few seconds before moving again in the 37 of them. There are 83 Tracks (all directions), 63 Pans (all directions), 15 Tilts (all directions), 15 Peds (all directions), and 21 Zooms (all directions). Camera may make two or more Tracks or Pans in the same take – the registration assumes the difficulty of clearly distinguishing all movements of a crane or steadicam camera. Concerning their order of appearance, there is no special emphasis on a certain type of movement; all kinds of movement appear regularly from the beginning to the end of the film, according to the purposes they serve.

Among the 64 shots, there are 49 where camera movement is entirely (from the beginning to the end) motivated by the movement of the depicted object; these are ‘follow shots’ and ‘reframings’. By contrast, there is only one shot where movement is totally independent of the action and the objects of which the viewer is aware; this is the opening shot, in which there are no living creatures. However, there are fourteen shots which are partly independent (i.e. they include movements independent of the movement of depicted objects) and have their own significance (shots 3, 9, 10, 13, 18, 35, 36, 40, 41, 44, 47, 54, 63, 64).

Furthermore, *Eternity and A Day* might be seen as an international reference film regarding the variations of the mobile shot. There are complicated camera movements in 61 out of 64 shots, while 38 of them are genuine scene-shots and sequence-shots, each with an integral meaning. There are no random movements in these shots and hardly any in the rest of the film. By contrast, the film includes the whole range of variations of camera movement in terms of its narrative function. There are pure 'follow shots' that expose the action of the scene or the overall feeling of the action; there are shots, independent of the depicted moving objects, that also function to advance the action; and there are independent shots that function as "explicit description" – that is, when the story's flow is interrupted in order a self-conscious meditation on the image's own structure may take place (Chatman 1990: 51-55).

The frequency of this range of camera work may have an important connotation: given that the eye of the camera is first and foremost the eye of the spectator, it is "difficult not to see camera movements as a substitute for our movement", while their extensive use functions as the major means by which the filmmaker leads the spectator to his thoughts, feelings, and expectations (Bordwell-Thompson 1997: 245). Camera movement of this kind stamps the film with the presence of the hidden author and shows the major ideas of authorship in practice. Indeed, camera movement constantly reminds the spectator that the film is a work of personal expression, style, and taste, that of the director. Camera movement of this kind is a clear sign of Angelopoulos's ideas on authorship, work and process in art. Angelopoulos in 1989 said to Irini Stathi:

I try to give back to the cinema what allows it to exist, the image in motion. In this sense, my attempt could be seen as a return to the real character of the film image as a primal element. (Stathi 1999: 151)

In *Eternity and a Day*, the major indication of authorial style is the movement of the camera. It seems that all other modes of expression work for it. The Long Takes provide the necessary duration. The lighting is as neutral as possible to underline every slight movement, while the compositions and framing are defined almost entirely by the constant presence and reaction of the mobile camera. Indeed, in the tradition of international art cinema, many directors have used the mobile camera in significant ways: from Murnau, Pabst, Dreyer, Gance, Clair, Renoir, and Ophuls to Antonioni and Fellini, there is a whole European tradition in camera movement adding to the notion of film auteurism. As David Bordwell has proved, Angelopoulos's visual style is based on two sub-traditions of European cinema: on the one hand, the tradition of Rossellini, Bresson, Dreyer and, most importantly, Antonioni, and, on the other, the "political modernism" tradition cultivated by Angelopoulos's contemporary filmmakers of the 1960s and 1970s, such as Jancsó, Straub and Huillet, Duras, Godard, Rossi, et al.

(Bordwell 1997: 11-15). It is very difficult not to mention the great visual similarity in camera movement, through a window, of the last shot of *Eternity and a Day* to the famous last 7-minute-sequence shot in Antonioni's *The Passenger* (1975). Angelopoulos himself has included Minnelli and the American musical, Hawks, Wilder, Huston, American police films, Welles, and Mizoguchi, among his influences (Themelis 1998: 159).

Camera movement is a purely cinematic code, in the sense that Metz and Kracauer use the word, and therefore, it radically departs from the theatricality of Angelopoulos's previous films based on long static camera, dead time, and the use of space editing to suggest a succession of stages where short plays are performed. At the same time, all this movement (together with the extended voice-over of the hero participating in the shot) can be seen, in part, as a reaction against the Brechtian alienation effect, which had been the primary concern of Angelopoulos in most of his previous films. Although many alienating devices are present once again, the extensive camera movement creates a kind of second and parallel dramatic line that partly offsets the dedramatisation of the film's plot. This result has disappointed some of Angelopoulos's admirers (Horton 1999: 219).

Extensive camera movement has often led critics and scholars to associate Angelopoulos's cinema with that of Jancsó. This is an old debate, indeed. Angelopoulos once claimed to Tony Mitchell that:

When I use a *plan sequence*, it is to create a complete, finished scene, with inherent dialectical counterpoints. The scene is concluded, whereas in Jancsó's films there are *plan sequences* which are long, but they do not amount to finished scenes. His are lateral, and convey only one meaning. (1980: 33)

Moreover, in an unpublished interview with the writer of this paper, Angelopoulos strongly denied any similarities with Jancsó:

In Jancsó's films the shot is constructed in order to declare his presence. It says: look at me, I am a complicated shot. Jancsó's shots are choreographies where the music is missing. If he used music, then, he would have a musical! He works by registering time, instead of showing the passing of time. By contrast, in my work, there is always a first level of realism. Even in shot 19, where you claim that there is a choreography of camera movement, I say that there is a composition of movements according to their signification. I see Jancsó as an artisan, not as a genius.

As far as I know, there is not as yet a detailed comparative study between Jancsó's and Angelopoulos's work, but at first sight, *Eternity and a Day* can be

seen as an exceptional film in which Angelopoulos's style is near to that of Jancsó. For the Long Takes are here not so much 'alienated'; in contrast they are in harmonic relationship with the ad hoc organisation of space in a profilmic stage. In several shots in *Eternity and a Day*, the camera simply records and reveals the already-organised space in front of it. This is how Jancsó's long takes function, as do those by several American directors from Welles to Scorsese – who, coincidentally, was the President of the Jury that awarded Angelopoulos the *Palme D'Or* in 1998 – in the sense that many of his movements convey pure iconic or indexical meanings and functions instead of only symbolic ones; the camera offers a "robust kinetic spectacle in the place of traditional dramatic values", as in Jancsó's films (Bordwell 1997: 15). Moreover, while a basic difference between Angelopoulos's and Jancsó's first films is the lack of parody in Jancsó's work and the use of the long take with camera movement as the final goal and not as a means for a critical approach (Arecco 1985: 55), these initial characteristics are not entirely true in *Eternity and a Day*.

Apart from the author's allegiance to art narration, the second major factor that contextualizes camera movement in *Eternity and a Day*, is the theme of the film, which is, like all Angelopoulos's major films, that of the journey. *The Travelling Players* is a journey into Greek history and province; *Taxidi sta Kythira/Voyage to Cythera* (1984) is the story of a political refugee returning home; *O Melissokomos/The Beekeeper* (1986) is about the journey of a beekeeper around Greece and towards his own death; *Topio stin Omichli/Landscape in the Mist* (1988) tells the story of two children travelling in search of their father; *To Meteoro Vima tou Pelargou/The Suspended Step of the Stork* (1991) is about the journey of a reporter to the Greek borders; *To Vlemma tou Odyssea/Ulysses's Gaze* (1995) concerns the journey of a Greek-American filmmaker around the Balkans in search of the first film ever shot there; and *Eternity and a Day* tells of an intellectual's journey into his past, through his memory, and present. This "journey", however, is not a spatial one. It is rather temporal. It is a journey of the lifetime of the main character. The constant slow movements of the camera correspond perfectly to this sense of a journey "in search of lost time".

In the light of ancient Greek culture, it seems reasonable for a critic (for example, Horton 1999: 38-42) to assume that the notion of the journey in Angelopoulos's films derives from the ancient Greek tradition of sailing and maritime commerce and the attempts of these sailors to return home, and also their feeling of nostalgia for what they have missed, a feeling which is, at the same time, a major theme of Ulysses's homecoming. Yet, there are some reasons to attribute these feelings to modern Greeks as well, although several international filmmakers (e.g. Wenders and Antonioni) develop similar thoughts. The flourishing Greek shipping industry, the Greek emigrations of the 1950s and 1960s, the size of the Greek diaspora population (almost equal to the population of Greece itself), the

waves of workers moving to the Greek cities from the provinces in the 1960s and 1970s, and, above all, the loss of a stable cultural identity in modern Greece, may have provoked such feelings. In *Eternity and a Day*, these are used as a framework for the hero's wanderings.

As the hero of *Eternity and a Day* searches for his mental roots, he wonders "why he has lived in such a way", regrets his mistakes, feels nostalgia for what he has missed and what he has not done during his life. Given that the hero has approximately the same age of Angelopoulos, it can be argued that all these "mistakes" are related to typical life experiences of the hero's – and Angelopoulos's – generation of Greek intellectuals. It is very characteristic that in the bus sequence – which represents a stream of representative memories – the national Greek poet, a couple of young protesters dressed in a 1960s style, and a music quartet playing Mozart's music appear successively as the journey with the bus keeps on.

Consequently, *Eternity and a Day* is a journey full of *nostos* (the ancient Greek word for homesickness) for the roots of a generation that is physically in decline echoing Ulysses's *nostos* as well. The camera has to 'travel', in order to correspond to this feeling. Alexandros, the protagonist, wanders in his present environment without apparent external motivation, apart from having to find a new home for his dog. This is the pretext for him to speculate, observe, and appreciate what he has achieved and, moreover, to compare present circumstances with his memories. It is a journey deep into his mind, his life, and his existence. The mobility of the camera explains and underlines this search.

c) Camera Distance

Assuming the difficulty in registering the size of the shots according to the size of the body of the depicted figures, as well as the additional obstacle of camera movement, the following categorization breaks down the distances that the camera takes from the figures: Extreme long shots (ELS): 76, Long shots (LS): 69, Medium shots (MS): 58, Medium close-up shots (MCU): 11, Close-up shots (CU): 4, Extreme close-up shots (ECU): 0.

The distance is registered before camera movement changes to another direction in cases where two figures are depicted; hence there is more than one Camera Distance in the same shot where more than one main subject is framed. There are only 13 out of 64 shots where camera distance remains at a fixed distance from at least one depicted figure or group (shots 1, 16, 17, 29, 34, 46, 47, 52, 56, 58, 60, 62), whether it moves parallel to them or not. All the other shots include more than one-size shot of the same depicted figure. Also, all landscapes without human figures are registered as extreme long shots.

In terms of construction, the ELS, the LS, the MS and the CU are spread equally throughout the film scenes. In contrast, the number of medium close-up shots increases, together with narrative tension, in the final scenes of the film. Moreover, the succession of shots in the extreme long takes appears carefully designed. For example, in shot 19 the series of camera positions is as follows: ELS > MS > LS > MS > LS > MS > LS > MS > LS; in shot 30 the series of the shots is as follows: ELS > MS > ELS > LS > ELS > LS. Evidently, there is some choreography involved between the camera that opens up and closes in the space, and the harmonious combination of successive shot sizes. As Giorgos Arvanitis said, "it is like the movement of the accordion" (Rammou 1998: 20-27).

Regarding Camera Distance, there are very few close-ups in the film (shots 9, 14, 24, 41), and they are all used to underline the emotional charge of the person depicted (the boy or the writer) with the support of a zoom-in. However, there are a few medium close-ups (11), a lot of medium shots (58) and an astonishing number of long shots and extreme long shots for a fiction film. These statistics are directly linked to a major effect that is present in all of Angelopoulos's films: the alienation/dedramatisation/distanciation effect as prescribed by Bertolt Brecht for the Epic Theatre and developed, in the 1960s and 1970s, by Antonioni, *Cahiers du Cinema*, and several directors who were involved in the political cinema movement.

According to Brecht (1974: 201-202) the major point of this effect is the elimination of the spectator's identification with the heroes of the fictional story. In other words, the achievement of the spectator's distanciation from the actions of the characters, a sense of feeling alienated from the spectacle, and the dedramatisation of the events, so as the spectator to think of them without (much) emotional involvement. Through these techniques, the passivity and illusion of the spectator, who participates emotionally in the hero's conflict, is restricted and a critical approach to the events of the play emerges. This notion applied to cinema as well, mainly in the 1960s and 1970s: it was against "the necessity for the movie to move the audience emotionally in an empathic relationship with the characters that become secondary to the rationality and intellectual quality of the discourse presented by it" (Lellis 1976: 10-13).

There are several techniques for creating this effect in cinema: in his first films, Antonioni eliminated non-diegetic music, point of view editing, and, above all, close-up and medium shots. Instead, he favoured shots with no dramatic action ("dead time"), muted performance styles, long held poses, landscape shots and the tendency for the actors' faces to turn away from the camera at moments of dramatic intensity (the "dorsality" effect) (Bordwell 1997: 14). To these techniques, it seems that Angelopoulos added the use of the Long Take in combination with camera movement that strays away from the action; a sudden

stillness among a series of mobile shots; the recording of profilmic events; and, most importantly, the absolute abolition of close-ups (ibid:21-23).

Many of the above techniques are present in *Eternity and a Day*. Commenting on long shots of figures in landscapes, it can be said that the camera reacts as a quasi-animated machine that wants to keep a LS and MS distance from the actors at all times. However, the fact that there are four close-ups and so many medium close-ups shows that the alienation effect is less active in this film in comparison to Angelopoulos's previous works. Nevertheless, as a result of the dominance of long and extreme long shots, a dialectical relationship of the human figure and the environment can be traced. The writer and the boy, for example, are always placed in a particular environment, the study, the seaside, the house, the borders, the car, in other words, the depicted "real" space. All these spaces communicate with the human figure and carry messages in every cinematographic frame, that is, in all 64 shots of the film. Although the dialectical relationship is a Marxist-Hegelian idea, in *Eternity and a Day* – and all Angelopoulos's films after 1984 – it is not the people or the masses that make history, as in classic Marxist thought, but individuals, who act and almost passively accept the environment that defines them.

d) Camera Height, Angle, and Level

Considering the level of the (illusory or not) horizon of the frame, which both reveals the height of the camera and the eye level of the depicted figure, the 64 shots of *Eternity and a Day* are divided as follows: Straight-on angle: 40, High angle: 3, Low angle: 6, From low angle to straight-on angle: 4, From high angle to straight-on angle or vice versa: 11. Similarly, there are: Eye (or chest) level viewpoint: 31, High viewpoint: 6, Low viewpoint: 6, from eye level to high viewpoint (or vice versa): 12, from eye level to low viewpoint (or vice versa): 6, from high viewpoint to eye level and to low viewpoint (or vice versa): 3. Every low or high angle is, unavoidably, accompanied by a low or high viewpoint and for that reason they are examined together in this research. However, the opposite is not always true. Due to complicated crane movements, there are six shots (3, 6, 12, 27, 32, 64) where, although the angle remains straight on, the camera height changes. For example, the camera may descend house floors (shot 64) or climb above the head of the foreground figure to reveal the action in the background (shot 13).

Finally, in all 64 shots, the camera is Level, namely, at the same level with the horizon line, and all the horizontal lines in every frame are parallel to the frame lines. In *Eternity and a Day*, the Level camera contributes to a "cinema of contemplation", counteracting any emphasis on the plot-orientated action of traditional Hollywood and European popular cinema (Horton 1999: 2) and contributing to a concrete, reasonable argument within the shot, as explained

earlier in the shot length section. It can be asserted that what exists in the frame is pure camera movement and the internal thoughts of the spectator on the major Angelopoulos's themes (here Time, Death, Creation, Love, Poetry, Intellectualism, and Altruism).

Camera height and angle can be contextualized in a similar way as camera movement, namely in relation to the European auteur tradition and the political modernism, which has very little to do with the continuity system of narration. Additionally, the eye level camera and the straight-on angle that dominate the vast majority of the shots underline Angelopoulos's obsession with figure-centred compositions. This is a key visual factor that shows Angelopoulos's fixation upon the individual (instead of people, groups or nations) in line with the theme and narration of a story with a single hero. The fact that the camera is constantly following human figures and staying at their eye level proves that the individual (in a position equal to that of the spectator) is the main subject of the film's narrative.

Putting the individual at the centre of the frame as well as of the camera's (spectator's) interest is ideologically interesting. According to Jean-Louis Comolli and his contemporary theorists, the artificial perspective embodied in the camera carries a certain ideology:

The hegemony of the eye linked to the western tradition of systems centred on a single point [...] and the visual code defined by Renaissance humanism [...] which placed the human eye at the center of the system of representation; [...] [T]he eye-subject enthroned in the place of the divine. (Comolli 1985: 46).

This is a humanist perspective, based on Renaissance tradition with the individual emerging as the main agent of action and interest. In their analysis of Hollywood cinema, Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson consider centred (and especially figure-centred) composition as

an outstanding example of the construction of film space in Hollywood cinema. In recent post-Renaissance painting, the erect human body provides one major standard of framing, with the face usually occupying the upper portion of the picture format. The same impulse can be seen in the principle of horizon-line isocephaly, which guarantees the figures' heads run along a more or less horizontal line. Classical cinema employs these precepts [...] [T]his centre determines the composition of long shots, medium shots, and close-ups as well as the grouping of figures [...] [C]lassical filmmaking thus considers edge framing taboo; frontally positioned figures or objects, however unimportant, are seldom sliced off

by either vertical edge [...] [T]hus the human body is made the centre of the narrative and graphic interest. (1985: 50-51)

Later, they add: “all these narrative strategies encourage us to read filmic space as story space” (ibid: 54).

It is precisely this organization of film space that marked a visual and ideological shift, and led film historians to divide Angelopoulos’s work into two periods: the first period, which ends with *Voyage to Cythera* and includes his purely political-historical films (where groups of people or persons symbolizing nations, political parties, and classes are the agents of the action); and the second phase, which starts with *The Beekeeper* in the mid-1980s and adopts a more anthropocentric, emotional, and existential approach. In the latter phase, the films tell the story, usually in the form of a journey, of one or two individuals (Themelis 1998: 4).

At the same time, this shift has led to a significant reduction in the use of Brechtian-Marxist methods of narration – although they have never been totally abandoned – and has added clear characteristics of classical narrative cinema: when the hero is an individual, it is almost impossible not to have figure-centred compositions and POV shots that provide spectator identification. In Angelopoulos’s and Arvanitis’s filmography, *Eternity and a Day* is a film that includes quite many POVs and figure-centred compositions.

e) Camera Focus (Depth of Field)

In the 64 shots of *Eternity and a Day*, the lens’ focus is used as follows: Shallow depth of field – selective focus: 14, medium depth of field: 0, all in focus: 50. Among the 50 all-in-focus shots (where the camera focus – depth of field is large) there are 12 shots where a certain kind of “deep focus” cinematography occurs (shots 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 17, 21, 32, 33, 36 and 64): An examination of the shot sizes reveals that the objects in focus are between medium-shot size and extreme-long-shot size. This is very close to the definition of deep focus as a shot “which has sharpness in all camera distances from extreme close-up to long shot” (Salt 1992: 294). Given that there are only four close-ups in *Eternity and a Day* (all via a zoom-in movement), the “deep focus” definition above can be qualified. As Bazin writes

[D]epth of focus brings the spectator into a relation with the image closer to that which he enjoys with reality. Therefore, it is correct to say that, independently of the contents of the image, its structure is more realistic [...] It implies, consequently, both a more active mental attitude on the part of the spectator and a more positive contribution on his part to the action in progress. (1999: 54)

In other words, what is clearly behind the use of deep focus shots and great depth of field is the ideology of Realism (Williams 1973: 109-112). According to Comolli (1985: 44-45), the invention and evolution of the cinema is dominated by the notion that reality can be reproduced, recaptured in film; cinema is a product and a reproduction of the code of humanist perspective that also sees the frame as the Albertian “window on the world”. Photography and cinema history has proved that the majority of technological discoveries in the world of the photographic and moving image have been driving it in this direction. Economics has also been a major determining factor in the establishment of film technique that aims at greater reality.

The extended use of deep focus shots in *Eternity and a Day* (and in all Angelopoulos’s previous works) and the location shooting confused many critics, who tended to categorize his work as “realist” according to Bazin’s definitions. Angelopoulos himself, when he was asked, rejected entirely the notion of Realism in his works. In an article of the French review *Positif* (February 1985), Angelopoulos strongly renounces his connection with Realism as a movement: “Realism? Me? I’ve not a damn thing to do with it. The religious attitude to reality has never concerned me” (Durgnat, 1990: 44).

A persuasive explanation for this contradiction is offered by Raymont Durgnat:

Certainly, the [Angelopoulos’s] repudiation of realism suggests Marxism’s sixties turn against realism, to formalism, and cine-Marxist enthusiasm for Brecht’s formalism in theatre, a conspicuously artificial medium. In a sense, Brecht became the Anti-Bazin, with his equal and opposite extremism, on behalf of form as rhetorical diagram, which should fuse local instance with general truth, with or without benefit of realism. Yet, both men championed the content of a sustained, ‘local’ space time unity. Just as Brecht’s ‘unity’ was the stage, so Bazin championed filmed theatre against montage [...] the long take, as a ‘local unity’, can make a ‘travelling stage’. And Angelopoulos’s long shots, meditative action, riddles, and uncertainties can evoke Brecht’s search for spectatorial contemplation, detached criticism and alienation. (ibid: 44-45)

f) In Camera Effects

Apart from the usual use of colour correction filters, there are no real in-camera or with-camera effects in *Eternity and a Day*, a film produced at the end of the 20th century, that can be considered to be beyond the normal straight view of the spectator into reality.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have proposed a contextualized Statistical Style Analysis of *Eternity and a Day*. While other analytical methods examine Angelopoulos as a

master of cinema by discussing his films mainly in relation to historical, social, and cultural issues, the contextualized quantitative method, I have proposed here, makes an attempt to investigate the stylistic characteristics of *Eternity and a Day* through the objectivity of numbers. At the same time it attempts to trace the origins of Angelopoulos's style in the European auteur tradition.

As shown in detail, in terms of duration, most of the shots of the film last almost two minutes when the Average Shot Length of a western-made film in the 1990s lasts from 4 to 7 seconds. A close look at the Cinematics chart of 1998 films – the year when *Eternity and a Day* was premiered – where around 180 films are cited, demonstrates that only 23 out of 180 films have an ASL higher than 10 seconds and only 11 of them were produced by western film industries. *Eternity and a Day* has the slowest pacing of all films worldwide examined in this database.¹

Moreover, Statistical Style Analysis reveals that camera mobility in *Eternity and a Day* is a major characteristic of Angelopoulos's style: 61 out of 64 are mobile shots marked by complicated camera movement in which camera angle and height constantly change. Statistics also show that, in terms of Camera Distance (Shot Size), Angelopoulos develops a rare style for a narrative film. In the 64 shots of the film, the camera approaches the main subject with up to 145 Extreme Long Shots and Long Shots, while there are only 73 Medium and Close Ups. In addition, 50 out of 64 are all-in-focus shots, a fact that complicates the relation of Angelopoulos with realism, in the context of several art film traditions. Angelopoulos's shots often include a whole scene, while occasionally consist of sequence shots – a sequence of scenes in a single take – where a change of space or even of time within the same shot takes place. Consequently, in a single shot the narrative jumps from space to space and from a period of time to another period of time in front of the eyes of the audience asking for a poetic rather than rational approach of the cinematic image.

Angelopoulos's carefully constructed Long Takes, with the large depth of field and the complicated camera movement contribute to the recording of “real space”: the imprint of reality – of the pro-filmic space – is constantly present; a “real” space and a concrete piece of time with no effects and no editing is depicted (by the camera) in a constant process of forming an artificial stage for contemplation. The viewer is persuaded that (s)he watches “reality”, usually consisted of social, historical, and political events, more or less like in the long takes of the documentary mode, while almost every single element in the image performs functions at a metaphorical, symbolic, and poetic level. Moreover, since

¹ See <http://cinematics.lv/database.php?all>/Accessed 20-1-2015. However, the counting of the shots in the database is slightly erroneous (66 shots are counted instead of 64 and the ASL is 114.3 instead of 117.8).

Extreme Long and Long Shots are dominant in the film, the viewer is placed at a distance from the depicted events so as to be able to observe and speculate on them.

In short, camerawork alongside *mise-en-scène*, pace, dialogue, and acting are the formal elements that intervene in the depiction of this “real” space in order to transform it into something else. Camerawork in *Eternity and a Day* becomes perhaps the most significant tool for creating a so called “cinema of contemplation” (Horton 1999), a post epic cinema of ideas, of subtle feelings and poetic realism. It can be said that camerawork in Angelopoulos’s films creates ‘magic’ without a single special effect: it is a sort of Expressionism within Realism.

Note: All translations from Greek are by the author.

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