

Entangled Life: *The Double Life of Veronique*

In Krzysztof Kieslowski's *The Double Life of Veronique* (*La double vie de Véronique*, France/Poland 1991), Irène Jacob plays a double role of the Polish Weronika and the French Véronique, two women whose lives duplicate each other in a mysterious fashion.¹ Not only do they look identical, they also share a similar life history: each of them has lost her mother at an early age and is particularly close with her father. They also share a passion for the same piece of music and a fascination for transparent objects. They even share the same patterns of gesture such as rubbing an eye with a golden ring, a method that is used in folk medicine in order to get rid of an eye sty. Towards the end of the film, Véronique enters the workshop of her lover, the puppeteer Alexandre (Philippe Volter), where he is making two marionettes, both replicas of herself. These marionettes would feature in a fairy tale entitled *The Double Life*, which he reads aloud to Véronique:

November 23, 1966 was the most important day of their lives. That day, at three in the morning, they were both born in two different cities, on two different continents. They both had dark hair and brownish-green eyes. When they were both two years old and already knew how to walk, one of them burned her hand on a stove. A few days later, the other one reached out to touch the stove but pulled away just in time. And yet, she could not have known that she was about to burn herself.

This ending illustrates the entire inner dynamics of the film that plays with the notion of 'Doppelgänger' on many levels.² The French Véronique can be seen as a Doppelgänger for the Polish Weronika, whilst Alexandre can be seen as a Doppelgänger for the implied author of the film. For Freud the Doppelgänger is the archetypal figure of the uncanny, embodying the return of the repressed, and hence it seems an obvious approach to analyze the film from this perspective. Yet, as Cynthia Freeland has shown, the uncanny elements of *The Double Life* are better explained by examining how the film's 'aesthetic surface', i.e. its mise-en-abyme structure prompts uncanny experiences in the spectator, rather than by searching for psychoanalytical themes.³ Like Freeland I opt for a methodology that moves from a precise interpretation of the aesthetic organization of a film to larger film-philosophical themes, instead of the other way around. However, leaving aside uncanny as a guiding theme, the operational structure of this film appears to me an embodiment of what is called *quantum entanglement* in physics. In quantum mechanics this phenomenon is defined as the quality of two (or more) agents linked to each other in such a way that one agent cannot be adequately described without its counterpart – even if both

agents are distinct in relation to their mutual entanglement. In the context of film-philosophy this concept provides us with insights into the relationship between the inner dynamics of cinema and the ‘affective system’ of the spectator, a relationship best characterized as intra-subjective and intra-active, with an important ethical dimension. Furthermore, the concept of entanglement sensitizes us to issues that concern responsibility of the self for the other, of the author for his or her creation, and even the responsibility of the film scholar for his or her object of study. All in all I hope to show that the notion of entanglement is film-philosophically significant and has methodological consequences, as it entails an understanding of cinema and the spectator in which both parties are agentially present for one another reciprocally and co-creatively.

The entangled relation between Weronika and Veronique is already established in the ‘circular’ opening of the film that begins with what appears to be a point-of-view shot of young Weronika, hanging upside down in front of a window and pointing at the starry winter sky, while her mother’s voice over off screen explains the view to her in Polish. The image fades out, and the following shot is a close up of young Véronique studying the first leaf of spring through a magnifying glass so that her enlarged eye stands out pronouncedly from the otherwise out-of-focus frame. Again, the mother’s presence is suggested through off-screen speech rather than visible presence, which might symbolize the way in which the mother is only present as an absence in the two women’s lives, but the film does not address very explicitly the issue of how the absence of mother has affected them. The image gets in focus and then fades in black before the opening credits roll, with inserted footage of Weronika shot ‘indirectly’ as it were, by way of a distorting screen (again the effect is as if she were viewed through a magnifying glass). The formal organization of this opening suggests that the lives of Weronika and Véronique are entangled. Yet this ‘double life’ is neither a confusion or a fusion, not even an interaction, but a mode of ‘intra-action’ in which individuals “lack an independent, self-contained existence” and emerge instead “through and as part of their entangled intra-relating.”⁴ In my interpretation, the opening suggests an intra-connectedness of *all* things, including human subjects, but also the microscopic and the macroscopic. This is an ontological state that Alain Badiou calls pure multiplicity deprived of any distinction between whole and part, distant (star) and near (leaf), “a multiple of multiples without any foundational stopping point.”⁵

The film is full of ‘entangled moments’ that are accompanied by distorting lenses, windows, transparent objects, mirrors and other reflecting surfaces. These elements suggest a reference to our fundamental intra-connectedness that is embodied in the relationship between Weronika and Véronique, and also between the character and the filmmaker, as will be discussed later on in this essay. For instance, in the scene in which Weronika announces to her father that she has a feeling

that she is not alone in the world, she is shot standing next to a mirror, her reflection duplicating her gestures. In Freudian thinking, a mirror is assumed to connote a transitional relation between the subject and the object originating from the mirror stage. Yet the intra-relation of Weronika with Véronique emerges not as a result of psychodynamic interplay but as a mutual constitution. What is duplicated in Weronika's mirror reflection is not the relationship which Kaja Silverman calls the principle of a 'self-same body,'⁶ but an intra-relationship between two agents in which a change affecting one agent results in changes in the other one, which in return holds repercussions for the first agent. After the scene with the mirror reflection, we see a shot from Weronika's point of view looking at the passing landscape out of the window of a moving train – the very same landscape that we saw her father draw in the previous scene, through one lens of his spectacles. The train window distorts the landscape outside, opening it up in two folds as it were. Then she sees the landscape even more distorted and inverted in a transparent ball in which two stars float – one green and one red. Later in the film, Véronique tells her father about a drawing she saw in a dream that portrayed “a sloping road in a small town lined on both sides by houses with a church in the background. A tall, slender church made of red brick.” Later still, we have access to her dream itself, but this time it is the same view that was seen earlier by Weronika through the transparent ball.

It seems as if a complicated process of entanglement was going on here. The distortions function as diffraction patterns that in quantum mechanics have to do with the phenomenon of superposition; the way in which waves (water, sound or light waves) bend, combine, and overlap when they encounter an obstacle. In *The Double Life*, diffraction occurs in the moments of superposition of Weronika and Véronique through which new possibilities emerge for both of them as their lives overlap. Therefore, as my analysis of *The Double Life* hopes to prove, entanglement is a more appropriate concept to describe this overlap than the Freudian notion of the uncanny for discussing intra-subjective relationships as epitomized in the film. For instance, in contrast to the Freudian mirror concept, which assumes an 'idiopathic' relationship to exist between the self and the other,⁷ the notion of entanglement suggests that the self exists in the signification of the other in a manner that is “inherently unstable, differentiated, dispersed, and yet strangely coherent.”⁸ Furthermore, in contrast to the mirror concept, entanglement is an apt analytical tool for understanding the film's geopolitical dimension, as well as the relationship between the spectator and the film as a mutual constitution in which one is indispensable to the other and vice versa, as the last part of my essay wishes to prove.

The scene in which Weronika and Véronique's paths finally cross illustrates the notion of intra-subjectivity particularly well. In their encounter, there is 'double glass' between them – the

lens of Véronique's camera and the bus window – that both unites and separates the two women. Even though Weronika notices Véronique and tries to catch her attention, the women never meet, because the latter is too busy photographing the demonstration that is taking place on the square. The bus makes a U-turn whilst Weronika walks around it, whereas the camera, focused on her face, moves together with her. This circularity again suggests the extent to which the lives of the two women are entangled even if they were not consciously aware of this entanglement. It is only when Alexandre points at a contact print of a chance photo of Weronika taken in the square, that an epiphany of some kind does take place. Véronique starts to cry inconsolably, Alexandre comforts her and they make love; this scene is cut to a shot of the crumpled contact print seen through a lens of Alexandre's spectacles after which the camera zooms out and in again, now focusing on Véronique's rubber ball. These 'transparent morphings' suggest a superpositioned relationship of Weronika and Véronique's double lives, in which both parties are phenomenally inseparable, but separable as agents. For Barad, "*agential separability* is a matter of *exteriority within phenomena*;"⁹ this condition of 'exteriority within' means that the subject is a dynamic part of the phenomenon (the world's becoming) in a reciprocal relationship with the other elements of the phenomenon; not external to the phenomenon, but not fully internal to it either (in the sense of being fused with the phenomenon). For *The Double Life*, this means that there is no 'causal' relationship between Weronika and Véronique in which the situation of one is brought about by the other in a linear fashion, but rather that their relationship is based on entangled interaction as part of their reciprocal becoming. But this reciprocity is also about something much larger, namely the fundamental condition for any social world in which the world of the other counts just as much as one's 'own' world.¹⁰

For instance, Weronika and Véronique's shared heart condition epitomizes the way in which subjectivity is a process that does not come into being in the form of a causal unfolding, but 'becomes being' as an intra-active enfolding. Visually, this again is expressed by means of diffraction. The fatal concert scene itself is shot with a wide-angle lens with a very short focal length that replaces the magnifying glass for a distorting effect. Weronika sings the E minor soprano solo from *Musique Funebres* by a fictitious eighteenth-century Dutch composer Van den Budenmayer.¹¹ In Luce Irigaray's words, this is "a music made from breath and soul [...] a voice which creates passages – between the universe, the world and the beating of one's own heart, the pulse of one's own blood, the alternation of inhaling and exhaling which gives one's own life its pulse."¹² But Weronika's heart stops halfway through the solo and she collapses, after which the camera flies 'upside down' above the audience. This movement is followed by an establishing shot of the concert hall, then by a close-up of her lifeless wrist, and the scene finally ends with a

'POV' from her grave, the image gradually 'fading out' as sand is being thrown upon her coffin. After this, the narration shifts from Weronika to Véronique, who is making love to someone she met in a casual encounter, again as if were shot through a magnifying glass. Stylistically, this 'transfer' is very similar to the opening scene discussed above, envisioning not only how entangled the lives of the two women are, but also the entanglement of passion and death, with significant consequences. According to the myth, meeting one's Doppelgänger is an omen of death. But Weronika dies so that Véronique can stay alive: shortly after Weronika's fatal heart attack, Véronique ends her singing career as if to escape the same fate. At one symbolic moment in the film, Weronika twists a thread around her finger while singing. During the climax the thread suddenly snaps and her singing stops abruptly, functioning as a powerful premonition for the event yet to come, the heart failure which kills her. In the second part of the film, Véronique performs a similar gesture with a thread she has received in the first mysterious package from Alexandre, who has written a children's story about a thread. Véronique studies the thread on top of a printout of her cardiogram before abruptly straightening it. This gesture not only suggests equivalence between Weronika and Véronique's life lines, but also that Véronique's 'fate' is never determined once and for all, but constantly emerges in the form of changing possibilities through her mysterious, reciprocal connection with Weronika.

Entangled Heart

The concept of the (beating) heart, not merely as an actual organ (the centre of blood circulation), but as an affective centre, seems to be a dominant motif of *The Double Life*. The presence of red clothing, setting and props as well as green elements lit with colored filters is particularly noticeable in the *mise-en-scene* throughout the whole film. This color combination can be seen as a metaphor for the pulsation of the heart, the regular alternation of systole and diastole not within one, but between two affective systems. The color red is popularly associated with passion, green with harmony, and Kieslowski himself has said that the film is about a choice between 'calm life' and 'vocation.' Perhaps it could even be said that the color combination stands for the intra-dependence of passion and deliberation, since it would be a mistake to assume an inherent disjunction or dichotomy between these two modes of being-in-the-world. This 'heartbeat connection,' an entangled intra-relation between Weronika and Véronique, is the condition for their "agential becoming,"¹³ and the flow from one heart to another is depicted in a particularly powerful manner in the two interior shots from their residences in Krakow and Paris. In the first shot, the apartment in Krakow is decorated with warm red tones, but the light that is

reflected in the mirror on the left side of the frame has an unearthly green glow. In the second shot, Véronique's apartment is bathed in green light, but the mirror reflection on the right side of the frame beams lustrous red.

This 'color asymmetry' between the two shots resembles the structure of the heart, and suggests the existence of an 'affective circulation' between Véronique and Weronika that in my reading presents an analogue to the systemic circulation of oxygenated and deoxygenated blood in the vascular system. But perhaps an even more appropriate heart-allegory is that of the heart transplant by which, as Jean-Luc Nancy puts it, what enters the one is not the organ of another, but "rather life/death: a suspension of the continuum of being, a scansion wherein 'I' has/have little to do."¹⁴ Yet, as David Palumbo-Liu points out, this instance can also be seen as an 'opening up' where one receives the other not as a fusion, but as an unfused entanglement in which both the self and the other remain agentially separate even at the centre of their intra-active inseparability: "[This] radical upsetting of a sense of separateness [...] actually only reverses the self-other relationship and accentuates their mutual identity within the interstitial space of indeterminate ownership of the heart."¹⁵ In *The Double Life*, Véronique literally has a 'change of heart' that is epitomized in her decision to give up singing; a decision she would not have made had Weronika not died pursuing her singing career.

Some critics, such as Slavoj Žižek, have argued that Véronique betrays her passion by her decision: "It is not simply that Véronique profits from her awareness of the suicidal character of Weronika's choice, but also that she accomplishes the act of ethical betrayal by abandoning singing, her true vocation."¹⁶ This argument might indeed find support in the later events of the film, when Alexandre enters the picture and becomes a substitute for Véronique's original vocation. Yet the love between Véronique and Alexandre does not count as 'true' or 'authentic' since it is not based on responsible self-determination, as Alexandre literally manipulates Véronique into falling in love with him. But in spite of this, it is also possible to argue that later on in the film Véronique's 'new heart' enables her to break altogether free from passion as an overdetermined trajectory, as I shall argue below.

The Double Life has often been seen as dealing with the questions of fate and free will, and (especially in terms of love and entanglement) how these questions become ethically charged. Tellingly, the moment that Véronique first really notices Alexandre is in a mirror, when he is performing at her school. Using the mirror as the site in which Véronique and Alexandre's eyes lock is telling, because what Véronique sees in the mirror is not what Alexandre 'truly' is, but her own passion reflected. Soon after, Véronique receives an anonymous phone call from Alexandre, during which he plays her a fragment of Van den Budenmayer's composition, which she herself

is teaching at school. And we see a flashback of Weronika's death that Jonathan Romney describes as "an image dimly seen through an amorphous body of red-brown light or liquid, as if preserved in an amniotic haze."¹⁷ This suggests perhaps that Véronique's true passion is now only an opportunity lost forever; an opportunity that exists in an alternative life-space that is entangled with her own, yet now always beyond her reach. Véronique then starts to receive mysterious packages, including a tape of a sound collage, which she traces to Gare Saint-Lazare in Paris, where Alexandre is waiting for her. He tells her that the course of events was a psychological experiment: "*But now I want to write a book... a real book. In this book there's a woman... a woman who responds to the call of an unknown man. So I wondered whether that was psychologically possible.*"

Deeply offended, Véronique runs away, but Alexandre follows her, and eventually they become lovers. Yet both the quote above and the one cited in the beginning of this essay suggest that Véronique's unwilling love is a consequence of Alexandre ensnaring her within the story he is narrating. Alexandre's anonymous packages put imaginary scenarios into motion in Véronique's mind that endow him with mystery and power, qualities that are indispensable for the object of love and, as a result, Véronique 'cannot help but' fall in love with Alexandre. Yet unlike assumed in popular psychology, love is not an emotion beyond our control. As Robert Solomon points out, falling in love is a matter of choice, although it is not a result of a *deliberate* contemplation), "a process of willful escalation and we do not 'fall' in love."¹⁸ At first, Véronique is denied this 'willful escalation' as her agency and free will are obscured by Alexandre's puppetry. Therefore, love between Véronique and Alexandre is not an ethical, entangled mode of love, which respects the agential separability (the 'freedom') of the other, and yet acknowledges the inseparability of the agents in their reciprocal, intra-active becoming. Love between Véronique and Alexandre does not respect but suspends agency, since it ensues from performing as a puppeteer/being handled as a puppet. Alexandre subjects Véronique to emotional manipulation, the origin of which is beyond her control. By contrast, Véronique's falling out of love as soon as she realizes that Alexandre is using her for dramatic material, counts as agential action, since it enables her to escape his authorial control.

Entangled Ethics

Both the relationship between Weronika and Véronique, and the one between Véronique and Alexandre can be seen bearing allegorical significance not only with regard to our own intimate relationships, but also with regard to film-philosophical questions of authorship and

spectatorship, among other things. Alexandre's performances, for instance, suggest an analogy with the mode in which Weronika's fate is entangled with the fate of Véronique. His performance at Véronique's school – to the solo from *Musique Funebres* – features a ballerina who collapses halfway through her recital (due to a sudden cardiac arrest?), then pupates and finally resurrects as a beautiful butterfly. His second performance at the end of the film, entitled *The Double Life* – that yet remains to be realized – establishes an 'ellipsis' between itself and the film we have just seen. I use the word ellipsis in Jean-Luc Nancy's sense of the word who writes that an ellipsis is a circle which at once comes back onto itself, closes itself off, and at the same time fails to do so.¹⁹ In the scene of the second performance, Alexandre invites Véronique to manipulate her own puppet, which is dressed up exactly like Weronika during her concert performance, gently guiding her hands through the correct motions. Not only does this scene contain a condensed image of Weronika's fate, but it also suggests that Véronique's fate is overdetermined too, forced into being by the creative power of Alexandre's imagination, having always already happened. But as Nancy points out, "the ellipsis of 'Ellipsis' closes itself off in [the Derridean] *différance* and its own circularity, and in the play of a recognition which never returns [to the 'origin' of the text]. [...] Closing of the text: quotation of the other text."²⁰ This means that no elliptical system is a closed organization, since in every system of signification that opens up to another, (a fixed) meaning is lost. Furthermore, this feature renders the ellipsis an entangled event in which there is no inherent distinction between the 'creator' and the 'creation,' but which acknowledges the agency of the created to self-determine and influence the course of events as it were.

This is why, in the film's last scene, Véronique not only escapes authorial but also spectatorial control: she drives to her father's house and pauses outside to touch a tree. Indoors, her father is building furniture, and as the familiar *Musique Funebres* aria builds on the soundtrack, he becomes aware of her presence. The film ends with a close up of Véronique's hand touching the tree bark. This is an ending (to emulate Nancy) that fails to be an ending, and it is very difficult to anchor any interpretative claims about the ending beyond loose, contestable associations. Apart from this, it is almost self-evident to draw a comparison between Alexandre and Kieslowski (as an implied author of the film). Whereas Alexandre appears to assume that determinate actions result in determinate reactions, 'Kieslowski' accepts the impossibility of the ending, and this makes the film an entangled event of a self-reflective kind. That is to say, the ending asks questions about the extent to which the relationship between the author and the character is entangled and ethically charged too. In other words, *The Double Life* confronts us with the question of the author's responsibility towards his or her characters, a question that can also be extended to film scholars and their object of study. The question is relevant especially in

the light of recent film-philosophical discussions on the ethics of film viewing experience, with regard to Michael Haneke's cinema in particular. Especially his film *Funny Games* (1997) imposes upon the spectators a considerable burden of responsibility, by offering them the freedom to move between the diegesis and the nondiegesis in the same ways the film's torturers can. As a result, *Funny Games* seems to suggest that the suffering of the tortured family in the film does not stop as long as there is an audience willing to keep watching.²¹ By contrast, *The Double Life's* 'Kieslowski' does not shift this responsibility, but acknowledges it and eventually disowns it, by allowing Véronique to become a character in her own right, beyond authorial determinism. The ending of *The Double Life* seems to suggest that Véronique now has the power to act without authorially imposed restraints, since it is impossible to assume what her ensuing actions will be. The ending conveys an ethical attitude from the part of the author insofar as it implies respect to the character's freedom to determine her actions of her own accord, after she has grown dissatisfied by the life she was given by the author. In this sense, the ending that refuses to be an ending, could be seen as a moment of rebellion in which Véronique abandons her author and begins searching for her freedom.

The implied author Kieslowski can also be seen corresponding to Kieslowski as a transnational figure. A prominent image from the beginning of the film is the shot in which a statue of Lenin is being removed from a public square in Weronika's hometown. This might be interpreted as a visual cue that links Kieslowski's past Polish oeuvre with his future directing career in France (the *Three Colours/Trois couleurs* trilogy, 1993-1994). *The Double Life* was, indeed, Kieslowski's first film to be produced partly in Poland, partly in France. Many critics view the film as a geopolitical allegory in which the relationship between Weronika/Krakow and Véronique/Paris, embodied in the figure of Kieslowski, represents a possibility for a newly defined, dynamic relationship emerging between the (post)communist East and the democratic West. Thomas Elsaesser employs the term 'double occupancy' to define this kind of 'hyphenated' citizenship characterized by divided allegiance and negotiated national identity.²² This notion seems to suggest that identity has 'two sides' that are intertwined, as in the joining of separate identities even if on the phenomenological level the hyphenated subject does not experience his or her identity as such. Therefore I think that entanglement is a more appropriate metaphor for transnational (or better: *intra-national*) subjectivity too, since it apprehends identity as emerging out of the inseparability of the two 'sides.' The 'differing elements' of intra-national identity do not stand in a relationship of externality to each other. Rather, identity comes into being through entangled dynamics of intra-action between one element and the other. This process is also epitomized in the relationship between Weronika and Véronique, Krakow and Paris. Both

Weronika and Véronique are agential components in the emerging, entangled, intra-national subjectivity in which new, changing possibilities come into being at every moment. Every agential action performed by Weronika influences Véronique's agential actions and *vice versa* in a system of identity as 'being singular plural.' According to Nancy's definition, plural singularity is an identity that is based on co-creativity of two or more individuals entangled with each other in a reciprocal relationship. Any intra-national individual must by necessity be characterized as being singular plural, since his or her 'origin' is a constant intra-action of coexisting cultures. In *The Double Life*, this co-creative reciprocity is the glue that keeps the narrative structure of the film together: this structure is not merely a connection, an intertwining or an enmeshment of one narrative trajectory with another, but an intra-action in which each reconfiguring opens up possibilities for new reconfigurings.

A third allegorical significance of *The Double Life* has to do with the question of spectatorship, since this kind of narrative structure does not tell us what to expect (as is usually the case with narratives based on causal linearity). Instead, the film requires effort and creative entanglement from us. Like Freeland too points out, "the movie frustrates the attempt to make sense of it as it appears to mediate on or represent the conditions of its own creation."²³ Therefore the narrative of *The Double Life* brings us into the realm of intra-action and provides us with the delight we take in making sense with instead of making sense of. Entangled spectatorship is not a matter of, say, mirror relation, in which the cinematic screen "lures the ego through being an image of its mirror-self; the screen is ready for narcissistic looking, a mirror for mirroring, thus a double (*sic*) of its double."²⁴ But, as has already been established, mirror describes neither the relation between Weronika and Véronique, nor the relation between the film and the spectator, since both parties emerge as agential participants in the becoming of the dynamic, co-creative, reciprocal and entangled event that is *The Double Life* (both within and outside the film). The same argument is also valid for film-philosophy in general, since 'film-philosophers' should not be considered as distanced observers located in a particular viewing position outside the film, as though the film were merely an objectively readable text – even though this seems to be the stance favored in film hermeneutics. I propose that film-philosophy, as well as its methodology, is best understood as an entangled practice in the mode of intra-action that enables the film to 'speak back' not as an 'object' of study, but as a co-participant in a philosophical discussion. As Michel Serres puts it, "knowing things requires one first of all to place oneself between them. Not only in front of them in order to see them, but in the midst of their mixture, on the paths that unite them."²⁵

In cinema, then, what truly ‘binds’ not only the spectator but also the film-philosopher to the film, is the very act of entangled co-creation of the cinematic system as a whole. My conviction carries methodological consequences that differ from approaches that are based on reflection of what the film is ‘about.’ For Barad, the difficulty with ‘reflective’ methodologies is that they are founded on representationalism:

Reflectivity takes for granted the idea that representations reflect (social or natural) reality. That is, reflectivity is based on the belief that practices of representing have no effect on the objects of investigation and that we have a kind of access to representations that we don’t have to the objects themselves. Reflectivity, like reflection, still holds the world at a distance.²⁶

Instead of reflection, Barad suggests the concept of diffraction as a more appropriate figuration for a methodological approach, a figuration that in my view is applicable to film-philosophy too. Within film studies, there is a long history of using ocular-specular paradigms, and visual and optical metaphors to talk and theorize about film. But these hold the cinema at a distance by presuming an epistemological gap between seer and seen, the subject and the object of look. By contrast, even though diffraction is an optical phenomenon too, it is first and foremost “...a critical practice of engagement, not a distance-learning practice of reflecting from afar [that] advances a [entangled] understanding [...], knowing, thinking, measuring, theorizing, and observing [as] practices of intra-acting within and as part of the world.”²⁷

Similarly, I propose that to think *with* cinema philosophically is to shift the question of representation to matters of entangled practices that do not reduce the film to an illustration of the theoretical hypothesis that the scholar wishes to prove, but that are attentive to the epistemological inseparability of the ‘subject’ and the ‘object’ of scholarly practice as entangled, intra-acting participants. In other words, film-philosophy should be understood as an entangled practice, rather than an exercise of matching philosophical ideas to films. Film-philosophy should be about the scholar intra-acting from within, and as part of the entangled event that is cinema. Then again, like ‘Kieslowski’ as an implied author in *The Double Life*, the film-philosopher should assume an ethical responsibility towards the film as an analytical partner, instead of forcing meaning upon it; an attitude that I hope to have held in my making sense with *The Double Life*.²⁸

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Notes

¹ Even though, in Elizabeth Wright's psychoanalytically informed reading of the film, the similarity is merely a masquerade for two different modes of desire: the denial of lack through *jouissance* (Weronika) and the affirmation of lack through hysteria (Véronique). Elizabeth Wright (1999) "What does woman want? *The Double Life of Véronique*." *Speaking Desires Can Be Dangerous*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 104-14.

² See, for instance, Lihi Nagler (2003) "Singling out the double: Objectivity, subjectivity, and alterity in Kieslowki's *The Double Life of Veronique*." *Post Script* Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 8-20.

³ Cynthia Freeland (2001) "Explaining the uncanny in *The Double Life of Véronique*." *Film and Philosophy* 2001, pp. 34-50.

⁴ Karen Barad (2007) *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press, p. ix. Barad proposes this replacement of 'interaction' with 'intra-action' since, for her, the latter is more suitable in defining the 'property' of a phenomenon (and, as I argue, the property of subjectivity) as an ongoing performance: "In contrast to the usual 'interaction,' which assumes that there are distinctive individual agencies that precede their interaction, the notion of intra-action recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action." Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, p. 33.

⁵ Alain Badiou (2005) *Being and Event*. Trans. Oliver Feltham. London: Continuum, p. 33.

⁶ Kaja Silverman (1996) *The Threshold of the Visible World*. London: Routledge, p. 22.

⁷ In contrast to a 'heteropathic' relationship that is a form of encounter based on an openness to a mode of existence or experience beyond what is familiar to the self. Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World*, p. 4.

⁸ Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, p. 184,

⁹ Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, p. 177.

¹⁰ Philip Fisher (2002) *The Vehement Passions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 68.

¹¹ In reality, the piece is composed by a contemporary Polish film score composer Zbigniew Preisner.

¹² Luce Irigaray (2004) "Before and beyond any word." Trans. Timothy Mathews. *Key Writings*. London: Continuum, p. 140.

¹³ Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, p. 91.

¹⁴ Jean-Luc Nancy (2000) *L'Intrus*, quoted in Jacques Derrida (2005) *On Touching – Jean-Luc Nancy*. Trans. Christine Irizarry. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 279.

¹⁵ David Palumbo-Liu (2002) "The operative heart." *The New Centennial Review*, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 96.

¹⁶ Slavoj Žižek (2006) "The forced choice of freedom." *The Double Life of Veronique Criterion Collection DVD Booklet*, pp. 16-25.

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²⁷ Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, p. 90.

²⁸ Many thanks to Charles France.