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Cover: *Possession* (1981), dir. Andrzej Zulawski.
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CONTENTS

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Capa: *Possession* (*Possessão*, 1981), real. Andrzej Zulawski.
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ÍNDICE

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Cinema: Journal of Philosophy and the Moving Image*, an international journal devoted to the philosophical inquiry into cinema.

Since its beginnings, cinema has been the subject of philosophical investigation on the both sides of the Atlantic. Early in the twentieth century, Henri Bergson (1907) and Hugo Munsterberg (1916) offered, arguably, the first deep philosophical reflections on the recently born art. From the outset, their inquiries reflected different philosophical engagements and traditions. Bergson's ideas were highly influential in continental Europe and inspired a significant amount of artistic production that persisted, at least until the beginning of the Second World War. Munsterberg's pioneering study was almost forgotten, until the revived interest from cognitive film theorists in the nineties. During the twentieth century, in continental Europe, cinema inspired deep philosophical investigations about its nature, functioning, and reception — integrating, for the most part, the influences of Gilles Deleuze, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, amongst others. Within analytical philosophical traditions, with the exception of Stanley Cavell's work since the seventies, the philosophical issues related to cinema found little expression until the last two decades when a change occurred. This change spearheaded innovative research and from it emerged new issues and questions, establishing a body of literature from philosophers like Noël Carroll, George M. Wilson, Gregory Currie, Paisley Livingston, that has underpinned subsequent investigations and debates in this scholarly field.

Additionally, throughout the often overlooked history of film theory, filmmakers and film-theorists such as Sergei Eisenstein, Jean Epstein, Rudolf Arnheim, Dziga Vertov, André Bazin, and Siegfried Kracauer, had continuously and consistently considered the medium and the many philosophical issues regarding the cinematic image in particular and prolific ways. *Cinema* will reflect its editors' belief that it is

time to revive all these traditions, bringing together the views of film theorists with the more recent philosophical contributions in the area.

On the other hand, particularly since the digital shift, the uses and definitions of "cinema" have become permeable. We are not going, however, to tackle the thorny issue of definitions here: the question "what is cinema?" or "what is the philosophy of cinema?" will be left to our contributors in this and future issues. Nevertheless, unquestionably, today, cinema means not just *film*, but other forms of the *moving image*. Traditional filmmakers are increasingly using digital and animation techniques and the usual understanding of cinema as film is being challenged with the digital shift. The same is true of television. Furthermore, ever since the 1960s, artists have increasingly incorporated video into installations in exhibitions and, more recently, new creative outputs include the use of new media. The shift, therefore, from film theory and the philosophy of film into studies of the moving image and its related philosophy, is not only a theoretical option, but it corresponds to, and reflects an actual change, one which extends across contemporary visual culture as a whole. We believe that, in its myriad forms and applications across a wide range of creative practices, the moving image will continue to be, perhaps more than ever, a subject of philosophical and theoretical inquiry.

The purpose of *Cinema* is consistent with this view: its aim is to provide a platform where cinema, taken in its broadest sense, as *image in motion* and *image that moves*, can be a topic of serious scholarly work. While continuing to support the established philosophy of film and film theory, the journal also aims at challenging the conventional divisions between film and other forms of moving image culture. In its urge to remain faithful to the long history of theoretical and philosophical research on cinema, from both sides of the Atlantic, the journal will not be confined to a single method or approach. The editors are aware of the division that still prevails between the analytic and the continental philosophical approaches to

cinema and we acknowledge that some recent developments in these fields show that this gap can be overcome.[1] Accordingly, one of our main editorial objectives is to encourage collaboration and exchange between disciplines (film studies and philosophy), methods (analytic and continental), and approaches (Marxist, phenomenological, psychoanalytic, cognitivist, and others), providing a platform for a dialogue while offering new opportunities for emergent and established scholars in these areas. To guarantee this, the Editorial Advisory Board gathers prominent scholars from a wide range of traditions and institutions who share with the editors the conviction that there is a need for an international journal with the remit of fostering this kind of fruitful dialogue.

In our inaugural issue we are delighted to feature articles by some of the most respected scholars working in a number of key areas in the intersection between philosophy and the moving image. We anticipate that their contributions will convey the diverse and comprehensive scope of the journal. The first article by D. N. Rodowick, "A Care for the Claims of Theory," revisits Christian Metz's work and sees "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" as a seminal essay in which Metz attempts to construct a discursive position for himself and for the academic study of film. Rodowick considers that the French theoretician copes with how semiology, still under Saussure's shadow, always faltered in a confrontation with the image. He further discusses how Metz aims to be conceptually precise, methodologically systematic, and suggests a new idea of film theory that emerges out of phenomenology, filmology, structuralism, classical film aesthetics, and cinephilism. Metz's *careful attitude* and *intensive search* anticipate later developments in the field of film theory. As Rodowick ultimately argues, one can hear echoes of his standpoint in Noël Carroll's prospects for theory, twenty-four years later. (It is an excerpt from

An Elegy for Theory, forthcoming from Harvard University Press in 2011, that we are honored to pre-publish.)

Thomas E. Wartenberg's "Carroll on the Moving Image," considers the definition of the *moving image* that Noël Carroll has put forward and concludes that Carroll has not completely avoided the essentialism of classical film theory. Wartenberg argues for a rethinking of the project of film theory in a manner that is more deeply anti-essentialist, which entails accepting that any concept of the moving image is *historically contingent*.

Raymond Bellour's article, "Deleuze: The Thinking of the Brain," investigates Gilles Deleuze's views on the cinema-body-mind concept, which address the relationship between the brain and thought, neurons and the mind, which is, undoubtedly, one of the most up-to-date topics in Deleuze's philosophy of cinema. Bellour demonstrates that Deleuze brings together philosophy, cinema and the neurosciences not to create a *science of films*, but instead, to think of them philosophically. The article directly confronts what the author considers to be the "dogmatic application of knowledge of the cognitive sciences" by most cognitive theoreticians of the cinema. Drawing also on Daniel Stern's concept of *vitality affects*, Bellour argues that affects "associated with the force, intensity, quality, form or rhythm of an experience," are irreducible to scientific regularities and that "all science of art therefore lives in the tension between real science and the impossible science of the single being."

Interested in a totally different line of thought, Patricia MacCormack's essay, "Mucous, Monsters and Angels: Irigaray and Zulawski's *Possession*" further investigates the relation between cinema, body, and mind, relating it instead to psychoanalytic theories concerning gender views of the role of women in cinema studies. Based on an analysis of Andrej Zulawski's *Possession* (1981) and the work of Luce Irigaray, MacCormack discusses how female desire both is and can create *mucosal monsters*, and how these relate to the idea of the image (or the screen) as a

new plane of *spectatorial pleasure*. MacComack further discusses how, in this plane, the viewer is no longer distinguished from the image, and he/she can experience "the image without sight and the self without subject."

Finally, Murray Smith draws our attention to epistemological issues and considers the so-called *l'affaire Sokal*, which is directly related to the divide between continental and analytical philosophical traditions. Smith opts for the kind of "ethical searching" that Rodowick describes in the opening article and diagnoses what he believes to be the still prevalent prejudice "against analytic philosophy within film and related fields of study, along with a concomitant commitment to continental philosophy," that often mistakes the analytic tradition as a "narrow, monolithic approach" to film. Murray makes a case for arguing that the analytic tradition is itself pluralistic, advocating for what he calls a *robust pluralism*, which, epistemologically, endorses a *relative plausibility* view. This view, while accepting the contingency of all claims, "does not abandon assessing the likelihood of particular truth claims being true."

Susana Duarte Nascimento and Maria Irene Aparício inaugurate our interviews section with an interview to Georges Didi-Huberman. In this interview Didi-Hubermann talks about his latest book *Remontages du temps subi. L'œil de l'histoire 2*, recently published by Les Éditions de Minuit and discusses on the theme of his current work: the role of images, in particular cinematographic images, in the legibility of History.

The Conference Reports section is launched by William Brown's "Cognitive Deleuze" and mirrors the aim of the journal not to be confined to a discipline or a method. Brown describes two very different conferences, the SCSMI Conference at Roanoke and the Deleuze Studies Conference in Amsterdam, calling attention to the productive critical exchange that may be established between them. We strongly endorse this approach, not only to keep dialogue alive, but also to guarantee the presence of a critical and philosophical effort in every section of the journal.

We hope you enjoy this first issue of the journal and welcome your comments [cjpmi@fcsh.unl.pt]. For the following issues, authors are warmly invited to make submissions to the journal. Articles will be selected for their ability to critically and innovatively engage with philosophical inquires into the moving image.

We want to express our gratitude to all who have worked to make *Cinema* become a reality. We are grateful to the members of our Editorial Advisory Board for their willingness to accept our invitation and for their collaboration in this project and, particularly, in this first issue. Our thanks are extended to our section editors, Susana Nascimento Duarte, Maria Irene Aparício, and Joana Pimenta, who are an essential part of the editorial team. We are also most indebted to the Philosophy of Language Institute at the New University of Lisbon for all its help and support that have made it possible for us to believe that this project will have a long and fruitful future. It is with this confidence that we are watchfully waiting to observe the aftereffects of this release, mirroring the eye in the image on the website header, taken from Manoel de Oliveira's *Past and Present* (*O Passado e o Presente*, 1972) — not quite able to anticipate what is to come, but eager to see it.

THE EDITORS

Patrícia Silveirinha Castello Branco

Sérgio Dias Branco

Susana Viegas

1. See, e.g., Paisley Livingston and Carl Plantinga, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film* (London: Routledge, 2008) that includes entries on authors like Rudolph Arnheim, Benjamin, David Bordwell, Christian Metz, and Jean Mitry, and on approaches such as cognitive theory, phenomenology, and psychoanalysis.

EDITORIAL

Bem-vindos ao número inaugural de *Cinema: Revista de Filosofia e da Imagem em Movimento*, uma revista internacional dedicada à investigação filosófica do cinema.

Desde as suas origens que o cinema tem sido objecto de pesquisa filosófica em ambos os lados do Atlântico. Nos primórdios do século XX, Henri Bergson (1907) e Hugo Munsterberg (1916) ofereceram as primeiras reflexões filosóficas sobre esta nova arte nascente. Essas reflexões reflectiram, desde logo, diferentes preocupações e diferentes tradições filosóficas. As ideias de Bergson tiveram uma enorme influência na Europa continental e inspiraram inúmeras obras artísticas que persistiram, pelo menos até ao início da Segunda Guerra Mundial. Por outro lado, os estudos pioneiros de Munsterberg quase caíram no esquecimento até aos anos 90 do século passado, altura em que foram alvo de um renovado interesse, nomeadamente por parte dos teóricos cognitivistas do cinema. Durante todo o século XX, na Europa continental, cinema continua a inspirar profundas investigações filosóficas sobre a sua natureza, funcionamento e recepção, integrando, em grande medida, as influências de Gilles Deleuze, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, entre outros. Relativamente à tradição filosófica analítica, com a excepção das obras de Stanley Cavell a partir dos anos 70, os problemas filosóficos relacionados com o cinema tiveram pouca expressão até à mudança ocorrida nas últimas duas décadas. Esta mudança deu um novo impulso ao lançamento de problemas e questões, e estabeleceu um *corpus* literário por parte de filósofos como Noël Carroll, George M. Wilson, Gregory Currie e Paisley Livingston, que serviu de base a subsequentes investigações e debates neste campo.

Para além disso, ao longo da frequentemente esquecida teoria do cinema, cineastas e teóricos como Sergei Eisenstein, Jean Epstein, Rudolf Arnheim, Dziga Vertov, André Bazin ou Siegfried Kracauer reflectiram, de forma contínua e

consistente, sobre o meio e os inúmeros problemas filosóficos levantados pela imagem cinematográfica. A *Cinema* reflectirá a convicção dos editores de que é necessário revisitar todas estas tradições e congregar as reflexões dos teóricos do cinema com os mais recentes contributos filosóficos nesta área.

Por outro lado, especialmente a partir da viragem digital, as práticas e as definições de "cinema" têm-se tornado menos rígidas. Longe de pretendermos abordar aqui a complexa problemática das definições (as questões "o que é o cinema?" ou "o que é a filosofia do cinema?", serão deixadas para os nossos colaboradores, neste, e nos próximos números), podemos, não obstante, seguramente afirmar ser hoje quase inquestionável que o cinema tem vindo a integrar outras formas de *imagens em movimento*. Sem dúvida que a habitual compreensão de cinema enquanto meio restrito à película tem sido profundamente desafiada pela introdução do digital e mesmo os realizadores mais tradicionais não ficam indiferentes às técnicas digitais. O mesmo podemos dizer da televisão. Para além disso, desde os anos 60, que artistas têm recorrentemente incluído o vídeo nas suas instalações e exposições e, mais recentemente, novas obras de arte, têm vindo a integrar a utilização dos novos média. Por todas estas razões, a deslocação da teoria e da filosofia do cinema para os estudos da imagem em movimento e respectiva filosofia, não corresponde apenas uma opção teórica mas reflecte também uma mudança real que se estende a toda a cultura visual contemporânea. Acreditamos que, na sua miríade de formas e aplicações por uma vasta gama de práticas criativas, a imagem em movimento continuará a ser, talvez mais do que nunca, objecto de investigação filosófica e teórica.

As intenções da *Cinema* são fiéis a esta perspectiva: o seu principal objectivo é oferecer uma plataforma onde o cinema, no seu sentido mais alargado, enquanto 'imagem em movimento' ou 'imagem que move', possa ser objecto de estudos académicos aprofundados. Ao mesmo tempo que continuará a apoiar a filosofia e os

estudos do cinema já estabelecidos, a *Cinema* pretende também desafiar as divisões tradicionais entre cinema e outras formas da imagem em movimento. Por outro lado, no seu desejo de se manter fiel à longa história da investigação teórica e filosófica sobre o cinema em ambos os lados do Atlântico, a *Cinema* não se confinará a um único método ou disciplina. Apesar de os editores estarem cientes da divisão que ainda persiste entre as abordagens da filosofia analítica e continental, também reconhecem que alguns desenvolvimentos mais recentes nestes campos mostram que esta cisão pode ser superada.[1] Assim, um dos nossos principais objectivos editoriais é encorajar a colaboração e troca entre disciplinas (estudos de cinema e filosofia), métodos (analítico e continental) e abordagens (marxista, fenomenológica, psicanalítica, cognitivista, entre outras) criando uma plataforma alargada de diálogo que, simultaneamente, possa oferecer novas oportunidades, quer para os académicos emergentes, quer para aqueles que têm já reconhecida obra nestas áreas. Com o intuito de garantir precisamente este objectivo, o Conselho Editorial Consultivo reúne académicos reconhecidos que representam uma gama diversa de tradições. Estes académicos partilham com os editores a convicção de que a publicação de uma revista internacional neste campo é um passo fundamental no sentido do lançamento de um diálogo produtivo entre diferentes abordagens e tradições.

É, por isso, com o máximo de satisfação que publicamos, neste nosso número inaugural, artigos inéditos de alguns dos mais reconhecidos representantes de áreas fundamentais deste encontro entre a filosofia e a imagem em movimento. É nossa convicção que o seu contributo expressa o âmbito diversificado e abrangente da revista.

O primeiro artigo, "A Care for the Claims of Theory" da autoria de D. N. Rodowick, é um excerto do livro *An Elegy for Theory*, a ser publicado em 2011 pela

Harvard University Press, que temos a honra de pré-publicar aqui em primeira mão. Neste texto, Rodowick revisita o trabalho de Christian Metz e debruça-se especialmente sobre o ensaio "Cinéma: langue ou langage?", um trabalho seminal no qual Metz procura construir uma posição discursiva para si e para o estudo académico do cinema. Rodowick argumenta que o teórico francês se confronta com a forma como a semiologia, ainda na sombra de Sausurre, sempre vacilou na sua confrontação com a imagem. Para além disso, Rodowick discute a forma como Metz ambiciona ser conceptualmente preciso, metodologicamente sistemático, e sugere uma nova concepção de teoria do cinema que deriva da fenomenologia, da filmologia, do estruturalismo, da estética clássica, e da cinefilia. A *atitude cautelosa* e a *procura intensiva* de Metz anteciparam posteriores desenvolvimentos no campo da teoria do cinema. Como conclui Rodowick, pode-se ouvir ecos deste ponto de vista nas perspectivas para a teoria delineadas por Noël Carroll, 24 anos mais tarde.

O artigo que se segue, "Carroll on the Moving Image" de Thomas E. Wartenberg, parte de uma análise da definição de *imagem em movimento* avançada por Noël Carroll, e conclui que Carroll não se afastou totalmente do essencialismo da teoria clássica do cinema. Wartenberg defende a necessidade de se repensar o projecto da teoria de cinema, orientando-a num sentido mais profundamente anti-essencialista. Tal orientação implica que se aceite que qualquer conceito de imagem em movimento é *historicamente contingente*.

O artigo de Raymond Bellour, "Deleuze: The Thinking of the Brain," aborda um dos temas mais actuais na filosofia deleuziana do cinema. Bellour analisa a perspectiva de Gilles Deleuze sobre o conceito de cinema-corpo-mente que aborda as ligações entre o cérebro e o pensamento, ou entre os neurónios e a mente. O autor demonstra que a forma como Deleuze relaciona a filosofia com o cinema e as neurociências, não tem o intuito de criar uma *ciência dos filmes* mas, ao invés, tem por objectivo pensá-los filosoficamente. No artigo, Bellour confronta ainda

directamente aquilo que considera ser a "aplicação dogmática do conhecimento das ciências cognitivas" por parte da maioria dos teóricos cognitivistas do cinema. Baseando-se igualmente no conceito de *afectos de vitalidade* de Daniel Stern, Bellour defende que os afectos "associados à força, intensidade, qualidade, forma ou ritmo de uma experiência" são irredutíveis à previsibilidade científica e que "toda a ciência da arte vive, assim, na tensão entre uma ciência real e uma ciência impossível do ser único."

Numa linha de pensamento totalmente diferente, o ensaio de Patricia MacCormack, "Mucous, Monsters and Angels: Irigaray and Zulawski's *Possession*," analisa a relação entre cinema, corpo, e mente, relacionando-a, ao invés, com as teorias psicanalíticas e com as perspectivas de género nos estudos de cinema. Baseando-se no filme *Possession* (1981) de Andrej Zulawski e no trabalho de Luce Irigaray, MacCormack questiona o modo o desejo feminino é, e origina, "monstros mucosos" e como estes, por sua vez, se relacionam com a ideia de imagem, ou ecrã, concebida como um novo plano de "prazer do espectador." MacComack analisa ainda de que modo, neste plano de "prazer do espectador," este último já não é distinto da imagem e pode experienciar "a imagem sem signo e o Eu sem sujeito."

Para terminar, Murray Smith chama a nossa atenção para alguns problemas epistemológicos, e reflecte sobre o chamado *l'affaire Sokal*, um famoso caso que reflecte directamente a divisão entre a tradição filosófica continental e analítica. Smith opta pelo tipo de "procura ética" que Rodowick descreve no artigo de arbertura e diagnostica aquilo que acredita ainda ser ainda um preconceito "contra a filosofia analítica do cinema e áreas de estudo relacionadas, juntamente com um concomitante compromisso com a filosofia continental" e que normalmente desconsidera, de forma errónea, a tradição analítica classificando-a como uma "abordagem limitada, monolítica" ao cinema. Murray argumenta ainda que a própria tradição analítica é pluralista, defendendo aquilo que ele designa como um

"pluralismo robusto" que, epistemologicamente, adopta uma perspectiva de *relativa plausibilidade*. Esta perspectiva, ao mesmo tempo que aceita a contingência de todas as pressuposições, "não desiste de afirmar a possibilidade de algumas declarações de verdade serem verdadeiras".

A nossa secção de entrevistas é inaugurada com uma entrevista a Georges Didi-Huberman intitulada "Georges Didi-Huberman: « .... Ce qui rend le temps lisible, c`est l´image»" por Susana Nascimento Duarte e Maria Irene Aparício. Nesta entrevista, Didi-Hubermann fala sobre o seu último livro, *Remontages du temps subi. L'œil de l'histoire 2*, publicado recentemente pela Les Éditions de Minuit, e discute de forma abrangente o tema do seu trabalho actual: as ligações entre a legibilidade da História e as imagens.

A secção de relatórios de conferências é inaugurada pelo relatório "Cognitive Deleuze" de William Brown e espelha a intenção da revista de não se limitar a uma única disciplina ou a uma única metodologia. Brown escreve sobre duas conferências muito diferentes, a conferência da SCSMI em Roanoke e a conferência dos Deleuze Studies em Amesterdão, apelando a um intercâmbio produtivo e crítico que pode ser estabelecido entre ambas. Subscrevemos inteiramente esta abordagem, não apenas como uma forma de manter o debate aceso, mas também como um modo de garantir a presença de um esforço crítico e filosófico em todas as secções da revista.

Esperamos que este número inaugural seja do vosso agrado e agradecemos os vossos comentários [cjpmi@fcsh.unl.pt]. É com enorme prazer que convidamos autores a colaborarem nos próximos números, submetendo artigos à revista. Os artigos serão seleccionados pela sua capacidade de abordarem questões filosóficas sobre a imagem em movimento de forma crítica e inovadora.

Queremos ainda expressar o nosso agradecimento a todos aqueles que contribuíram para que a *Cinema* se tenha tornado uma realidade. Estamos

profundamente gratos aos elementos do nosso Conselho Editorial Consultivo, pela disponibilidade para aceitar o nosso convite e pela forma como activamente colaboraram este projecto, e especialmente, neste número inaugural. Os nossos agradecimentos estendem-se também aos editores de cada secção, Susana Nascimento Duarte, Maria Irene Aparício e Joana Pimenta, elementos fundamentais da nossa equipa editorial. Estamos igualmente muitíssimo agradecidos ao Instituto de Filosofia da Linguagem da Universidade Nova de Lisboa por todo o apoio e ajuda que recebemos, permitindo-nos acreditar que este projecto terá um futuro longo e produtivo. É com a confiança que recebemos de todos que aguardamos atentamente pelos resultados desta publicação, reflectindo o olhar da imagem que encabeça o website, retirada do filme de Manoel de Oliveira, *O Passado e o Presente* (1972): incapaz de antecipar o futuro, mas impaciente para o ver.

OS EDITORES

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Sérgio Dias Branco

Susana Viegas

1. Ver, por exemplo, Paisley Livingston e Carl Plantinga, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film* (Londres: Routledge, 2008) que inclui entradas sobre autores como like Rudolph Arnheim, Benjamin, David Bordwell, Christian Metz, e Jean Mitry, e sobre abordagens como a teoria cognitiva, a fenomenologia, e a psicanálise.

Excerpted from D. N. Rodowick, *An Elegy for Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, forthcoming).

A CARE FOR THE CLAIMS OF THEORY

D. N. Rodowick (Harvard University)

Those who know Metz from the three perspectives of writer, teacher, and friend are always struck by this paradox, which is only apparent: of a radical demand for precision and clarity, yet born from a free tone, like a dreamer, and I would almost say, as if intoxicated. (Didn't Baudelaire turn H. into the source of an unheard of precision?) There reigns a furious exactitude.

— Roland Barthes, "To Learn and to Teach"

One sees reborn everywhere, after a long eclipse, the interest for theoretical discussion.

— Christian Metz, "On Classical Theories of Cinema"

Often considered to be the discursive founder of the structuralist enterprise in film, revisiting Metz's earliest publications reveals a more complex and often surprising picture. In a group of texts published between 1964 and 1972, Metz marks out a conflicted conceptual space within structuralism — between a precedent aesthetic discourse in film theory and an emergent discourse of signification, between phenomenology and semiology, between semiology and film, and between sign and image — whose stakes are played out in the imagination and construction of "theory" as a concept whose rarity before the 1960s cannot be underestimated. Indeed the early Metz takes on two projects in the early sixties whose scales are enormously ambitious. Having become associated with the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* (EPHE) from 1963 under Roland Barthes's tutelage (and in 1966 elected a *directeur d'études*), Metz takes on one of the central

obstacles to expanding linguistics into a general semiology of culture, that is, to show that the methods and concepts of structural linguistics and the study of speech or *langue* are applicable to non-spoken phenomena; in short photography and film. As is clear even in Barthes's early essays on photography, the image is viewed here as both an object of fascination and an obstacle to a general science of signs, which can only demonstrate its universality if it can master the image in signification. The enunciative a priori or implied defining question of the aesthetic discourse from the 1910s through the 1930s was "In what ways can film be considered an art?" And in repeatedly returning to this question, debating it, worrying it, probing it from different angles and from a variety of conceptual frames, the discourse fractured and eroded the concept of the aesthetic itself in a way commensurate with the larger project of modernism in the arts. The enunciative a priori of the discourse of signification, raised by Barthes in "The Rhetoric of the Image," is "How does meaning get into the image?," as if the image itself, in its analogical plenitude, is opaque to meaning.[1] Semiology can only lay claim to founding a general science of signs if it can demonstrate that the image is surrounded by meaning, crossed with or shot through with signification, bathed in sense. However, and in a way analogous to the aesthetic discourse, semiology founders in its confrontations with the image; or, as Barthes's encounters with the image makes clear from the beginning, from a semiological perspective there is something traumatic, anxious, or imponderable in the image that semiology feels compelled to master, and in many respects fails to master. Barthes will finally embrace the idea of an unmasterable core of non-meaning in the image in his return to "phenomenology" in *Camera Lucida*.

Therefore, one central concern of Metz's earliest essays is to make a contribution to a general semiology of culture by working within the context of the EPHE in a specialized domain — the cinema. Alternatively, out of this project unfolds another one, less remarked upon yet equally ambitious. More than Barthes, I think, Metz quickly became

keenly aware of the difficulties, not of the image, but of renovating the concepts of structural linguistics to extend them to non-linguistic expressions. At the same time, if the semiological program was to include film one also needed to take into account a historical discourse on cinema reaching as far back as the 1920s to show how these writings were already approaching, if often in conceptually imprecise and non-systematic ways, the problem of film *as* discourse. After Guido Aristarco's pioneering *Storia delle teoriche del film*[2] Metz is one of the first important figures to place the aesthetic discourse in an historical frame, to consider it in all its disparity and dispersion across continents, languages, and decades as a special genre of discourse, distinguishable from both film history and criticism, and one that has a history seeking conceptual unity. Like Aristarco, Metz is constructing an archive (which will be recognized retrospectively as the first canon of classical film theory) but a directed one — selecting texts, identifying predecessors, locating where conceptual foundations have been laid.

This project is not without its ironies and paradoxes. On one hand, Metz is entirely a product of his discursive context. In excavating and refashioning the aesthetic discourse in the early 1960s he is guided ineluctably by a retrojecting framework that revisits and unavoidably rediscovers in the first fifty years of writing on film a preoccupation with language and signification commensurate with, if only incompletely and in a fragmentary way, the larger discourse of structuralism. On the other hand, through his cinephilism, his commitment to phenomenology, and his attachment to postwar French film culture, Metz is at odds with structuralism. The twinned project of contributing to a new cine-semiology, and to recovering and paying homage to a special literature on film, does not necessarily lead to building a general science of culture through linguistics. Metz desires to be rigorous, conceptually precise, and methodologically systematic, but he refrains from making this into a desire for science or for philosophy — it is, rather, a desire for *theory*.

Emerging out of a series of overlapping yet conflicting discursive formations — phenomenology, filmology, structuralism, classical film aesthetics, and cinephilism — in a series of important texts of the 1960s, Metz finds his way in theory, and in so doing, begins to construct an enunciative position or perspective that can finally be recognized as *theoretical*. Metz builds a map and a picture of the history of film theory through the discursive formations of structuralism and semiology. Contrary to the usual conception of the early Metz as the founder of a certain discourse and of a method — cine-semiology and the structural analysis of film — Metz here becomes a fairly unique figure within the larger discourse of signification in its era of methodological passion. Metz's particular conception of theory is directed by a kind of ethical searching at odds with the discursive context that produced him, one that questions a whole mode of existence (in structuralism, in film study, in theory) through the conceptual will to forge a new form of life in thought around the cinema. A closer look at his essays of the 1960s, gradually uncovers the will to locate a position or perspective expressed in the form of a certain moral reasoning. An inheritor of the institutional and academic discourse of filmology, as well as the phenomenology of André Bazin, and inhabiting discourses that are simultaneously cinephilic, philosophical, and ethical, in these essays Metz positions himself as the conciliator between several postwar discourses traversing film and the human sciences, as if to find a new place for film in the human sciences through theory.

Metz's construction of a place for theory — its positions of address, its points of intersection and conflict with other forms of discourse, its epistemological extensions and limits — unfolds on a sinuous path that moves forward by looping back on itself at frequent intervals in a recurrent process of revision and refashioning, moving in uneven lines across several essays. Undoubtedly, the most fascinating and most complex account occurs in the first half of Metz's first professional article, "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" published in 1964 in an issue of *Communications* devoted to "Semiological Research."[3] In

short order, Metz takes up the problem of history and theory again in his review of the first volume of Jean Mitry's *Aesthetic and Psychology of Film*, "Une étape dans la réflexion sur le cinéma" ("A Stage in Reflection on the Cinema").[4] The line continues in a 1967 review of Mitry's second volume, "Problèmes actuels de théorie du cinéma" ("Current Problems in Cinema Theory") before another phase of methodological reflection and revision occurs in parallel: first in the opening chapter of *Language and Cinema*, and then in the republication of the two essays on Mitry in *Essais sur la signification au cinéma, II*,[5] which are grouped together with a new prologue in a section entitled, "On Classical Theories of Cinema." Among his many significant contributions, then, Metz was one of the first key figures to adopt a metatheoretical perspective in film study — a reflection on the components and conceptual standards of theory construction, as well as a historical view of the development of film theory. Metz is also one of the first main figures after Aristarco to make present and perspicuous a new concept of theory by constructing theory as an object, examining its history, and testing its present and potential claims to generate knowledge.

That Metz moves, as if searching out stepping stones to cross an unruly stream, from a stage in reflection, to current problems of theory, and then to the assertion of an antecedent and historically locatable period of film theorizing is significant, as we shall soon see, and all the more so in that the canon of film theory so familiar to us today was still fragmentary, incomplete, imperfectly translated, and hardly known. Still, one finds throughout the sixties the emergence of a certain historical consciousness in the form of a desire to revisit, recollect, reorganize and systematize thought about the cinema, especially as represented in Kracauer's *Theory of Film* (1960) and Mitry's great books, preceded by Jay Leyda's pioneering translations of Eisenstein's *Film Sense* (1942) and *Film Form* (1949). Nonetheless, up until the 1970s a great number of key theoretical texts were unavailable in French, and indeed, in many other languages: Eisenstein and

Pudovkin's work appeared only in scattered fragments and excerpts, Vertov was hardly known, and key texts by Arnheim and Balázs were available only in German. The French genealogy scattered across the diverse texts of Canudo, Delluc, Dulac, Moussinac, Faure, Epstein, Gance, Clair, Cocteau, Feuillade, L'Herbier, or the Surrealists, was dispersed in often hard to find publications. The fiftieth anniversary of the invention of cinema inspired the publication of two important collections in 1946, Marcel Lapierre's *Anthologie du cinema : retrospective par les texts de l'art muet qui devint parlant* (Paris: La Nouvelle Édition) and Marcel L'Herbier's *Intelligence du cinématographe* (Paris: Éditions Corrêa), but valuable as they were these volumes were hardly more than a mélange of testimony by directors, actors, and inventors interspersed with selections from aesthetic writings assembled under rubrics that revealed no special concept of "theory." Still, in France as in Italy, postwar film culture did have a sense of a canon for the aesthetic discourse, as represented by Henri Agel's little pedagogical volume for the Que sais-je? series, *Esthétique du cinéma* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), which refers to and closely follows Aristarco's canonization of Balázs, Pudovkin, Eisenstein, Arnheim, and Spottiswoode though without reproducing any of their texts. The first collection of Eisenstein's texts in French, *Réflexions d'un cinéaste*, appeared only in 1958.

Throughout this period of recovery, collection, and anthologization an historical perception emerges of there being a corpus of film theory that is relatively delimited and self-contained if only one could assemble all the texts in an orderly way. This desire to discover or construct a canon is fueled both by the rarity of sustained studies of film aesthetics in the classical period and by the cultural and academic marginality of film and film studies. Even in Metz's case, this perception of rarity and marginality leads to a tendency to think of the history of film theory as a series of monuments: Balázs, Arnheim, Eisenstein, Kracauer, Bazin, Mitry, all major figures who could anchor a field or mark out

its borders. (And one believed this territory could in principle be taken in from a single field of vision — even in the early seventies, the devoted student of cinema could still dream of reading every published work in film theory, in English or in French, as the books would hardly fill one shelf.)

Metz's expert command of German and English, and his institutional placement as an academic researcher in a field which as such did not yet exist, no doubt abets and fuels a drive to assemble, organize, and arrange, methodically and systematically, the available "research" on cinema, as if to reassure himself of a certain place in the history of thought about cinema, or even to show that this thought exists and has a history. No doubt he is also inspired by Mitry's own drive to organize systematically a certain thought about cinema, to ratify it and to show that it has methodological unity and value. At the same time, it is not clear that Metz viewed the initial phase of his work as contributing to a (semiological) theory of film, so much as appealing to film as a problem in the transition from linguistics to a general science of signs. Metz will thus regroup and reconfigure the canon of film theory as constituted by Aristarco and others to include film semiology as a necessary stage toward developing a "scientific" problem and attendant vocabulary in which film is only a part.

To better understand Metz's construction of theory, along with the epistemological stakes and perspectives invested in that term, it may be best to begin at the point where Metz concludes the first phase of his thinking: the Introduction to his magisterial *thèse d'État*, *Language and Cinema*. Nearly ten years after filing a proposal to study "filmolinguistics" at the *Centre nationale de recherches scientifiques*, the connection to filmology had not been forgotten. In hindsight it is clear that Metz conceived both "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" and *Language and Cinema* as functioning in ways analogous to Gilbert Cohen-Séat's foundational *Essai sur les principes d'une philosophie du cinéma* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1946), that is, as setting out a

methodological foundation as a kind of conceptual grid: imposing conceptual order, reducing the problem to a manageable scale, defining and aiming at certain problems while excluding others. *Language and Cinema* is a sort of reconception and rewriting of the *Essai* but from the standpoint of the discourse of signification, which in 1971 has fully bloomed, meaning also that is has begun to fade. Four years later, with the publication of yet another deeply influential methodological statement in *Communications*, "The Imaginary Signifier," Metz would help found again a new discourse, that of the subject and ideology.

In a strong sense, the central question of the Introduction to *Language and Cinema* is how to bring theory to cinema? Or in other words, how to filter, reduce, or circumscribe the object of investigation to make it the proper object of a theory? The cinema in its largest possible conception, Metz argues, is a total social fact in Marcel Mauss' sense. As a multidimensional whole it does not lend itself to a unified and rigorous examination, but rather, only to "a heteroclite mass of remarks implicating multiple and various points of view."[6] As a possible object of theory, this is another way in which "cinema" is analogous to "language," for language in its largest sense also confronted Saussure as a global, variegate, and multidimensional social whole whose scale and complexity escaped any theoretical purchase. A theory, then, requires a principle of pertinence, a sort of filter or grid that sets the conceptual perimeters of a theoretical object and establishes the lines of latitude and longitude guiding its systematic study. The cinema as such, like language as such, is too vast to be a possible object of knowledge. Saussure laid the foundations for a theory of signs — semiology — in defining *langue* as a system of signification underlying language more generally, and therein lies a possible opening into film theory. In examining the system of signification, semiology refinds language in another sense, and finds other senses in language. A theory of *film*, rather than a theory of cinema, will have to

perform a similar reduction, isolating only those components of the filmic fact that are discursive or textual.

Metz continues by observing that although narrative film began to emerge about the same time as Saussure was giving his course on general linguistics, theory was a long time coming to film, or at least the components of a theory wherein one could clearly establish criteria for defining filmic and cinematographic facts. That the history of film theory has unfolded, higgledy-piggledy, in the accumulation of heteroclite and syncretic observations and texts is a result of its relative youth as an art form and lack of institutional setting. The history of cinema has not wanted for "theorists," Metz observes, though it has until recently lacked the constituents of a theory. To make film a possible object of knowledge means reducing the scale of investigation, plotting out recognizable property lines, flattening and shaping the landscape, giving it an architectural design. For Metz the profile of the classical "film theorist" echoes the eclecticism of the writings themselves. In the early decades of writing on the cinema, Metz observes, "What one most often called a 'cinema theorist' was a sort of one-man-band [*l'homme orchestre*] who ideally held an encyclopedic knowledge and a quasi-universal methodological formation."[7] One needed to be a *historian*, with complete knowledge of world film production, as well as an *economist* who could understand the industrial circumstances of production. To define film as art one also needed to be an *aesthetician*, and if one wished to comprehend film as a meaningful discourse, one was also a *semiologist*. Finally, to the extent that one wanted to excavate in the content of particular films various psychological, psychoanalytic, social, political, or ideological facts, "nothing less than a total *anthropological* knowledge was virtually required."[8]

In short, the classical era risked producing little more than "a heteroclite mass of remarks implicating multiple and various points of view." What is surprising, nonetheless, is the conceptual richness and precision of early contributions to

understanding film (here Metz draws clearly his canon) in the texts of Balázs, Arnheim, or Albert Laffay, in the writings of Eisenstein and the Russian Formalists, or later, Edgar Morin and Gilbert Cohen-Séat where, as Metz notes, the choice of principles of pertinence is already more self-consciously made. For Metz, these names represent phases, stations, or stages on the way to theory, or a theory yet to come. The classical period is thus not a total but only a partial eclipse — light peers through, and it is waxing. If the space opened between Aristarco in 1951 to Metz in 1964 defines a period in which film theory will gradually achieve historical consciousness of itself, in the period between 1964 and 1971 film theory not only acquires a name, it also takes on a form and acquires a method and epistemology — it becomes a genre of discourse.

1964 is not only the date of publication of Metz's seminal and foundational essay, "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" It also falls between the publication of Jean Mitry's two volumes of *Aesthetic and Psychology of Cinema* (1963 and 1965). No doubt, a figure like Mitry embodies more than any other the image of an *homme orchestre* that Metz sketches on the first page of *Language and Cinema*. Metz's deep appreciation of Mitry's arguments and his accomplishments — fully set out in his two critical reviews on Mitry in 1965 and 1967 respectively, and his frequent citations of Mitry's magisterial if flawed work — are sincere and his praise fulsome. Nonetheless this praise is attenuated by the curious place reserved for Mitry in Metz's genealogy of theory. Metz praises Mitry's books as the synthesis and the outcome of an entire era of "reflection on film," reflection, however, and not theory. For as Metz will soon make clear, from the standpoint of a possible film semiology Mitry's work is the apogee, but also the denouement and conclusion, of a certain way of thinking about film. The question before Metz here is "theory": what counts as a theory of film, what are its conceptual components and its characteristic activities, and who can lay claim to being a subject of theory, its author or enunciator? In posing these questions in a series of works between 1964 and 1971, and sketching out

historical markers and directions, in fact, in raising theory's history as a theoretical question, Metz not only invents film theory but also becomes the first exponent of what I have called the metatheoretical attitude. In these seven short years, for film studies at least, Metz becomes "discursive" in Foucault's sense. Not just the author of film theories but the focal point of a new system of address, which emits from a new institutional context with its own rhetorical style and sense of place in history, setting out a new conceptual framework defined by precise principles of pertinence and implicit criteria of inclusion and exclusion for the practice of theory.

In looking back retrospectively at the first phase of general reflection on film, Metz observes that in fact there are two kinds of "theories" proposed. (The quotation marks are Metz's.) On one hand, in everyday language the word "theoretician" still "frequently designates an author whose writings are above all normative and whose principle aim is to exert influence on films to come, indeed, to prescribe a preferential choice of subject for these films."[9] But another path has been forged through the aesthetic discourse, above all by the authors that occupy Metz's preferred canon. These are writers who "have devoted all or an important part of their cinematographic efforts to analyzing films such as they exist, and who appear as so many precursors of a *description* of film, in the sense given this work in the human sciences and notably in linguistics."[10] These authors are precursors, then, of a descriptive rather than prescriptive form of analysis that attends to films as they are rather than some possible future ideal film yet to be created. There are two sides or dimensions of this pre-theoretical reflection then:

> one on the side of the work to come, thought in terms of *influence*, which does not hesitate to advise or prescribe, which wants to respond directly to the working problems of an 'artist creator,' and which only has sense in this perspective, and one

> on the side of filmic discourses *already given*, and which seeks to analyze them as facts.[11]

An analogous situation exists in aesthetics, Metz suggests. But the significant point here is Metz's preference for a descriptive theory of cinema whose main outlines are prefigured, though in a scattered and disunified way, in the most important authors of the discourse of aesthetics. These writers, however, lacked principles of pertinence that could ground and unify their observations about the state of film language. As such, they could follow only furrows they had already plowed, circling endlessly back to the aesthetic a prioris guiding their thought.

However, the first epoch of general reflection on film has now come to an end. One can no longer be satisfied with a variety of heteroclite observations but must clearly choose a principle of pertinence; in other words, theory must rally around a method, which can unify synthetically from a singular perspective the data and knowledge gathered within its domain. What was previously called "film theory" included observations concerning filmic and cinematographic facts but often without differentiating them. Though often illuminating, these approaches were eclectic and syncretic, drawing on a variety of methods without applying any one in a consistent or even self-conscious way. The discourse of aesthetics was not yet a theory of film. The discourse of structure and signification signals another mutation in this history, then, as the opening of a new phase, which Francesco Casetti has quite rightly characterized as "methodological."[12] In this transitional moment, Metz argues that methodological pluralism is a necessary though nonetheless provisional exigency. One sees here both a defense of filmology, its persistence as a fellow traveler supporting the discourse of signification in film, as well as the flowering of a "theory of the filmic fact" derived from the methods of a linguistically informed semiology. Most striking throughout this

chapter is Metz's implication that semiology is somehow provisional or less stable than sister disciplines in the human sciences, and that theory has not yet arrived here in the form of a singular and unifying method. A striking commonality, then, between the discourses of aesthetics and signification, despite all the characteristics and criteria that divide them, is the sense that theory is yet to come, always ahead of us as a third possibility, envisageable but so far unattained.

Metz's concern with method in the Introduction to *Language and Cinema* is already on full display in "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" Throughout the sixties, it is fascinating how Metz seems so concerned with mapping out and clarifying the variety of epistemological frameworks within which film study takes place, as if in his first published essay he needs to create a new mode of existence, in film and in theory. The essay is thus a manifesto and methodological statement, dividing and ascribing tasks, probing and defining concepts, and laying out positions of address. More importantly, it wants to explore the conditions of possibility wherein a synthetic and unified theory of film might be constructed, and as such it is both a prelude and pendant to the Introduction to *Language and Cinema*. That such a global and unified approach to film might be possible is the lesson Metz learns from Mitry's *Aesthetic*, and that a global and unified approach to the problem of signification as such is possible is the very air Metz breathes throughout the sixties. This idea directs, after all, the project for semiological research outlined in *Communications* 4, especially in Barthes's "Elements of Semiology," with all its methodological passion. What remains to be understood is the place of a possible *film* theory in this discursive universe — now already somewhat ahead of Mitry's summing up and closing off of classical film aesthetics, but also somewhat behind in making its own positive contributions to a general semiology. Theory as such is yet to arrive in academic film study.

The title of the essay is significant: can the sense of film be studied from within the

concepts and methods of linguistics, whose object is *langue*? Or if film is a language (how could it not be since it conveys meaning) what kind of language is it, or by what rights do we refer to it as a language? The essay aims not only at rendering more precisely an object of study but also at creating and evaluating a perspective from which that object can be known, and in many respects, valued. Already, this is a somewhat strange position to occupy within the context of a "scientific" structuralism. Be that as it may, if theory is a problem searching for an explanation, Metz here redraws a fairly cloudy picture in sharp outline. In so doing, he shifts the discursive landscape and remaps the entire territory of the aesthetic discourse onto the discourse of signification. Where before the persistent problem was "Is film an art, or has it transformed the concept of art?", now the problem is: "How do images convey meaning, or in what ways can images be considered as signs?" This question lies at the heart of the semiological enterprise and is the key to its aspirations to become a general science. If linguistics is only a subdomain of a more general semiology, then the conceptual domain of speech, and the scientific foundation of linguistics, must be extendible to images, and especially, moving images. This turning of the question shifts all the centers of gravity of the earlier discourse; it displaces elements in their orbits and creates new sources of illumination, lighting up new features of the landscape and throwing shadows over previously prominent landmarks. With what would soon be recognized as Metz's characteristic precision and attention to detail, the very long prologue to the essay works back through the history of film theory as it was known at the time but with a specific agenda in mind. The prologue focalizes a persistent question of earlier writings on film, though running in the background, as it were, and brings it forward. Again, one outcome of this move is to recast retroactively this discourse as "film theory," indeed to see in a variety of otherwise eclectic accounts the problem of language and signification in film, and to assess them as false starts or

incomplete movements waiting for the proper general concepts and methods to place them in a framework where they can be articulated and resolved, moving forward in a genuinely dialectical fashion.

Here key differences become apparent. More often than not the aesthetic discourse proceeds through an immanent analysis. It begins with the idea that filmic expression has a specific identity anchored in materials, processes, or automatisms that belong only to film. Semiology extends these medium specificity arguments for a certain time only finally to renounce them in the second semiology, whose turning point is Metz's *Language and Cinema*. However, Metz's earlier essay produces another, more violent mutation of perspective, and one that accounted for the resistance to semiology by more aesthetically inclined thinkers. In a very real sense, film as such was no longer the object of theory (and in *Language and Cinema* that object will entirely disappear into a conceptual, virtual space). Rather, the discourse of signification begins from a general yet precise methodological perspective — that of the "science of signs" — of which film or photography will only be a part of the universe of cultural signification. In the context of the EPHE, this science was forged in the commitment to linguistics and marked by Saussure's unaccomplished dream of creating a general theory of signs. In this respect, semiological film theory was initially considered as only one component or sub-domain of a general account of signs. However, if photography or film were of special interest to both Barthes and Metz in the early sixties, this is because they posed a special, and in many respects intractable problem for a general and inclusive theory of signs, at least from a Saussurean perspective.

As I have remarked in several contexts, the aesthetic discourse inherited from the philosophy of art a system of categories that divided and ranked art forms according to criteria of spatial or temporal expression. Among the many disorienting features of film was to present itself as an uncanny hybrid of space and time, thus producing the need for

new concepts and categories, and in some cases, unsettling and remapping the idea of the aesthetic itself. Being forged in the history of linguistics (running parallel in a curious coincidence with the history of film), semiology confronted in film another intractable division, that of *speech* and *image*. Through its commutation tests and concepts of double articulation, syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis, denotation and connotation, messages and codes, semiology was born in a scientific context confident that its analysis of speech or natural languages was extendible into anthropological and literary structures of expression. The open question in the heroic era of structuralism was whether these concepts and categories would prove pertinent or even applicable to more general forms of expression, especially analogical and pictorial images. Or even, and this is the question that Metz's essay both wants to answer and finds nearly impossible to answer, is the very notion of "film language," so prominent among the Soviet theorists and in the fad for grammars of film in the 1950s, a legitimate formulation, or is it in fact an oxymoron? If the image cannot be considered a sign, and if narrative film cannot be analyzed as a language or aesthetic discourse, then the scientific project of a general semiology, a complete theoretical account of signifying phenomena, was an impossible fantasy. This is the project that would preoccupy Metz throughout the sixties, which would bring him into conflict and debate with Umberto Eco and Pier Paolo Pasolini, and which would in fact create the discursive genre of film theory within the context of the larger episteme laid in place by the more general history of structuralism.

Metz's essay is thus the launching pad for a new sense of theory, marked by the adoption of a vast new range of concepts, a shift in rhetoric and positions of address, and new institutional contexts. Film becomes an academic enterprise, subject to scholarly debate in university seminars and colloquia by trained researchers, in ways that presuppose a common methodological background or framework, even if that framework is open to revision. But here there is another important point to emphasize.

Before the discourse of signification there is no "film theory"; there are only aesthetic writings on film. Aristarco's rhetorical move is ratified thirteen years later by the discourse of signification; or rather, by the early sixties the invention of theory as a discourse in the context of structuralism has fully and invisibly accomplished a retrojection, both carving out and bridging over an epistemic breach, wherein theory enters the ordinary language of academic discourse as if it were always there, as if, from the time of Canudo's earliest essays, we were and had always been "theorists."

We find ourselves again beginning with an ending. The conclusion to "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" comes round again to the opening to underscore the stakes of Metz's arguments. (It also anticipates in interesting ways the Introduction to *Language and Cinema*.) It is certainly the case that the essay remains a foundational text, laying out the elements for a semiology of cinema, performing for film studies the work that Barthes's "Elements of Semiology" performed for the study of literature and of culture in general. Metz is concerned not only with working through and critiquing metaphorical uses of the concept of language in relation to film form and narration, but also with making more conceptually precise how one may speak of filmic meaning within the conceptual vocabulary of linguistics and semiology, and finally, with how film both challenges and enlarges the prospects for achieving a general semiology of culture.

These accomplishments would have been enough to assure Metz a place in the history of modern film theory, and this with his first professional academic essay at the age of 33. But half of the text is fully devoted to another question, and one not often discussed: the specificity of theory as a concept. Just as Metz is clearing the ground and making more precise how and under what conditions the concept of language can be applied to the study of meaning in film, he is also concerned with mapping precisely appropriate uses of the term "theory." Here Metz is equally convinced that there is a literature or language of theory, and that not all writings on film are theoretical; thus,

his implicit desire to establish the parameters of theory as a discursive genre. Recall that, with the exception of Aristarco, the term as such has up till now, 1964, been deployed only infrequently, irregularly, and inconsistently; no one embraces it, or if they do, they equivocate even in the larger context of structuralism. Through the discourse of signification, Metz draws the contours of the concept, gives it form, shape, and appearance through a nominative process. Hereafter, vernacular uses of the term will become less habitual as *theory* comes to denominate a specific kind of practice and a more or less well defined genre of (academic) discourse.

Metz concludes his essay then asserting that up until 1964 there have been four ways of approaching film study: film criticism, cinema history, filmology, and "theories of cinema." (The scare quotes are Metz's.) While the history and criticism of film must certainly contribute to a complete understanding of the cinematographic institution, they are not the central focus of Metz's interest. Nevertheless, what Metz calls the "theory of cinema" is less a present discourse than a historical one (if one is past, another new one must be emerging), whose great exponents were Eisenstein, Balázs, and Bazin. Metz characterizes this approach as "a fundamental reflection (on the cinema or on film, depending on the case) whose originality, interest, significance and, in sum, whose very definition is tied to the fact that it was also made from within the world of cinema: 'theorists' were either cineastes, enthusiastic amateurs, or critics […]."[13] In contrast, filmology approached the cinema from the outside, carrying out research on cinematographic facts through the domains of psychology, psychiatry, aesthetics, sociology, and biology, whose fundamental figures are Gilbert Cohen-Séat and Edgar Morin. No doubt, many of the concerns of film theory and filmology are complementary as represented by what Metz calls the border cases of Rudolf Arnheim, Jean Epstein, and Albert Laffay. Both approaches are indispensable to the territory of activities that Metz wishes to mark out, a synthesis no doubt possible since it is nearly accomplished in the

first volume of Jean Mitry's *Aesthetic and Psychology of Cinema*. But there is something missing in this story. Despite the variety and repetitiveness of the appeals to the idea of language in theoretical writing on film, and given the fact that no less a figure that Cohen-Séat underlined the importance of the study of the filmic fact as discourse, there have been few points of contact between linguistics and semiology, and the study of film. That linguistics has ignored film is not unreasonable. But here Metz has a more daring move in mind. The time has come to bring together in a synthetic way the work of the principle theoreticians of film, filmological research, and the vocabulary and methods of linguistics as a way of finally realizing

> in the domain of cinema the great Saussurian project of a study of the mechanisms through which individuals transmit human significations in human societies. The master of Geneva did not live long enough to witness the importance that cinema would have for our world. No one contests this importance. We have to make a semiology of cinema [*Il faut faire la sémiologie du cinéma*].[14]

Curiously, the specificity of the study of film would seem to disappear in the accomplishment of a general semiology; at the same time, the project of semiology cannot move forward without a passage through the problem of how meaning is transmitted through images.

This is a thorny problem that requires some tricky conceptual gymnastics in the essay. We will eventually find our way back to them. But for now let us return to the idea that Metz is trying to survey a vast landscape, in both film study and linguistics, to lay out the perimeters of a new and more contained conceptual space. For the moment, he is less certain of what it is than what it is not. It borders on history and criticism and draws support from them but at the same time it is spatially distinct from them. It

appears to be temporally distinct from "film theory" as a historical discourse; at the same time, coming from outside the cinematographic world, filmology is also not "film theory." What is, in fact, the discursive position that Metz is trying to construct for himself and for the academic study of film?

This question in fact functions as a sort of enunciative a priori, structuring the conceptual and rhetorical space that links "Cinéma: langue ou langage?", "On the Classical Theory of Film," and the Introduction to *Language and Cinema* into a common discursive network. In each iteration of the question, in pursuing a drive towards theory, Metz recurrently finds himself equally confronting the idea that film theory does not yet exist; rather, we find ourselves in a middle period where at best we are only on the way to theory, and that in most respects what will be finally accomplished is not a "film theory" but rather an incorporation or subsumption of the filmic fact into the general domain of a semiology of culture.

This untimeliness of theory as a conceptual and rhetorical position — always to come and always past, never fully present as an epistemological perspective — is on full display in Metz's writings on Mitry. The interest of these essays lies primarily neither in Metz's clear and useful account of Mitry's books, nor in his criticisms of certain of Mitry's concepts, but rather in Metz's attentiveness, striking in its perspicuity, to a certain concept of theory. Through Metz, film theory achieves a certain presence, stature, or standing. There is confidence here that film theory has a structure and a history, that it develops and evolves according to a definable arc, and that it seeks a form, which it has not yet attained. For Metz, Mitry's books are thus a stage or stepping stone in this progressive arc of film theory. They have an intermediate status — summing up and concluding one phase and opening out to another — and an uncertain temporality. They have deep roots in the past, and thus belong conceptually in most respects to classical film theory, yet in their drive towards building a global and

synthetic account of meaning and the moving image, Mitry's work anticipates a theory yet to come. (It is significant that Mitry produces an "aesthetic"; Metz calls this work a "theory.") Thirteen years after Aristarco's pioneering book, film theory gels, thickens, and begins to appear in clear outline as the possibility of a systematic and unifying conceptual framework for the study of cinema.

In "On the Classical Theory of Cinema," Metz also outlines a historiography of theory: that theory is a way of thinking about film that has a history, that it has had a "classic" phase, which is coming to a close in Mitry's work, a future that can contribute to a global account of the social life of signs, and a present though intermediate phase, which is laying the conceptual foundation for a possible general semiology of the cinema, though in a fragmentary and piecemeal fashion. (Though Metz himself does not say so, this vision of theory does not arise, actually, from the history and discursive structure of aesthetic writing on film, but rather from a larger discursive territory — that of the history of structuralism, already anticipated in Russian Formalism, and especially Eikhenbaum's "Theory of the 'Formal' Method.") Metz's 1971 presentation of the two texts on Mitry, contemporaneous with the writing and publication of *Language and Cinema*, is striking in this respect. In a few short paragraphs, Metz takes pains to lay down definitive historical markers, so many stages in the theory of film marked by discursive fissures and breaks that overlap in uneven strata. The first section of Metz's 1972 collection — on the classical theory of cinema, and in particular, the works of Jean Mitry — is meant to give an account of how problems of theory were posed in the years of publication of Mitry's two volumes, 1963 and 1966. Metz wants to put into perspective the "classical" period of film theory (the parentheses are his own, a doubt or hesitation concerning the temporality and conceptual cohesion of such a concept), of which Mitry's books are at once the apogee and closing gesture, and from which they draw their conceptual and

historical significance. The books thus define a precise historical segment in the stations of theory:

> It was before the theoretical renewal of 1968-69; just before and in another sense, well before. It was well after the great theoretical era of silent film. It was just after the Bazinian wave. As for filmology, one no longer spoke of it. A hollow period [*période creuse*] [...]: there was not enough interest in theory to know who was already part of it, and who was then passing into a vast forgetting."[15]

The lack of interest in Mitry's important books, Metz argues, is caused by their uncertain historical position — they bear witness to the importance of a past tradition that had reached its point of culmination, and having thus exhausted itself had also outlived its audience.

Metz puts the "classical" period within quotation marks not only to signal its temporal uncertainty (How far into the present has it dilated? How deep into the past has it contracted?) but also to clear a space for a new discursive terrain. Through Mitry, the classical discourse has reached its point of culmination in the present but it is not part of the present; it cannot find a resting place within the modern or actual discourse, the discourse of signification, but must remain disjunct from it on several levels. The deep irony of this disjunctiveness is Metz's recognition of the many points of contact between Mitry's work and the emerging discourse of signification.

This hole or hollow in the progress of film theory ("*période creuse*") would not long remain empty. Metz quickly notes that his own first steps in conceiving the project of a film semiology, "Le cinéma: langue ou langage," was published in 1964 in between Mitry's two volumes. ("Une étape" is contemporaneous with that essay, as I have already noted.) But despite the novelty of semiology and the possibility it presents for

real theoretical advancement, Metz reiterates his sentiment that it cannot be considered as an absolute beginning for film theory. In its inaugural moment, semiology must take into account, reconsider, and reevaluate what preceded it and made it possible. This task is neither an afterthought nor a supplement, Metz emphasizes, but rather engages directly the value of theory itself.

A single page, then, and apart from a foreword the first page of Metz's book, but one can already begin to see clearly his conception of the place of semiology in the broader historical perspective of film theory. What is not so clear is how the gesture of placement itself constructs a history of theory with divisions, continuities and discontinuities, way stations and mile markers, retrospective glances and retrojecting movements. Classical writers were on the way to theory, as it were, but could take it only so far. Writing in 1971, Metz believes he sees a future for theory, a renewal and setting of new directions. In between falls a period of transition, a time of taking stock, clearing terrain, and of clearly establishing principles of pertinence that can make real theoretical work possible. Among the other hopes placed in it, film semiology was thus charged with the task of finally building the foundations of a film theory that would contribute to the larger project of constructing a general science of signs.

But what in fact are the criteria defining theory in this sense? How is it different from previous writing on film, and how does it anticipate its place in the general, critical semiology to come?

Mitry's conceptual concerns here overlap with those of the younger Metz and of semiology in other interesting ways, above all with respect to questions of analogy, representation, the "coefficient of reality" attributed to film, and film's phenomenological character. In fact, these are all qualities of photography and film that would rub up against and resist the incorporation of mechanically produced images within a linguistically inspired account of signs in both Barthes's and Metz's texts of the early

sixties. Metz remarks upon this as a problem for the "first semiology," which constructed an intractable opposition between the analogical and the coded.[16] As Metz relates,

> The first semiology could not conceive that analogy itself might result from certain codes, whose proper action is to produce the impression of their absence. And further, today still, if one wishes to critique the illusion of reality, is it not necessary to take the fullest account of the reality of that illusion? Thus a gap still resides between arbitrary codes and analogical codes, even if the latter, precisely, are at present conceived of as codes.[17]

In retrospect, one of the most striking aspects of Metz's first text on Mitry, "Une étape dans la réflexion sur le cinéma," is not only his suggestion of a clear historical transition between two ways of thinking about the cinema but also his sense that this thought distributes itself historically in distinct if sometimes overlapping and interpenetrating genres. Metz writes of Mitry's book that "This work, taken on its own terms, represents the most serious effort of general synthesis to date of which cinema has been the object."[18] In its breadth, ambition, and logical structure, one imagines it suggests for the first time the real possibility of a general and synthetic theory of film.

If Mitry's book embodies both a point of culmination and a distinct division, how is it alike or different from other texts that historically considered themselves, or were considered, "theories of cinema"? Metz sets aside journalistic or anecdotal accounts as well as film history to first describe as theory general accounts of film itself divided onto two lines:

> The first emerges from what one calls the "theory of cinema": written by cineastes or critics, or by enthusiastic amateurs, they place themselves in any case within the

> cinematographic institution and consider the cinema first as an *art*. The others, of more recent appearance, adopt the "filmological" perspective: approached from the outside, the cinema is grasped as a *fact* with psychological, sociological, and physiological dimensions, and — more rarely — aesthetic dimensions.[19]

Whereas they might have complemented one another, theory and filmology have, more often than not, experienced tense relations. Perhaps they are two sides or dimensions of a single theoretical approach? They are alike in their generality, Metz offers, as well as in their distinctiveness from what Metz calls "differential studies" of individual filmmakers, genres, or national cinemas. "How can one understand the cinema without being a bit of a 'filmologist'," Metz asks, "since film puts to work phenomena that go well beyond it? And how to understand it without being a bit of a 'theoretician' because the cinema is nothing without the cineastes who make it?"[20] Among Mitry's great achievements is that he brings these two dimensions together in a single work by a thinker who is also a maker. Moreover, in its great synthetic arc, Mitry's book establishes a line of thought and a network of filiation and common concerns that reasserts, once again, the emerging canon of classical film theory: Balázs, Arnheim, Jean Epstein, Eisenstein, Bazin, Albert Laffay, Gilbert Cohen-Séat, and Edgar Morin. One finds conjoined within Mitry, then, the aesthetic or "theoretical" line of classical film theory and the scientific or "filmological" line that is a sort of precursor to modern film theory.

Later in the review, Metz characterizes the classical period as a time of violent polemics and blind combat, of too general analysis and contradictory claims for the metaphysical essence of cinema. Although Metz would later revise this opinion, Eisenstein and the Soviets come in for particular criticism for their lack of rigorous terminology, approximative and inexact analysis, and avant-garde enthusiasms rendered in an "artistic" style. In contrast, Metz offers that Mitry's book marks the

passing of this era and the emergence of a new phase of reflection on film, opening

> an epoch of precise research, which even if its objectives are general, will no longer be vague or uncertain in its methodological reasoning […]. This book has brilliantly concluded an epoch that was sometimes brilliant but which risked aging badly if prolonged immoderately. *Aesthetics and Psychology of Cinema* opens a reflection on film to the perspectives of a new epoch, which will have the face of those who make it.[21]

This new era, of course, is the era of signs and meaning, and if Mitry marks the point of termination of one line of thought, moving towards theory, perhaps Metz marks the beginning of another.

We are finally approaching the beginning of "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" The essay is divided into two, almost equal halves: the implicit concern of the first half is to review the history of film theory and to construct an idea of what it means to have a theory; the second half works through methodological problems of applying linguistic concepts to film. It is revealing that most glosses on this foundational essay ignore the first twenty-five pages as if there were something there that was inassimilable or perturbing to the project of the second half, which lays down the ground work for a semiology of film. There are perhaps two reasons why the first half of the essay seems so out of place, or perhaps out of time, a long delay or digression before Metz gets on to the presumed semiological heart of his argument. To understand the first reason means comprehending that Metz himself does not know or has not yet found the place or position from which a theory can be articulated. It is as if one were trying to speak without yet knowing the grammatical rules of a language or even its pronominal functions. Metz is searching, trying to find his place in theory without yet being certain

of what defines the epistemological stakes and value of theory construction. The ground continually shifts beneath his feet as he seeks out a stable foundation on which to build a new epistemological perspective (the semiological) alongside an ethical analysis. In fact, it is this ethical dimension of Metz's questing for theory that seems indigestible though in hindsight it may be the most original and fascinating line of thought in his argument. The reflexivity of these pages is dizzying as Metz tries to put in place a vision or concept of theory that does not yet exist as such, and at the same time also reflects continually on the value of theory as an enterprise. Though Metz is no Nietzschean, one sees him here in almost a Zarathustrian mode, asking, "What does the 'theorist' want, and what does he will in wanting it?"

The second reason derives from the place the essay itself occupies in the history of film theory: not only does "theory" as such not yet exist as a concept (we almost literally see it here in a process of discursive emergence), one also cannot yet place it in a *history*. It is as if the concept cannot emerge without having a certain historical consciousness of itself, heretofore lacking. Theory's archive does not yet exist. It must be reassembled and evaluated from scattered texts in multiple languages; one must make of it a corpus, defining within it salient questions, problems, and debates with their own internal regularities and zones of classification.

This historical self-consciousness of theory, and the desire to assemble critically an archive from which the potential for theory construction can be adjudicated, is a fairly unique accomplishment for the period. By the same token, this sense of a history of (film) theory could only occur under two conditions. It requires, first, that there is a sense of a canon of aesthetic writing on film as a sort of prelude to theory. Filmology by no means provided this canon nor is there yet textual evidence that Metz was aware of Aristarco's *Storia*. However, both polyglot and polymath, and an intensely curious and exacting researcher, Metz constructs his own canon as it were, from German and English as well

as French sources. Metz's canon conforms in interesting though coincidental ways with the first canons of Daniel Talbot and Richard Dyer MacCann, though with an exception: Metz is refining the definition of theory and who is capable of constructing theories; his principle of selection is guided by a concept of theory where earlier collections are not.[22] Second, this canon must define a certain kind of historical space, where there is not only "theory" but competing theories and ideas, grouped together historically. Francesco Casetti has commented astutely that theories in the classical period were local formations contained in distinct social and national communities that were rarely in direct contact with one another. In the post-war period, a new discursive environment occurs, where not only is a new idea of theory coming into existence, but where there is also the awareness of an *international* history of film theory comprised from an archive whose fundamental texts are now co-present, spatially and historically, and in dialogue with another. Moreover, here the syncretism and eclecticism of the classical era is defined retrospectively from the point of view of an epistemological space where structuralism follows on the heels of filmology, and where a unified and globally applicable theory in the human sciences seems possible. In constructing a space for theory, Metz is clearing the grounds, shifting back through the history of writing about film to sculpt a concept with precision, to review its possible senses, and to reorganize it in a unified field held together with well formed and consensually accepted principles of pertinence.

We have finally arrived, through a series of loops and digressions, though important ones, at the first pages of "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" Most astonishing in retrospect is how Metz begins emphatically with an implied *ethical* question: from what place does theory speak? In an essay that wants to explore what a theory of language can offer film, the stakes first unfold in a critical evaluation of the language of theory and what theory values in taking film as an object of knowledge. In this respect, it is odd that so much of 1970's theory opposed Metz to André Bazin, for in the opening

paragraph of the essay the cards of the argument are fully stacked in Bazin's favor. Citing a 1959 interview with Roberto Rossellini in *Cahiers du cinéma*, Metz observes that at the very turning point of modern cinema in Europe, Rossellini speaks of the great silent age of Soviet montage and the idea of editing as an all powerful manipulation of meaning as things of the past. The era of montage was an indispensable phase of cinematic creation but now it is giving way to other strategies, and other aesthetic approaches, to reality. Here, Rossellini (and Metz) might as well be quoting chapter and verse from Bazin's "Evolution of the Language of Cinema." Montage was also thought a theory, Metz suggests, not only because it was one of the first sustained concepts of cinema but also because of its scientific pretensions. Trained as an engineer, the young Eisenstein came to believe in the possibility of engineering reality and subjectivity through the reconstruction of film language. And in this respect, a certain concept of montage became co-extensive with the cinema itself in a long line of influential writers: not only Eisenstein but also Pudovkin, Alexandrov, Dziga Vertov, Kuleshov, Balázs, Renato May, Rudolf Arhneim, Raymond J. Spottiswoode, André Levinson, Abel Gance, and Jean Epstein. Pudovkin introduces yet another variant in the discussion — of the relation between shot and montage, where the shot is only an element of montage whose sense is found in the whole of the construction, not in the content of an individual part. Metz calls this a fanaticism for montage, whose adherents refuse doggedly and categorically any form of descriptive realism to the cinema. Two problems thus arise about the status and location of language in cinema, especially in relation to the shot and to the referential status of profilmic space. Eisenstein's process is one of fragmentation and reconstitution. That an uninterrupted segment would have its own sense and beauty is unthinkable. In the early Eisenstein, the profilmic space is a raw material to be dissected and reconfigured into a new series whose meaning is unambiguous. Thus for Metz, "Eisenstein does not miss any opportunity to devalue, to

the profit of concern for sequential arrangement, any art that would invest itself in the modeling of the segments themselves."[23]

Metz thus characterizes the era of montage as being dominated by a spirit of manipulation and of engineering the spirit. The theme of the ethical dimension of theory starts to emerge along these lines, and very soon it will be clear that Metz is contrasting two forms of life or modes of existence characteristic of his modernity — the structural and the phenomenological — in order to explore how an *aesthetic* semiology comes to designate a third path inspired by the phenomenological aesthetics of Mikel Dufrenne, and to a certain extent, the early Barthes. In the opening pages of this essay, an unquestioned foundational text in the history of film theory, what we find then is rather a strong ethical statement, which continues into the second section. The question of film language has hardly yet been asked. The central problem here seems to be the value of the shot of whatever duration in relation to the sequence, and then the question of where meaning is expressed in the composed film? What is most striking in the second section is how the ethical question, rather than the theoretical one, advances; or yet more complexly, how the ethical and the theoretical advance in turns like two strands that weave one around the other. The engineering spirit of sovereign montage has not fallen into the past except in the cinema, Metz asserts; instead, it finds itself reborn in the new cultural attitudes of the human sciences. Where one would think that Metz's ambit is to present the value of structural linguistics for the study of film, one finds instead a heartfelt plea to soften the structuralist activity by bringing it into contact with modern film, that is, with art. What links the Soviet obsession with decoupage and montage to a certain modern attitude in the human sciences is a passion for manipulating elements through dismantling and reconstructing them — Metz calls this a "jeu de mecano," playing with Erector Sets, a childhood preoccupation that carries forward into the more adult activities of "engineers, cyberneticians, indeed ethnographers or linguists […]."[24]

So here, slowly and subtly, before it is even apparent that Metz is addressing the question of *langue* or *langage*, the problem of linguistics, and of the multiple and confusing overlapping senses of "language," weave themselves into his text. Film should be confronted as a language, but what kind of language, with what sort of linguistics, and from what perspective? Indeed what languages of theory must be spoken or rewritten to examine the possible senses of language in relation cinematographic art? With undisguised irony, Metz associates information theory and distributional analysis with playing with model trains: disassembling, classifying, and reassembling always interchangeable parts — rails, straight, curving, and forked — into ever renewable configurations. Though himself trained in structural linguistics, what Metz is straining towards slowly is a deep criticism of modern linguistics for denaturing and de-aestheticizing language. No doubt, like boxes of rails and connectors in a model train set, ordinary language may be characterized by fairly strict kinds of paradigmatic choices that yield richly varied syntagmatic chains, all of which are open to modelization. (This, in point of fact, is close to what Saussure referred to as *langue*, an implicit and restricted set of invariant operations underlying mechanisms of sense in ordinary language.) But there is still something in language that *resists* modelization and the engineering of meaning, something that remains open and ambiguous, only ever partially and incompletely coded, and something also that sticks to the world of experience and is not so easily reduced to a virtual system. Information theory wants to reduce the thickness of language to a message, because language

> pulls along too much "substance" within itself, it is not totally organizable. Its double substantiality, phonic and semantic (that is to say, two times human, by the body and the mind) resists complete pigeon-holing [*résiste à l'exhaustivité de la mise en grilles*]. Furthermore, has the language that we speak become — quite

> paradoxically when one thinks of it — what these American logicians call "natural" or "ordinary" language, whereas in their eyes no adjective is required when they speak of their machine languages, more perfectly binary than Jakobson's best analyses. The machine has stripped human language of its bones, sliced it up into neat sections where no flesh adheres. These "binary digits," perfect segments, now only need to be assembled [*montés*] (programmed) in the required order. The perfection of the code is triumphantly achieved in the transmission of the *message*. This is the great celebration of the syntagmatic mind.[25]

In case one misses his meaning, Metz continues by focalizing in the "linguistic machine" a variety of modern preoccupations with automatization, commodification, and the over-processing of raw nature into denatured products where finally, "The prosthesis is to the leg what the cybernetic message is to the human sentence."[26]

In the opening sections of his essay, then, Metz is objecting to two kinds of theory, in film and linguistics, which are connected by a preoccupation with "engineering" and a way of construing language. What Metz is searching for now is a theoretical alternative both to montage "theory" and to hard structuralist analysis. In hard structuralism language is treated as a product, Metz asserts, or more clearly, a raw material that must be refined in a well-defined process: one analyses by isolating constitutive elements of paradigms, then these elements are redistributed into isofunctional categories ("straight rails to one side, curved rails to the other"). However, the moment that one anticipates in theory,

> which one thought of from the beginning, is the syntagmatic moment. One reconstitutes a double of the first object, a double totally thinkable since it is a pure product of thought: the intelligibility of the object has become itself an object.

> And one has not in the least considered that the natural object has served as *model*. Quite to the contrary, the constructed object is the object-model; the natural object has only to hold up to it. Thus the linguist tries to apply the givens of information theory to human language, and what the ethnographer will call "model" is not in the least the reality examined but rather the formalization established from it.[27]

Reality has disappeared into its simulacrum.

Published in 1964 in the rapidly ascendant arc of structuralism, and in the flagship journal of the semiological enterprise in France, this paragraph must have been stunning, even bewildering to some readers, for Metz continues by linking information theory to French structuralism itself. No less a figure than Levi-Strauss is chided for "passifying the real as 'non-pertinent'."[28] This theory of abstracting and modeling the real is then linked to the structuralist activity as defined by Roland Barthes, Metz's mentor at the *École Pratique*, who is himself criticized because his aim is not to represent the real, but to simulate it. The structuralist activity

> does not try to imitate the concrete face of the initial object, it is not "poesis" or "pseudo-physis"; it is a product of simulation, a product of "techne." In sum, the result of a manipulation. Structural skeleton of the object erected into a second object, always a sort of prosthesis.[29]

Metz, soon to be considered the godfather of cine-structuralism, has here retreated from the core concepts of structuralism. Or perhaps he is trying to imagine another kind of structuralism, and another path to theory, one where the hard structuralism of Levi-Strauss can be softened in the passage through aesthetics in general and film in particular?

After Levi-Strauss and Barthes, the next link in Metz's chain of argumentation is Eisenstein, considered as a hard structuralist *avant la lettre*. And in a similar fashion, film *theory* must seek still another path, not in a return to the filmic past, to the engineering or manipulative attitude that now, ironically, replicates itself in hard structuralism, but rather one in relation to modern cinema, which presents an ethos alternative to the machinic mind. Rossellini is again the avatar of a new way of thinking. "To Rossellini who exclaimed: 'Things are there. Why manipulate them?'," Metz writes,

> the Soviet might have responded, "Things are there. They must be manipulated." Eisenstein never shows the course of the world, but always, as he himself said, the course of the world refracted through an "ideological point of view," entirely thought and *signifying* in each of its parts. *Meaning* does not suffice; one had to add signification to it [*Le sens ne suffit pas, il faut que s'y ajoute la signification*].[30]

This is not a political contrast, as Metz makes very clear, but it is an ethical one, and one with theoretical consequences. If Eisenstein veers too far towards the materialist side of modernity, the scientific and engineering mentality, on the phenomenological side, Bazin's desire for a direct contact with things through film is too idealist. At stake in this contrast is how one approaches the concept of sense or meaning in relation to signification. At this very moment in the text, semiology makes a surprise appearance as an intermediary possibility, perhaps bridging the materialist and the phenomenological attitudes, or in fact, softening structuralism with phenomenology. Rather than a direct contact of consciousness with things, or a deconstruction and remaking of meaning in a simulacrum, semiology, Metz argues, is concerned with something else:

> what I call the "sense" of the event narrated by the cineaste would be, in any case, a meaning *for someone* (no others exist). But from the point of view of expressive mechanisms, one can distinguish deliberate signification from the "natural" meaning of things and beings (continuous, global, without a distinct signifier, thus the joy read on a child's face). The latter would be inconceivable if we did not already live in a world of meaning, but it is also only conceivable as a distinctive organizing act through which meaning is redistributed: signification loves to cut up precisely discontinuous signifieds that correspond to as many discrete signifiers.[31]

In this Eisenstein goes too far, not aesthetically but theoretically. Referring to the magnificent segment of the stone lions rising up in protest in *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), Metz argues that "It wasn't enough for Eisenstein to have composed a splendid sequence, he intended in addition that this be a fact of language [*langue*]."[32] How far can the passion for construction go, Metz protests? One variation on the imagination of the sign would be a cybernetic art finally reconciled with science, a vision of poetry programmable by machines. This is an extreme example of a certain orientation of modernity, one of its possible paths, where whether carried forward into aesthetic creation or into cybernetics or structural science, leads to dubious results.

There is a genealogical line, then, that Metz draws from the modernity of sovereign montage to that of Barthes's vision of "structural man." Along this line, it must be said, there are many points of attraction for Metz. Both *cinéphile chevronné* and structural linguist, admirer of Eisenstein (in theory and practice) no less than Rossellini, adept at phenomenology no less than semiology, how to counter-balance all these opposing forces? And how to do so in theory and through language? Indeed, how to seek out in language — both a theoretical conception of language and in a certain conception of theoretical language — a place that reconciles these interests? How to find one's distinct

place in theory? In implicitly asking these questions, Metz is forging for himself here a new form of life in theory.

But to return to my reading, here Metz notes two reservations with respect to his criticisms of structural man or the "syntagmatic mind." The historical existence of Constructivism in film and film theory waxes and declines well before the emergence of structural man, who appears after the Liberation in France. In fact, the historical situation is yet more complex. The emergence of a Formalist or structuralist attitude is contemporaneous with the triumphant period of Soviet cinema and aesthetics. The two evolve in tandem and in close contact with one another, especially in the pages of Lef and through the work of Eikenbaum, Osip Brik, Victor Shlovsky, and Roman Jakobson in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Moreover, even if the period of sovereign montage is thought to be concluded, structuralism in the thirties was just entering a period of gestation before arriving with Levi-Strauss, Jakobson, and André Martinet in France, all fresh from their encounters in New York. This does not detract from Metz's main point, however. In the historical moment when a certain mentality (call this from our perspective, a certain form of life in language and in theory, but what Metz calls an "intellect-agent") becomes conscious of itself and gains confidence in itself, it deserts the cinema, where a new form of modernism is asserting itself in neorealism and the French New Wave. Moreover, the cinematic domain is too small; structuralism needed to deploy its forces on larger territories. It is thus understandable that at the beginning structuralism would have to feel its way slowly toward a field so rich and complex as film.

But here Metz's second reservation arises. Metz finds it paradoxical that the cinema would be considered such a rich domain for the early syntagmatic mind of the 1920s, for it seems to be in conflict with the analogical power of the film image as well as its phenomenological sensitivity for the real — what Metz calls a continuous and global image without a distinct signifier, which is resistant, in fact, to strict codification. Even

from a semiological perspective, Metz's bets for a new film theory, indeed, for modern theory as such, are placed on the real, or at least, a certain image of the real:

> Is it not the peculiarity of the camera to restore to us the object in its perceptual quasi-literality, even if what one gives it to film is only a fragment pre-selected from a global situation? The close-up itself, the absolute weapon of the montage theorists in their struggle against visual naturalism, is it not at the smallest scale just as much respectful of the face of the object as a wide shot? Is not the cinema the triumph of this "pseudo-physis" that the manipulative mind precisely refuses? Is it not based completely on the famous "impression of reality" that no one contests, which many have studied, and to which it owes simultaneously its "realist" tendencies and its aptitude for staging the fabulous?[33]

And here is the dilemma in which Metz finds himself, the double bind that requires a solution in theory — what is most modern in theory, structuralism, finds itself in conflict with what is most modern in cinema, Rossellini or Bazin's phenomenology of the real. And indeed film (or more precisely, the analogical image) — which might be thought as marginal to the larger enterprise of structuralism whose concern is with all of culture and all of language — will soon become the focal point through which semiology must distinguish itself from linguistics. The image is in conflict with language, and what is most advanced in theory is at odds with the most powerful aesthetic concepts of modern cinema. In league in many respects with Barthes's writing on photography in the same period, Metz must now remodel a concept of language to find a new way of approaching semiology — not a science (filmology), but something methodologically rigorous and conceptually precise; not a hard structuralism, but a soft one.

From a semiological perspective, film theory could only have a paradoxical status in its current state. Given Metz's view that the cinema does not lend itself well to manipulation or to the engineering mind, why did it generate so much enthusiasm for certain "theorists of construction" [*"théoriciens de l'agencement"*] like Eisenstein and the Russian Formalists? The great attraction of film for Constructivism was based on a fundamental conceptual error in Metz's opinion. Like a language, film seemed to have fundamental and distinct levels of articulation — from the photograms on the film strip, to shots, to sequences, and to larger structural parts — that could be broken down, reconfigured, and rearticulated. Why should one not see a meaningful system of articulations there? Metz continues in observing that

> the error was tempting: seen from a certain angle, the cinema has all the appearances of what it is not. It seems to be a kind of language; one saw there a *langue*. It authorized and even required decoupage and montage: one believed that its organization, so manifestly syntagmatic, could only proceed from a *prerequisite* code, even if presented as not yet fully conscious of itself. The film is too clearly a message for one to suppose it without code.[34]

This is perhaps the moment to follow Metz in a short digression. The problem of the essay — cinema, *langue ou langage*? — so limpidly posed in French has always presented obstacles to English readers, above all in translating the term *langue*. *Langue* is not exactly speech nor is it language. In a footnote to these paragraphs, Metz explains the basic conceptual distinction where for Saussurianism *langue* is a highly organized code, while language covers a zone of interest more amorphous and more vast:

> Saussure said that language is the sum of *langue* and speech. Charles Bally or Émile Benveniste's notion of the "language fact" goes in the same direction. If one wants to define things and not words, one would say that language, in its most extensive reality, appears every time that something is said with the intention of saying [...]. No doubt, the distinction between verbal language (language properly speaking) and other "semes" (sometimes referred to as "language in the figurative sense") imposes itself on the mind and must not be mixed. But it is [also] normal that semiology would take an interest in all "languages" without prejudging from the beginning the extension and limits of the semic domain. Semiology can and must draw important support from linguistics, but the two cannot be confused.[35]

Two problems arise from this terminological digression. On the side of code, *langue* is neither speech nor language, nor is anything gained from opposing natural and aesthetic languages. Metz needs something more here than Formalism's main principle of pertinence, the distinction between practical and poetic language. Secondly, semiology must deal with a vast range of meaningful phenomena (semes), many of which are not linguistic in nature. Yet, as a science of meaning linguistics has not been surpassed, and must still nourish the concepts and methods of semiology. The contrast between *langue* and *parole*, or code and message, is not only a key principle of pertinence for Saussure's linguistics, it is also essential to his imagination of a more general semiology. Message, speech, language, and seme are all *actualized* instances of meaning, but the *langue* underlying them is *virtual*. Where *langue* is so close in French to "tongue," or "national language," here it is more like a virtual force, nowhere present in any instance of signification, yet at the same time underlying all meaning as the structured system of differences from which an expression gains and transmits sense.

Herein lies a conceptual confusion where all the various "grammars" of film and treatises on "film language" have come to grief. Because films are understood, and are repeatedly understood, one searches in them for a conventional syntax. Yet, at best one will find only fragile and partially coded elements torn from reality, like

> a great river whose always moving branches deposit here and there its bed, in the form of an archipelago, shaped from the disjointed elements of at least a partial code. Perhaps these small islands, hardly distinct from the watery mass, are too fragile and scattered to resist the external forces of the currents that gave birth to them, and to which in return they remain always vulnerable.[36]

Metz later continues this line of thought in a significant passage:

> In the cinema, everything happens as if the signifying richness of the code and that of the message were connected together [*unies entre elles*] — or rather, disconnected — by the obscurely rigorous relation of a kind of inverse proportionality: the code, when it exists, is coarse. Those who believed in it, when they were great cineastes, did so in spite of themselves. When the message becomes more refined, it undermines the code — at any moment, the code can change or disappear; at any moment, the message can find a way to signify differently.[37]

The impermanent, unstable, and even historical nature of code in aesthetic expressions already throws up a challenge to Saussure, who insisted that only a synchronic analysis could reconstruct the underlying system of a *langue*. All the (phenomenological) qualities of analogical artifacts, and indeed the historical variability and innovativeness of art, erect conceptual barriers to a theory of the code, at least in a strict sense.

The open question for theory, then, is how to remain sensitive to the open and complex processes through which films have, gain, or give the appearance of intelligibility? On one hand, Constructivist or Formalist writing on film goes too far in taking shots for words and sequences for phrases, thereby finding the structure of *langue*, speech, and other forms of "pseudo-syntax" within the filmic message. Sovereign montage dismantles the sense interior to the image to slice it up into simple signs exploitable at will. On the other, without montage, or rather, the extreme forms of montage, modern cinema unveils another kind of expressivity, and therefore a kind of "language" immanent to the analogical image itself in its phenomenological density and richness. Metz calls this another or alternative kind of organization [*agencement*], where "the signifier is coextensive with the whole of the signified, a spectacle that signifies itself, short-circuiting the sign properly speaking."[38] Following Merleau-Ponty's lecture on "Cinema and the New Psychology," and indeed a whole line of post-war reflection on the phenomenology of the image, Metz finds film to be the phenomenological art *par excellence*, where the moving image,

> like a spectacle of life, carries its meaning within itself, the signifier only uneasily distinct from the signified. "It is the felicity of art to show how a thing begins to signify, not by reference to ideas that are already formed or acquired, but by the temporal and spatial arrangement of elements."[39]

The film image short circuits the linguistic sign, but at the same time it is not life itself but rather a composed, complex, heteroclite image; not a *langue*, but nonetheless a language, and again following Rossellini, a "poetic language."[40]

Thus the title of the essay already gestures towards Metz's key dilemma in theory. The problem of meaning in film must navigate carefully between, on one hand, the

domain of *langue* and the conceptual precisions of structural linguistics, and on the other, language, or the phenomenological richness of the analogical and aesthetic image. This dilemma organizes all the great rhetorical poles of the essay, including the recurrent contrast between Rossellini and Eisenstein in the realm of poetics, and the historical distinction between the "classical theorists" of film and the broader, more synthetic semiology to come. At the same time, these are also ethical choices, laying out approaches to life and to thought as the odd introduction to the essay makes clear. As an alternative to structural linguistics, Metz searches out an aesthetic or poetic semiology to forge a compromise where the search for a place in theory might define a domain that is both conceptually precise and aesthetically rich. Even more striking is the way that for Metz the new, modern cinema already anticipates, reconciles, and transcends these oppositions in its very forms; it is ahead of or anticipates theory in this respect.[41] The modern cinema includes both montage and sequence-shot in its creative repertoire, and here Metz agrees completely with Mitry that there is no film without montage, or rather, editing. The analogical power of the image, the near fusion of signifier and signified, cannot define the whole of the film image but only one of its most important components — the photographic image. The image is not reducible to the photographic alone. The shot enters into many kinds of combinations and on various scales or degrees: "A film is made of many images, which take their sense, one in relation to the others, in a play of reciprocal implications".[42] The signifier and the signified are thus separated in a way that indeed makes "language" possible. Therefore, through their interest in aesthetic or poetic language, even the Bazinians and Left Bank filmmakers have the merit of having conceived a sort of spontaneous and intuitive semiology that refuses any consideration of cinema as a *langue.*

Finally, there is yet another polarity that must be reconciled in Metz's essay, and this polarity poses two obstacles to the kind of aesthetic semiology Metz is searching

for. Within the historical space of "classical theories," which Metz no doubt considers the precursors to a more modern approach signaled by semiology, there are two possibilities or pathways on the way to theory: one which veers too closely to language, the other of which strays too far from it. On one hand there is Formalism or Constructivism, what Metz calls the adherents of "cine-*langue*"; on the other, there are the "aestheticians," such as Balázs and Arnheim.[43] In each instance, it seems always to be the case that theory has not yet arrived: one constructs the components of a theory, but then there occur the false starts, detours, digressions, and cul de sacs where in the aesthetic discourse either one veers towards Constructivism and cine-*langue* or towards art and expression — theory must reconcile the two. The second obstacle is that the conceptual genealogy of cine-semiology descends directly from the Formalists (in the broadest sense), who, Metz implies, may have posed the problem for film in a limited or inadequate manner. And this observation turns round to complicate the first problem. In 1964 a linguistically inspired semiology passing through structural anthropology aims high, hoping to construct a general and critical account of culture as language. But if a general semiology is to transcend linguistics to become a comprehensive account of the life of signs in society, of signifying culture, it must widen conceptually the province of language to include non-linguistic expressions. And here all the most intractable problems will pass through the analogical arts, primarily photography and cinema, "messages without codes" as Barthes put it at the time. The artistic domain, which at first glance seems tangential, now becomes the central obstacle to constructing a general theory. Suddenly, the minor art of film is a major concern for semiology. Moreover, to construct a theory by bringing the two domains in contact with one another, to produce a defendable epistemological perspective on the filmic fact that is equally attentive to the phenomenological experience of film, Metz needs a new concept of language, one which, like filmology,

comes from outside the cinematographic institution but which also remains attentive to the expressive power and complexity of the works themselves.

To be on the way to theory, then, means returning to but also remapping the problem of speech or cine-*langue* in pre-war writing on film, and also, from the perspective of modern aesthetics and structural linguistics, to pass judgment on the first stage or phase of theory, which now implicitly, though in a scattered and disunified way, follows the Ariadne's thread of the concept of cine-*langue*, and this, paradoxically, in the era of silent film. Metz is well aware of the irony: "No era was more verbose than that of silent film. So many manifestos, vociferations, invectives, proclamations, prophetic statements, and all against the same fantasmatic adversary: speech."[44] And all seeking purity of expression, as it were, in a moving visual image of universal power.

At the same time, the concept of cine-*langue* sought out something like a universal syntax in the silent image, something that made of images a "language" but a non-verbal one. In returning to and remapping the canon of aesthetic writing on film, Metz defines a two-fold project. On one hand, he identifies and defines a certain genre of writing on film — film theory — and gives it a conceptual valence distinguishable from history and criticism. Historically, this is both a backward looking and forward projecting gesture, which in each case launches itself from a space located within the discourse of signification. The objective of constructing a new idea of film theory is to make it part of a larger project — the general semiology to come as the foundation for the human sciences. At the same time, this rewriting or remapping is a retrojection, reformatting the aesthetic discourse in the structure of the discourse of signification, making of it the first or preliminary archaeological phase to which film semiology will be a second and intermediary step contributing to a general science of signs.

After stating his criticisms and hesitations concerning the status of the concept of

cine-*langue*, Metz returns to them to examine what elements or characteristics bring them close to theory, or render them as stages or stepping stones, partial and fragmentary attempts to find a path towards theory. The seduction and the sin of early writings was to have been on the right road but going too fast in the wrong direction. Many found a path toward theory through the problems of meaning and language; nonetheless, they operated with an inexact, even mistaken, concept of signification and of language,

> for at the moment when they defined the cinema as a non-verbal language, they still imagined confusedly that a pseudo-verbal mechanism was at work in the film [...]. A thorough review of theoretical writings of the period makes easily apparent a surprising convergence of conceptions: the image is like a word, the sequence is like a sentence, a sequence is constructed from images like a sentence from words, etc. In placing itself on this terrain, the cinema, proclaiming its superiority, condemned itself to an eternal inferiority. In comparison to a refined language (verbal language), it defined itself without knowing as a courser double.[45]

This is what Metz calls the paradox of "talking cinema," in expression and in theory. The key aestheticians of the silent period and the transition to sound had an unclear and even somewhat perverse understanding of the complex relationship of speech to image. They viewed this relationship as antagonism and rivalry, which blinded them in theory to the wealth of possible combinations and interactions between image and speech, each equally impure, each equally enriched, by their mutual interaction. Looking back at this period historically, like Bazin but for different reasons, Metz observes that for a certain cinema nothing changes during the transition to sound. In fact, not until a new modern cinema was born, perhaps with *Citizen Kane* (1941), did the

image transform itself to welcome a new relationship with speech, and not any kind of speech, but rather, a modern aesthetic discourse. Modern cinema appears again in Metz as a sort of herald for theory — the proto-conceptual *Theôry* who announces a new relationship of image to language, which can only be finally understood in a new construction of "theory" where Metz's aesthetic version of structuralism hopes to make a contribution. Here the modern cinema finally becomes a "talking" cinema that conceives itself as a supple aesthetic language, never fixed in advance, always open to transformation. Referring explicitly to Étienne Souriau (and implicitly to André Bazin), Metz writes that the long take has done more for talking cinema than the advent of sound, and that a technological innovation can never resolve an aesthetic problem — it can only present the problem before a second and properly artistic creation comes to suggest possible solutions, which can consequently be expressed in theory. In this manner, the modern cinema of Alain Resnais, Chris Marker, and Agnès Varda constructs a new conceptual relation of language to image, a complex yet "authentically 'filmic'"[46] discourse. In many respects, they present to semiology what is a stake in a film discourse.

We are now close to the end of the first half of the essay. After all of his criticisms of Constructivism, of cine-*langue* and erector set cinema, Metz then concludes the first half of "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" with an appreciation of cine-*langue* as theory, or perhaps pointing the way towards theory. Metz offers that these writings formed a whole body of theory ("La ciné-langue formait tout un corps théorique"),[47] which must be evaluated as such. The open question here is what are the components and conceptual stakes of theory that appear in outline or in their initial steps in the 1920s and 30s, and which are more or less clearly distinguishable from criticism on one hand, and history on the other? And there is another term in this equation — art. Metz observes that there may have been an erector set cinema but not erector set films. "Cinema" here means an idea or

a concept imagining, desiring, or proselytizing for a certain kind of film. But, *pace* Arnheim, the great films of Eisenstein or Pudovkin transcended their theories: "The common tendency of many films of this period were only hypostasized in the writings and manifestos. The tendency never realized itself completely in any particular film".[48] Aesthetic thinking through a filmic discourse, in this respect, always remained ahead of theoretical expression itself. This observation is related to Metz's subsequent comment that from a historical perspective the cinema could only become conscious of itself, as film and as art, through excess or exaggeration; hence, the ecstatic tone of the period's manifestos and various *cris de coeurs*. The period of cine-*langue* is thus important for two reasons. After 1920 or thereabouts, it coincides with the birth of an idea of cinema as art and thus represents the emergence of a kind of historical consciousness as well as an anticipation of theory through aesthetic practice. Secondly, Metz notes that his central question — cinema, *langue* or language? — could only begin to be presented at the moment when the first film theories were being conceived. The whole conception of cine-*langue* — though preliminary, incomplete, and excessive — nonetheless raises questions of both art and language. Though Metz does not say so directly (he says it everywhere indirectly), the path to theory is sign-posted here as passing through, and perhaps beyond, the domains of the aesthetic and the linguistic. The possibility of theory, however, had to wait for more modern approaches to both art and linguistics, and in this respect film, like every art, exhibited its proto-conceptual and anticipatory force. At the apogee of sovereign montage, Metz concludes, and without attendant theories or manifestos, directors like Stroheim and Murnau prefigured the modern cinema. This idea of cinematic modernity is, of course, Bazin's. And at the same time, *il faut faire la sémiologie du cinéma*.

The theory to come — film theory as a stage or step towards a global and unified semiology — must pass through the linguistic and the concept of *langue*, and at the

same time it must become "translinguistic" passing through the problems posed by non-verbal languages. The question of cinema has pride of place in this framework. And here, interestingly enough, Rossellini is evoked once again to establish that film is an art rather than a specific sign-vehicle, and must be treated as such semiologically. The simple conclusion and the profound irony for the discourse of signification is that while films are powerfully meaningful and expressive nothing can be gained for semiology by considering them as analogous to a *langue*. But just as a general semiology will only come into being by transcending and subsuming the domain of linguistics, film theory will become a sub-domain of semiology in recognizing concretely the ways in which cinema is a language without a *langue*. Testing the conceptual limits of *langue* in order to map out the possible and legitimate ways of treating filmic expression as language is the great technical task of the second half of Metz's essay. That useful pedagogical task must be left aside here.[49] The important point to conclude with is to account fully for the role played by the aesthetic, or a transformed idea of the aesthetic, in forging the discourse of signification. In one of the most remarkable sentences of the essay, Metz writes that "The 'specificity' of cinema is the presence of a language that wants to be made art, in the heart of an art that wants to become language. [*La 'spécificité' du cinéma, c'est la présence d'un langage qui veut se faire art au cœur d'un art qui veut se faire langage*]."[50] There are two directions of "language," then, neither of which is predisposed to being understood as a *langue*. On the one hand, there is what Metz calls an "*imaged discourse*" ["*discours imagé*"], that is, the moving photographic image as "an open system, difficultly codifiable, with its non-discrete fundamental unities (= images), its too natural intelligibility, and its lack of distance between the signifier and signified."[51] But there is also a "filmic discourse" that draws upon a variety of other elements to compose a film expressively, not only with moving images and montage, but also with dialogue, music, sound effects, written elements, structures of narration

and patterns of spatial and temporal articulation both invented and borrowed from the other arts, which are only partially codifiable. "Art or language," concludes Metz,

> the composed film is a yet more open system [...]. The cinema that we know (there will perhaps be others [...]) is a "menu" with many pleasures: a lasting marriage of art and languages that constitutes a union where the powers of each tend to become interchangeable. It is a community of wealth, and in addition, love.[52]

To construct a film theory while maintaining a love of cinema, to make this theory conceptually possible and terminologically current, now means knowing to what extent the vocabulary of linguistics advances or blocks the passage through film to a general semiology. For the possibility of semiology is also the path to having or possessing a theory, or to know that one thinks theoretically. This is why to become or be on the way to theory, the discourse of signification has to find itself pre-figured in the aesthetic discourse. Or to put it in a different way, theory is only the partial and intermediate transition point toward a more general science.

For all the pages so far written in this essay, and for all the twists and turns taken in Metz's brilliant argument, the question still before him, then, is that if the cinema can in no way be considered a *langue*, then how to defend his conviction that a "filmolinguistics" is both possible and desirable, and that it must be solidly grounded in the vocabulary and method of linguistics? One of the founders of the discourse of signification, for Metz the path to a global semiology and a science of signs must pass through a linguistically inspired *film* theory. This conviction produced two consequences for his writings of the period. First, his retroactive historical reconstruction of a certain history of writing on film from the 1920s produces a canon where in fact to claim their status as theory means to have considered the problem of

language in whatever form. A process of retrojection is at work here, where the highly variegate and contradictory aesthetic discourse is being (has been) transformed by the discourse of signification. The past canon of film theory is thus selectively formed to contribute to a debate in which filmolinguistics or cine-structuralism will be both the culmination and the passage to new, broader, and more synthetic forms of knowledge. Theory here becomes a theory of language and structure, inspired by Saussure, a process begun already by the Russian Formalists in the twenties and thirties. Tracking back for the moment from our restricted view on Metz's first essays to include the prolific work of other writers of the period, including Umberto Eco, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Raymond Bellour, Noël Burch, Emilo Garroni, Yuri Lotman, Peter Wollen, Sol Worth, and many others, even including Jean Mitry, we can see that despite the will to forge a common method and conceptual vocabulary for (cine)semiology, the discourse of signification was itself a highly variegate and in some senses syncretic discourse. Nonetheless — and here filmology indicated a real and fundamental change — there was a sense common to almost everyone of a shared, international dialogue or debate within a more or less common set of problems and concepts, of moving forward through conceptual conflict to a more precise and unified approach defined by the problem of signs and meaning in images.

Marc Vernet has observed that Metz's writings can be organized into three distinct phases, each with their particular style of writing, each of which defines its own particular conceptual and epistemological space distinct from the others: the collected essays of the 1960s, *Language and Cinema*, and finally, "The Imaginary Signifier."[53] These phases are all points of passage or transition in theory, moving from the problem of signification to that of the text, and finally, to psychoanalytic accounts of the signifier. In taking account of the variety of Metz's contributions, and his extraordinary drive and commitment continually to revisit critically and to remap the stakes of theory, both

epistemologically and evaluatively, we can better understand his unique contributions not only to building film studies as a modern university discipline but also to forging a discourse now often taken for granted: the theory of film. What drives Metz's epistemological and ethical searching from the very beginning is his dual sense of both the fundamental necessity of theory as conceptual critique and innovation, and an idea that theory is always open and incomplete, not yet arrived and always to come. In the decades of semiology's methodological passion, Metz was one of structuralism's most powerful critics, and also one of its true believers, but by the early seventies the dream of a global and unified science of signs was rapidly fading — the discourse of signification was fraying and splitting into new formations; structuralism was turning into poststructuralism, and theory was becoming Theory. In this respect, it is interesting to return to the Introduction to *Language and Cinema* and its retroactive account of what Metz calls the three phases of "film theory." In the first phase, what was referred to as the theory of film was eclectic and syncretic, and "called upon several methods without applying any of them in a consistent manner, and sometimes without being aware of doing so."[54] The semiology of the cinema, which preoccupied Metz throughout the sixties, and whose crowning achievement was *Language and Cinema*, is obviously here only an intermediate stepping stone — not yet a theory, but building the foundations of a methodology on the shoulders of filmology through a process of conceptual clarification and reorganization in the context of a general science of signs. Metz continues by anticipating a third phase to come,

> where various methods would be reconciled in depth (which could imply the disappearance in common of their present forms), and film theory would then be a real synthesis, non-syncretic, capable of precisely determining the field of validity of different approaches, the articulation of various levels. Today, it may be that we

> have reached the beginning of the second phase, where one may define a provisional but necessary methodological pluralism, an indispensable course of treatment through division [*une cure de morcellement*]. The psychology of film, the semiology of film, etc., did not exist yesterday and may no longer exist tomorrow, but must be allowed to live today, true unifications never being brought about by dictate but only at the end of numerous studies.[55]

It is a tribute to Metz's influence on the field, and his own capacity for self-criticism and innovation, that Noël Carroll will echo this sentiment twenty-four years later in his own introduction to a collection co-edited with David Bordwell, *Post-Theory*.[56] Moreover, Metz's major turn to psychoanalysis only four years after *Language and Cinema* would force a wild shift in the discourse of signification and, at the same time, set in place a new discursive situation of increasing conceptual pluralism, opening the era of contemporary theory in film, media, and art. There is a certain irony here in noting Metz's close agreement with Bordwell and Carroll about the prospects for theory and its incompleteness, that we have not yet entered a conceptual space where a theory of film is possible. At the same time, in what may have been his last interview, Metz characterizes this openness or incompleteness as a kind of ethics or modesty in theory. The interview with Marie and Vernet ends with Metz offering a tribute to Roland Barthes as his only real master. Metz describes this debt to Barthes as a care for the claims of theory, of thinking theoretically, while maintaining a certain flexibility or openness: to not be attached to a theory but to change positions according to need. In this, one better understands Metz's rejection of the idea that the study of film could be the object of a science or *Wissenschaft*, and that in fact the serious or theoretical study of film would always take place through a methodological pluralism that was open-ended and irresolvable. But there is something else. "This practical philosophy, which

[Barthes] transmitted to me rather than taught me," Metz offers, "is a sort of ethic — the will to furnish, in the very movement of research, an amiable and open space [*un espace amical et respirable*]."[57] Call this, theory as generosity.

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1. Roland Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image" in *Image/Music/Text* (Glasgow: Fontana Press, 1993), 32. Also see, in the same volume, "The Photographic Message" and "The Third Sense."

2. Guido Aristarco, *Storia delle teoriche del film* (Milan: Guido Einaudi, 1951).

3. Christian Metz, "Cinéma: langue ou langage?", *Communications* 4, ed. Roland Barthes (Paris : Seuil, 1964), 52–90. The article was reprinted in Metz's first collection of essays, *Essais sur la signification du cinéma* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1968), 39-93. It appeared in translation as "Cinema: Language or Language System" in *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* [1974], trans. Michael Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 31-91. As I will discuss further on, the English title of the essay is misleading and the translation itself marred by many errors and infelicities. For this reason, I will refer to the essay with its French title. All citations from this essay are my own translation, with French page numbers from the *Essais* given first, and corresponding pages from the English translation given after in italics. For a detailed overview of Metz publications and curriculum vita see *Christian Metz et la théorie du cinéma*, special issue of *iris* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1990), 299-318.

4. The first Mitry review essay was published in *Critique* 214 (March 1965): 227-245, and the second in *Revue d'esthétique* 20 (April-September 1967): 180-221. Dudley Andrew has recently stated that he has "always dated the advent of academic film studies at the moment when Metz leapfrogged over Mitry as he reviewed the latter's *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma*." See his "The Core and Flow of Film Studies," *Critical Inquiry* 35 (Summer 2009): 896.

5. Christian Metz, *Essais sur la signification au cinema, II* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1972).

6. Christian Metz, *Language and Cinema*, trans. Donna Jean Umiker-Sebeok (The Hague: Mouton, 1974): 9, *5* (trans. modified). Originally published as *Langage et cinéma* (Paris: Larousse, 1971). Wherever I have modified the translation, page numbers in the French original will be given in italics.

7. Ibid., 10, *5*.

8. Ibid., 10, *6*.

9. Ibid., 11, *6*.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 11, *7*.

12. See, in this respect, Cassetti's authoritative account in *Theories of Cinema*: 1945-1995, trans. Francesca Chiostri and Elizabeth Gard Bartolini-Salimbeni, with Thomas Kelso (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).

13. Christian Metz, "Cinéma: langue ou langage?" in *Essais sur la signification au cinéma* (Paris, Klincksieck, 1968), 92, *90*. Trans. Michael Taylor as *Film Language*. I remind the reader that all English translations are my own, and that corresponding page numbers from *Film Language* are given in italics.

14. Ibid., 93, *91*.

15. "Sur la théorie classique du cinéma: a propos des travaux de Jean Mitry" in *Essais sur la signification du cinéma II* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1972), 11 (my trans.).

16. The question of whether the analogical image could be subdivided into smaller distinctive units, and thus to what degree one could identify codes interior to the image, as it were, is one of the key points of contention between Metz, Umberto Eco, and Pier Paolo Pasolini. Referring to this as a debate on the relative value of graded and coded signs, Peter Wollen provides an astute commentary in his *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* [1969] (London: British Film Institute, 1998). See especially the chapter on "The Semiology of the Cinema," 79-118.

17. Metz, "Sur la théorie classique," 12.

18. "Une étape dans la réflexion sur le cinema," in *Essais sur la signification du cinema II* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1972), 13 (my trans.). Metz also refers to the book as the "first general treatment of cinema available in the world" (13), strangely ignoring the 1960 publication of Kracauer's *Theory of Film*.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 14.

21. Ibid., 34 (my trans.).
22. Compare, for example, Daniel Talbot, ed., *Film: An Anthology* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959); reprinted (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), and Richard Dyer MacCann, ed., *Film: A Montage of Theories* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1966).
23. Metz, "Cinéma," 41, *33*. In later essays and retrospective footnotes, Metz significantly softens and complicates his original assessment of Eisenstein. Metz also ignores, of course, Eisenstein's fascinating experiments with the sequence-shot as described in Vladimir Nilsen's *The Cinema as a Graphic Art* (London: Newnes, 1959). This is a selective ethical reading of Eisenstein, incomplete though not unjust, to make him an exemplar of "structuralist man."
24. Metz, "Cinéma," 42, *34*.
25. Ibid., 43, *35*.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 44, *36*.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid. The interior citations are from Barthes's essay, "The Structuralist Activity," originally published *Lettres modernes* (February 1963), 71-81, and reprinted in Barthes's *Essais critiques* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1964).
30. Metz, "Cinéma," 44, *36-37*.
31. Ibid., 45, *37*.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., 46, *38*.
34. Ibid., 47-48, *40*.
35. Ibid., 47-48, n. 5, *40*.
36. Ibid., 48, *40-41*.
37. Ibid., 56, *48-49*.
38. Ibid., 50, *43*.
39. Ibid. The interior citation is from Merleau-Ponty's "The Film and the New Psychology," a lecture originally given at IDHEC in 1945 and reprinted in his *Sense and Non-sense*, trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia Allen Dreyfus (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 57-58 (trans. modified).
40. Ibid., 51, *44*.
41. This observation draws out an interesting contrast between the early work of Metz and Raymond Bellour, who otherwise were so closely allied. Bellour understood early on that the primary testing ground for the structural analysis of film should target a certain classicism; in short, Hollywood film, especially Hitchcock. In contrast, to put his "large syntagmatic categories" to the test, Metz turned to a minor though important New Wave film, *Adieu Philippine* (1962) and investigates narration in Fellini's *8 ½* (1963), both of which have essays devoted to them in *Film Language*. His frequent references to Left Bank filmmakers are not simply a matter of taste, I think, but rather are more generally representative of a feeling for the conceptual power and inventiveness of the new cinemas, and one that would be echoed later in Gilles Deleuze's work on the time-image. The tight link between "modern theory" and "modern cinema" is also in full view in the panels on semiology and film incorporated into the Mostri del Nuovo Cinema in Pesaro in 1966 and 1967, which generated important critical discussions in which Barthes, Metz, Eco, and Pasolini all had roles to play. See for example Casetti's *Theories of Cinema*, 135.
42. Metz, "Cinéma," 51, *43*.
43. This contrast was implicitly understood in the classical period. In a 1931 review of Granowky's *Das Lied vom Leben* (1931), Arhneim complained about "the strange way in which Russian film artists ruin the chance of visualizing things through their penchant for theoretical constructions. The Russians are real fanatics of film theory. They have thought up almost cabbalistic systems; yet the application to the actual work of art is for the most part not very satisfactory." The implication is that there should be some conceptual alternative to the Russian approach, and perhaps one that is more aesthetic and less theoretical. See "Granowsky probiert," in *Rudolf Arnheim: Kritiken und Aufsätze zum Film*, ed. Helmut H. Diederichs (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979), 233. I was led to this fascinating quote by Sabine Hake's *The Cinema's Third Machine: Writing on Film in Germany, 1907-1933* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 278.
44. Metz, "Cinéma," 56, *49*.
45. Ibid., 57, *50-51*.
46. Ibid., 62, *56*.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Briefly, Metz's main objective is to trace out all the ways signification in film is unlike a langue but like a language according to the following criteria: within the image discourse there is no double articulation; filmic syntax is forged at the level of sequence composition, making film more like "speech"

than *langue*; narrative film is characterized by strong syntagmatic organization with weak paradigms, or rather, commutations are only possible at the level of large units of organization; and that film, like other art forms, is less communication than an open system of expression. Linguistics, in other words, points the way to showing what film is not (*langue*) and what it is, a language or discourse of art.

50. Metz, "Cinéma," 65, *59*.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. See Michel Marie and Marc Vernet, "Entretien avec Christian Metz," *iris* 10 (April 1990): 276.
54. Metz, *Language and Cinema*, 20, *13*.
55. Ibid., 21, *14*.
56. David Bordwell and Nöel Carroll, eds., *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996).
57. Marie and Vernet, "Entretien avec Christian Metz," 295.

CARROLL ON THE MOVING IMAGE

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The question "What is cinema?" has been one of the central concerns of film theorists and aestheticians of film since the beginnings of cinema. No one has done more to show us how this question has been used than Noël Carroll. In his essay, "Defining the Moving Image,"[1] Carroll attempts to go beyond a critique of classical film theory for its essentialism by developing an answer to this question that is non-essentialist in various senses of that term.

In this paper, I shall consider Carroll's proposed definition of the moving image. After considering whether his five necessary conditions for an object's being a moving image are an accurate characterization of the concept, I will turn to the broader question of whether Carroll has evaded the essentialism of classical film theory. My conclusion will be that he has not and that the project of film theory needs to be rethought in a manner that is more deeply anti-essentialist than that proposed by Carroll.

Carroll develops his account of the moving image[2] in a dialectical strategy in which he first looks at two problematic views that have dominated philosophical theories of the moving image. The first such view is medium essentialism, the assumption that there is a single medium that determines the nature of an art form. Against this assumption Carroll argues that art forms generally have more than one medium and that, even if this were not so, there is no reason to see an art's medium as determining appropriate ways for that art form to develop. Carroll's claim is that this entails that defining the nature of an art form cannot have normative consequences for the future development of that art. As a result, Carroll concludes, one important goal of medium essentialism has to be seen as a mistaken one.

The second view that Carroll attacks is photographic realism, the claim that photographs allow their viewers to be directly perceive the objects represented. On this view, films are to be thought of on analogy with glasses or telescopes, instruments that simply aid a viewer in directly seeing the things that are before her. Against this view, Carroll asserts that "all photographic and cinematic images are detached displays," by which he means that there is a discontinuity between the space portrayed in the images and the physical space in which the viewer finds herself. As a result, Carroll claims "that it is vastly improbably and maybe effectively impossible that spectators, save in freak situations, be able to orient themselves to the real, profilmic spaces physically portrayed on the screen,"[3] so that cinematic realism must be false.

As Carroll puts this point, it seems clearly false. When watching a film that includes a scene of Washington Square in New York City, I may very well know exactly what actions I would have to take in order to relate my body to the space portrayed on the screen. Nonetheless, Carroll is certainly right to claim that there is a discontinuity between my own spatial and temporal position in the real world and the spatial and temporal world that I see portrayed in a narrative film.[4] Even if I can walk to Washington Square, I cannot arrive at the world that I saw projected there. Carroll's talk of a detached display is meant to conceptualize this discontinuity between the film world and the real world.

The claim that a moving image is a detached display is the first of the five conditions that Carroll proposes as necessary for an object's being a moving image, a term that he prefers to film because it allows videos, laser discs, and other similar forms to be thought of as all the same art form. His claim is as follows:

> we can say that x is a moving image (1) only if x is a detached display, (2) only if x belongs to the class of things from which the impression of movement is technically

> possible, (3) only if performance tokens of x are generated by a template that is a token, and (4) only if performance tokens of x are not artworks in their own right and (5) only if it is two-dimensional.[5]

In spelling out these five criteria, Carroll is concerned to distinguish films from various other types of artworks. Paintings, photographic slides, and plays are the primary types of artworks with which Carroll is concerned. His criteria are intended to mark out moving images as artworks that are of a different ontological type than paintings, plays, etc.

I have already discussed some problems with Carroll's first condition. It is meant to distinguish moving (and still) images from the images we get when we look through such devices as glasses, telescopes, and microscopes. Although cameras also depend on the existence of lenses, Carroll thinks it is important that we realize that there is a real difference between what we see when we look at a photograph and what we see when we look through a device with a lens. He characterizes this difference by saying that, when we look through a device with a lens, there is a continuity between the space of what we see and the space that we inhabit. He claims that this is not true when we look at a photograph, be it a moving or still one, for they are "detached displays."

Carroll himself considers a putative counter-example to his claim, one in which we are watching a video monitor that shows us the contents of the room next to us. Do we not know how to orient ourselves to the physical space presented on the screen? Carroll's reply is that, unlike the case of detached displays, we need to use information that is not provided by "the image itself"[6] in order to orient ourselves to the physical space of the image. But is it so clear that we do not need information external to the image to orient ourselves to the space of a telescope or a microscope? In each case, I

think that there is information external to the image that a person needs to use in orienting themself to the image. I just do not see that Carroll has been able to give an account of a detached display that is adequate to his purposes.

I think that this problem can be sharpened if we think about whether there is a difference between what a cameraperson sees when looking through a camera lens and what an audience member sees when she sees the same visual information projected on her television set. For Carroll, the former is an instance of direct seeing, for the cameraperson exists in a physical space that is continuous with the one that she sees through the camera. The viewer of this scene, however, does not see things directly, for her world is spatially discontinuous with the world she sees on the screen.

This way of putting things is misleading, however, for even though the cameraperson filming a fictional narrative is in the same physical space as the actors, she is not in the same physical space as the characters they play. So the issue is not the physical means by which one looks at an object but what one sees when one looks, how one interprets the images that one sees. Although Carroll is correct in rejecting the claim that film allows one to see the world in an unmediated way, his own explanation of film as involving a detached display is not an adequate characterization of the viewer's situation.

In explaining his second condition, Carroll vacillates between an epistemic and an ontological mode of exposition. Given his project, he needs to stick to the ontological mode, saying that for an object to be a moving image it must be possible that it convey the impression of motion. I do not have a lot to say about this condition. It does seem right to say that, if an object is a moving image, it must at least be possible for it to convey an image of motion. The condition has to be formulated as merely a possibility in order to take account of films, like Andy Warhol's *Empire* (1965), a 7-hour static shot of the Empire State Building or Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962), a film composed of shots

of still photographs alone. Although neither of these films includes a shot of things actually moving, Carroll claims that they *could*.[7]

They question about the validity of this condition comes down to whether Carroll can justify giving an ontological interpretation of the "could" in the last sentence. When I am watching a film, it might make sense for me to be aware that I might soon see something moving on the screen even when nothing I am currently seeing is in motion. But the "might" in that sentence is an epistemic one. *Might* the film have included a shot of things in motion even though, in point of actual fact, it does not? One's position on whether this claim is true depends on prior metaphysical commitments. So it is not obvious that Carroll has provided a sound necessary condition for an object's being a moving image in his second condition.

I shall discuss Carroll's third and fourth clause of Carroll's set of necessary conditions together. They are both proposed because the first two clauses are not adequate to distinguish moving images from plays or, although Carroll does not mention this, from pieces of music. Carroll attempts to distinguish between these distinct types of artworks by claiming that there are differences in their "performances." Whereas performances of plays or musical works are themselves works of art that are generated by interpretations, Carroll claims that film performances are not artworks and are generated by templates. Although he does not explain what he means by a template, the point is fairly clear. Carroll is using the term "template" in order to conceptualize the relationship between, say, the reels of film stock of Jean-Luc Godard's *Week End* (1967) and the "performances" of it that my class attends when I screen the film. The reels of stock act as a template in that, when I project it, there is a mechanical procedure that results in the film being performed for my class in a way that can be reproduced on other occasions.

I find it quite odd for Carroll to speak of performances of moving images. We generally say that they are screened or played. I think that it would be more informative to claim that moving images are screened rather than performed and then to explain the difference between art forms that are screened and those that are performed.

So let us investigate what the implications are of saying that moving images are *screened* rather than *performed*? First of all, it means that, as Carroll's fourth condition points out, the screening of a moving image is not a separate object of criticism. One may be interested in criticizing a film, but not its screening, although one might explain that there was a technical problem in the screening one attended. That is, one would not report that the latest screening of *Week End* involved an amazing interpretation of the significance of the film, so long as the film was simply projected onto a screen as it standardly is. With artworks that are performed, however, the individual performance is a candidate for criticism as well as the work of which it is a performance. So one might well debate whether Glenn Gould's 1955 or 1981 performance of the *Goldberg Variations* were superior, for the two performances involved very different interpretations of the work.

Part of the problem here is that the type-token distinction that Carroll invokes has to be used twice in articulating the ontology of a moving image. Moving images, like photographs, are not identical with a single physical object as is the case with paintings or sculptures. The original of a moving image, like the original of a book, is a type. All of the prints of *It Happened One Night* (1934) are on a par in this ontological respect despite their empirical differences: None of them alone *is* the artwork. This is different from the relationship between the *Mona Lisa* and its numerous reproductions around the world. As a result, a screening of a moving image is a token in *two* senses: First, the print that is screened is itself a token, one that is produced by a template when the print

is produced by being copied from a master. Second, the actual screening of the mechanically produced moving image is itself a token, something that is repeatable. It is this iterated use of mechanical means of production that I think is best captured by saying that moving images are screened.

The fifth condition that Carroll discusses is that a moving image must be two-dimensional. He includes this condition in order to distinguish moving images from music boxes with figures on them that move and other such devices. Carroll thinks that this condition helps limit the applicability of the concept of moving image in an important way.

Since I will discuss this condition in a moment, let me first address a putative sixth condition that would render the set of necessary conditions jointly sufficient. Carroll considers the additional condition that a moving image must be projected. This would distinguish moving images from such things as flip books. A flip book satisfies all of the five conditions that Carroll has proposed, but not this sixth one. Carroll rejects this proposal, too quickly in my view, because it would exclude certain devices such as Edison's Kinetoscope in which the viewer actually looked at a moving film rather than a projected image.

Although Carroll's reasons for rejecting this claim are more complex than his stated explanation, let us start by considering his explicit reasons, for I am not convinced that these are sufficient grounds for rejecting this sixth condition. As Carroll himself points out, we may have to make decisions in this area that do not quite accord with our pre-theoretical intuitions: "we should expect to find problematic border cases in exactly this vicinity."[8] But this does not seem decisive to me. Why not simply accept the implication that certain pre-film technological devices like the Kinetoscope are not examples of moving images as we now know them, but that they are similar to them or precursors?

What reason is there for asserting that a Kinetoscope produces a moving image other than that it was an element in the historical process that led to the invention of the moving image proper. We even can admit that, if history were different, we would have a different conception of the moving image, but still maintain that *our* concept of the moving image requires that the image be a projected one. If he were to take this tack, Carroll would then have produced a set of six singly necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for an object's being a moving image.

Carroll's reluctance to embrace this sixth condition, however, stems from a broader theoretical worry. He wants to develop an approach to theorizing about film that is free of the essentialism of earlier theorists. He seems to think that providing sufficient criteria for an object's being a moving image would result in an essentialist definition of film, a consequence that he believes he has avoided by specifying only a set of necessary conditions. As he says,

> the characterization of moving pictures (or moving images) proposed in this essay is not essentialist in the philosophical sense that presupposes that an essential definition of cinema would be comprised of a list of necessary conditions that are jointly sufficient.[9]

It is this claim that I want to consider now, for I do not think that Carroll has fully understood the implications of his own anti-essentialist argument with the result that his own account of the nature of the moving image is too tied to the essentialist definitional project.

As we have seen, Carroll explicitly attempts to give a non-essentialist definition of the moving image. There are a number of reasons for this. Foremost among them is his desire

to avoid the objectionable types of essentialism that he sees operative in traditional philosophic theorizing about the moving image. For example, Carroll does not believe it is the place of a theorist of film to develop a concept of film that has implications for cinematic style. In this respect, he differs sharply from the classical film theorists, such as Rudolph Arnheim or André Bazin, whose own attempts to define film were clearly part of a broader strategy of legitimating certain film styles as constitutive of genuine works of art. (In this paper, Carroll does not consider the question of what makes a film a work of art in an evaluative sense, an important part of the classical theorists' program.) Carroll has no interest in developing this strategy for, as we have seen, he thinks that it is fatally flawed. Instead, however, he characterizes his own project as developing a definition of film that is non-essentialist in this objectionable sense.

For this reason, Carroll does not want to present a definition of the moving image in the traditional sense. He does, however, propose five necessary criteria for an object being a moving image, claiming that this makes his view non-essentialist: I want to ask whether Carroll's claim to provide a non-essential definition of the moving image because he has only provided necessary conditions makes sense. At issue is whether it makes sense to see the theorist as developing a set of conditions for calling an object a moving image when it is clear that the history of the art forms brought together under this term are rapidly developing and constantly changing. Indeed, Carroll is himself acutely aware of this fact and chooses to use the term "moving image" rather than "film" because he believes, as a matter of historical projection, that "in the future the history of what we now call cinema and the history of video, TV, CD-ROM, and whatever comes next will be thought of as a piece."[10] Here, Carroll shows an awareness that the very terms in which we think about film and its related art forms are in a continuing process of change that depends upon both technological developments and

the art forms themselves. The theorist, he implies, has to see her own work as dependent on these historical developments rather than as dictating how they should go. The question that this raises is whether it then makes sense, if one is to be a thoroughgoing non-essentialist for the very reasons that Carroll has put forward, to develop a set of necessary conditions for an object's being a moving image. How do we know now that future developments in the moving image will not affect our willingness to call something a moving image in such a way that the necessary conditions Carroll has laid down will be violated?

The answer, I think, is that we cannot know. To choose one example, I want to take up the one necessary condition for something being a moving image Carroll has proposed a discussion of which I have postponed: its being two-dimensional. This is a peculiar condition since it is not clear to me that a contemporary film, soundtrack and all, can be thought of as a two-dimensional object, but leave that aside. Carroll proposes this condition in order that his own set of necessary conditions not allow in things like music boxes that have ballerinas on them that spin around once the box has been wound up. Is it clear that future developments in moving image technology will not make it possible for there to be three-dimensional projections that we watch in the way that we now watch films? What I have in mind is an extension of hologram technology in a way that makes it possible for films to present themselves to us in three dimensions. This certainly seems like a possibility to me, but it is one that Carroll's definition rules out as counting as a development of the moving image. Can we rule out on *a priori* grounds the existence of new cinemas in which people surround a moving holographic image projected from above?

My concern here is not so much with this particular necessary condition, but with the philosophic strategy that motivates Carroll. While he is aware that classical film theory has been burdened by essentialism, and while he tries to develop his own, non-

essentialist variant of film theory, I see his theory as still tied too rigidly to the idea that necessary and sufficient conditions are what theory is all about. He has not, I believe, assimilated fully enough the lessons about the nature of concepts in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*,[11] for he still sees concepts as tied too rigidly to a logic of necessary, if not sufficient, conditions. My own example has attempted to show that the historical change in our concepts proceeds in ways that we cannot predict in advance, a fact that Carroll acknowledges but fails to integrate into his theoretical claims. The concept of the moving image is simply too variable for us to attempt to fix it for all time as Carroll seems to be doing.

There is, however, another possibility open to Carroll. He could say that he is simply articulating how we currently use the concept of the moving image, a project that he undertakes with a sense of certain historical tendencies that he thinks can be integrated into the account. This understanding of his project would make it non-essentialist in that the five conditions that he proposes would have to be seen as historically contingent in the sense that the future history of the moving image might cause us to reject any or all of them. This more historicist and pragmatic understanding of the concept of the moving image seems to me the right one, although it is one that I think Carroll has not fully accepted. Were Carroll to truly embrace anti-essentialism as a philosophic position, he would have to have a deeper sense of his own theoretical categories as themselves embedded in a historical process. This is, I believe, the right direction for film theory to develop, a direction that Carroll has done a great deal to help us find, but one that his own project is hesitant to follow.

1. Noël Carroll, *Theorizing the Moving Image* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 49-74.

2. I follow Carroll's usage of the term "moving image" to refer to films, video, laser discs, etc., for purposes of exposition.

3. Carroll, *Theorizing the Moving Image*, 63.

4. In cases of documentary films, this condition seems less valid. For the purposes of this paper, I simply bypass this problem.

5. Carroll, *Theorizing the Moving Image*, 70.

6. Ibid., 63.

7. Although Wahrol's film has been claimed to include a shot of some pigeons flying and Marker's does include one moving image, one can easily think of fictional counterpart films from which those short shots have been removed. Carroll's claim would then apply to these counterpart films.

8. Ibid., 71.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., 65.

11. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 50th Anniversary ed., trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).

DELEUZE:

THE THINKING OF THE BRAIN[1]

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After the publication of *The Time-Image*, Deleuze gave two interviews, one to *Cinéma* magazine in December 1985 (repeated in *Pourparlers*),[2] the other to *Cahiers du cinéma* in February 1986 (repeated in *Deux régimes de fous*).[3]

I am going to read two long passages from them.

The question by Gilbert Cabasso and Fabrice Revault d'Allones in the first interview had to do with the changes that affected the nature of images that Deleuze had just mentioned.

> But what are the principles behind these changes? How can we assess them, aesthetically or otherwise? In short: on what basis can we assess films?
>
> I think one particularly important principle is the biology of the brain, a micro-biology. It's going through a complete transformation, and coming up with extraordinary discoveries. It's not to psychoanalysis or linguistics but to the biology of the brain that we should look for principles, because it doesn't have the drawback, like the other two disciplines, of applying ready-made concepts. We can consider the brain as a relatively undifferentiated mass and ask what circuits, what kinds of circuit, the movement-image or time-image traces out, or invent, because the circuits aren't there to begin with.[4]

Deleuze added in conclusion:

> Once again it's a cerebral matter: the brain's the hidden side of all circuits, and these can allow the most basic conditioned reflexes to prevail, as well as leaving room for more creative tracings, less "probable" links. The brain's a spatio-temporal volume:

> it's up to art to trace through it the new paths open to us today. You might see continuities and false continuities as cinematic synapses — you get different links, and different circuits, in Godard and Resnais, for example. The overall importance or significance of cinema seems to me to depend on this sort of problem.[5]

Deleuze used these words, among others, to respond to the *Cahiers du cinéma* collective who came together around his book

> The brain is unity. The brain is the screen. [This was the title given to the interview.] The brain is unity. The brain is the screen. I don't believe that linguistics and psychoanalysis offer a great deal to the cinema. On the contrary, the biology of the brain — molecular biology — does. Thought is molecular. Molecular speeds make up the slow beings that we are. As Michaux said, *"Man is a slow being, who is only made possible thanks to fantastic speeds"*. The circuits and linkages of the brain don't preexist the stimuli, corpuscles, and particles [*grains*] that trace them. Cinema isn't theater; rather, it makes bodies out of grains. The linkages are often paradoxical and on all sides overflow simple associations of images. Cinema, precisely because it puts the image in motion, or rather endows the image with self-motion [*auto-mouvement*], never stops tracing the circuits of the brain. This characteristic can be manifested either positively or negatively. The screen, that is to say ourselves, can be the deficient brain of an idiot as easily as a creative brain. […] Bad cinema always travels through circuits created by the lower brain: violence and sexuality in what is represented — a mix of a gratuitous cruelty and organized ineptitude. Real cinema achieves another violence, another sexuality, molecular rather than localized.[6]

These answers directly extend the central pages of the "Cinema, Body and Brain, Thought" section of *The Time-Image*. There, Deleuze invoked all the consequences of

the "general redistribution" resulting from progress in scientific knowledge of the brain. He based his arguments on a number of scientific works: Gilbert Simondon, to whom he had long been frequently referring, particularly to his book *L'individu et sa genèse physico-biologique*,[7] Raymond Ruyer and his *Genèse des formes vivantes*,[8] Steven Rose and his *The Conscious Brain*[9] and especially *L'homme neuronal* just published by Jean-Pierre Changeux (1983).[10] Deleuze was inspired by them to develop a conception of the "brain as an acentred system". He focused particularly on the opposition between electric and chemical transmission from one neuron to another. The former produces breaks that can be called "rational", while the latter produces "irrational" ones, assuming a random or semi-random factor.[11]

We notice, and this is essential, that these two types of break between neurons are analogous to the comparison that Deleuze makes between *The Movement-Image* and *The Time-Image*, between the types of link belonging to each of these two main forms of image: the rational interval of the action image, the irrational interstice that makes the crystal-image.

While Deleuze recognised the cinema as a brain (or brain-body), it is essential for a neurobiologist to be able to recognise the brain (brain-body) as cinema.

This is, for example, the case of António Damásio, by continuous references in his three major books published between 1994 and 2003: *Descartes' Error: Emotions, Reason and the Human Brain*; *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*; *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain*.[12]

In *Descartes' Error*, even before the word cinema had been spoken, it is the metaphor of the film conveyed by the image of the train that imposes itself: "I conceptualize the essence of feelings as something you and I can see through a window that opens directly onto a continuously updated image of the structure and

state of our body."[13] There is thus a constantly invoked "movie-in-the-brain," in which everything suggests that the real film can produce an image because it was itself based on the more or less virtual model according to which the brain-body develops so that it can project itself in the world and as a world.

> Movies are the closest external representation of the prevailing storytelling that goes on in our minds. What goes on within each shot, the different framing of a subject that the movement of the camera can accomplish, what goes in the transition of shots achieved by editing, and what goes on in the narrative constructed by a particular juxtaposition of shots is comparable, in some respects to what is going on in the mind, thanks to the machinery in charge of making visual and auditory images, and to devices such as the many levels of attention and working memory.[14]

On the other hand, it is as an emblem of the functioning of memory that the idea of film acquires its breadth. Twice, in two of his books Damásio used the example of *Brigadoon* (1954), Vincente Minnelli's musical comedy, recalling the argument by which this village whose name does not figure on any map only wakes up every 100 years, just as the cinema and brain keep doing in relation to each other.

We would like to quote a recent article in the catalogue of an exhibition held last autumn at the FilmMuseum in Berlin, *Kino im Kopf* (*Cinema in the Head*): "Film, Mind and Emotion: The Brain Perspective". Here, Damásio furthers a comparison, the force of which can be summarised in these words:

> It is apparent that the brilliant people who developed film techniques decades ago were inspired, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, by the workings of the human mind as produced by the greatest and most byzantine of film studios: the human brain.[15]

It is in this way of thinking, and focusing more specifically on the question of the emotions produced from the very body of films taken in their detail that I based my arguments on the works of Daniel Stern, the famous American infant development specialist (and particularly his great book of 1985, *The Interpersonal World of the Infant*).[16]

I remember that in his last book, *Chaosmosis*, Félix Guattari wrote crucial pages to show to what extent Stern's conceptions were in harmony with his own constructions, both in an "ontology" of subjectivisation and an "aesthetic paradigm."

There is also a very clear articulation that both recognised between the works of Stern and Damásio, for example between Stern's fundamental concept of vitality affects and Damásio's concept of background emotions. In his latest book, *The Present Moment in Psychotherapy and Everyday Life*,[17] Stern brings his research closer and closer to the neurobiology of the brain.

If the concept of vitality affects is so important to thought on art in general and the cinema in particular, it is because vitality affects are irreducible to discreet or Darwinian affects, assuming psychological contents like fear, sadness, shame, etc. On the contrary, we are talking about affects associated with the force, intensity, quality, form or rhythm of an experience, which touch it in the detail of its material reality. These vitality affects are the expression of so-called amodal perception, which ensures circulation between the different levels of sensorial reality from the first months of life. These are all the modalities that, in the words of Deleuze and Guattari, form part of a non-signifying semiotics and of a logic of flows.

By using Stern's concepts and descriptions, I was able to constitute a reality of the film spectator's experience conceived from the body of the films themselves, analysed at multiple levels of detail.[18] This is not an application but rather an isomorphic or analogical construction of the cinema spectator from the "infant's interpersonal world." This hypothetical construction of a body of cinema articulates

directly with the concept of a cinema-body-brain as it is used in Deleuze's two books on the cinema. But it also articulates with his vision of "perception in the folds," developed in *The Fold,* his book about Leibniz, i.e., with his formulation of a redoubling molecular unconscious, which he called "cinema in itself" in his books on the cinema, after Bergson.

This brings us to an inevitable confrontation between art and science and between science and philosophy, the same one made by Deleuze and Guattari in *What Is Philosophy*?

Before going there, I would like to quote the example of a relatively recent scientific discovery, which raises the problem of this confrontation in its acuity.

It has to do with mirror neurons, the "crucial" discovery of which Daniel Stern hailed in *The Present Moment in Psychotherapy and Everyday Life*.[19]

We first learn in depth that these pre-motor neurons adjacent to the motor neurons, which they complement, were discovered recently in the brain of macaques and then found in humans. The name chosen for them comes from the fact that they are activated in the brain both when a subject performs an action and when another subject merely observes that action. It is not exactly a question of imitation, because the same movement actually made by a subject is, in fact, simulated by another. Proven results are still limited (they mainly address movements of the hand, foot and mouth and also sounds accompanying these actions). However, they have already prompted an impressive number of hypotheses on human intersubjectivity and communication.[20]

Vittorio Gallese, one of the discoverers of mirror neurons, also suggested the general term "shared manifold of intersubjectivity" to measure the extent of a phenomenon that he sees occurring at three levels:[21]

a) a sub-personal level, based on the activity of a series of mirror neural circuits closely linked to multiple changes in states of the body and appropriate for creating shared spaces of sensations and emotions;

b) a functional level of "embodied simulation," an "automatic, unconscious, and pre-reflexive functional mechanism, whose function is the modeling of objects, agents, and events," in which embodied simulation is regarded as "basic functional mechanism of our brain";[22]

c) a phenomenological or empathetic level that returns, from a neuro-biological perspective, to the intuitions of Theodor Lipps, the great theoretician of empathy of the early 20th century, and of Edith Stein, Husserl's student, and even Merleau-Ponty. It is therefore a concept extended to the socially and neurobiologically based exchange of empathy that makes it possible to project mirror neurons.

It is easy to understand how someone like Stern would be interested in these mirror neurons, as they become a living, proven incarnation of the functioning of the "intersubjective matrix" that is at the heart of his latest book through the reality of what he calls present moments, when developing the knowledge acquired in his *The Interpersonal World of the Infant*.[23] We also discern the virtuality with which mirror neurons seem to be able to fuel an intellection of the cinema. The more or less unconscious exchange established in the reality between two brain-bodies, one acting and the other simulating the act in thought, irresistibly evokes a parallel exchange that seems to take place between the active body of an actor-character and that of an apparently passive observer-receptor, the spectator. This vision immediately raises the delicate question of distances between the effects caused by a real movement and a recorded movement made into an image and belonging to a body of illusion.

But above all, the essential thing is that all action of the body in the cinema belongs to the forms and forces of image in the framework in which it is produced. Therefore a film stripped of all human bodies, attached only to the body of the earth viewed by the mechanical eye of a camera, is all together and perhaps more purely a film, as Michael Snow clearly showed in *La région centrale* (1971). It is thus in the eyes of the reality of the body of the film in its entire unreality that we should conceive the effects of sensitive transfers like those that mirror neurons invite us to conceive.[24]

We also see the abyss that opens up here between a scientific vision and an aesthetic or philosophical conception, even though the latter is willing to be inspired by the former. Let us, for example, envisage the distinction that Stern makes between vitality affects peculiar to the intensity, rhythm and form of stimulation, and the corresponding temporal contours in the development of the present moment.[25] First and foremost, vitality affects are subjective experiences. On the other hand, their temporal contours, which are "polyphonic and polyrhythmic," according to Stern, are theoretically objectifiable, i.e., calculable.

On this subject, Stern highlights the extent to which progress in the field of cerebral imaging and neurophysiological recording techniques have today placed the neurosciences in a position to clarify these questions. He distinguishes between two types of necessary data: an exact timing of brain activity correlated to phenomenal experiences; and timing of analogical changes in intensity or magnitude of neuron discharges during these same experiences. "With just that much, one could propose a scientific correlate to the subjective experience of vitality affects. More important, a typology of time-shapes of neural activity related to various experiences would merge."[26]

Thus, between the phenomenology of the experience and the possibility of calculating it, we find the perspective of an exact science of behaviour and effects, as

well as of works of art in their effects. Stern is careful not to project it as such, even when he highlights the contribution of mirror neurons to a greater understanding of intersubjectivity. But, even so, that is what one might infer.

We have reached a limit here, the same one that Deleuze and Guattari described in *What Is Philosophy?* Philosophy, art and science are defined there respectively by their concepts, sensations and functions. If the word chaos is certainly the most active in this book, it is because these three forms of thought have three different ways of "confronting chaos, laying out a plane, throwing a plane over chaos."[27] But while the forms of interference between these three forms of thought all have to face chaos, the differences between the three systems are just as clear.

The terms finite and infinite are the ones that best express them. There where philosophy "wants to save the infinity," brings events or concepts to the infinite, "science, on the other hand, relinquishes the infinite in order to gain reference: it lays out a plane of simply undefined coordinates that each time, through the action of partial observers, defines states of affairs, functions, or referential propositions." In turn, art "wants to create the finite that restores the infinite." This is why we can think of art by linking its finite-infinite to the infinity of philosophy. On the other hand, there is always a risk, whatever the light in which we receive it, of submitting art to the endless redefined finitudes peculiar to the state of affairs and the functions of science.

There is a risk of a standardisation of application, in which the rule becomes fatally reductive of the exception that all works of art naturally constitute in spite of the regularities within which it is found. Because these regularities are always secondary or at least insufficient in expressing the singularity from which all works emerge, in line with the "composite sensations" that it builds. This is why, inspired

particularly by Stern's extraordinary, precise visions of the world of infants as micro-elementary experiences of what he calls the present moment, I felt I had to insist on the dimension of analogy or isomorphism that these visions offer to the intelligence of films. This, rather than seeking to conform instants and moments in films too precisely to Stern's descriptions to try and produce some kind of transfer from them.

We see it in the astonishing example of the mirror neurons. The more groundbreaking, increasingly unprecedented advances of science seemed able to provide models capable of clarifying the functioning of material thought of imagination peculiar to all works of art, the more the thought attached to these works should be distinguished from it, as if in proportion to the suggestions that it receives.

This takes us back to endeavouring to understand the final pages of *What Is Philosophy?* They are devoted to the brain as a junction and not as unity, of the three planes of thought. Two formulas outline the problem. "If the mental objects of philosophy, art and science […] have a place, it will be in the deepest of the synaptic fissures, in the hiatuses, intervals, and meantimes of a non-objectifiable brain, in a place where to go in search of them will be to create." "Philosophy, art and science are not the mental objects of an objectified brain but the three aspects under which the brain becomes subject."[28]

This insistence therefore supposes for science, through its models of objectification and recognition, "to make evident the chaos into which the brain itself, as subject of knowledge, plunges."[29] The probabilistic and risky nature of synaptic, electrical and chemical connections is thus determinable beyond all links, the guarantee of "the free effect that varies according to the creation of concepts, sensations, or functions themselves." Hence, through the irreducibility that remains between the three planes of thought, analogies between the problems

facing each one in accordance with its own level and the interferences to which they are prey.

We can now go back to that opposition that Deleuze expressed in one of his two interviews, if you remember, between a "deficient brain of an idiot" and "a creative brain," between "the lower brain" of bad cinema and that of "real cinema."

This opposition is obviously controversial. Deleuze borrows these terms in *The Time-Image* from the great Russian writer Andrei Bely in his novel *Petersburg*.[30] In part he only recovers the tension between the non-objectifiable brain and the objectified brain in *What Is Philosophy?* But this part is essential. It makes it possible for the future-subject of the brain to agree with the invention of art as the virtualities of science rather than the regulatory standards of scientific objectivism. Because we know, and neurobiologists insist, that each brain is a singular individual brain, just as, in another way, any work of art is.

This brings us back to the question of evaluation of films that Deleuze was trying to answer by opposing the two ideas of the brain. How does one evaluate a good film, the good films in the cinema? One might answer, as Deleuze does in his books, that it is by the capacity that these films give him to think of them philosophically, to produce concepts from them. But it is also thanks to the opportunity they provide for true analyses of detail at levels that are not yet glimpsed enough, with a view to what we can call their molecular unconscious. We can also say that this analysis is conducted more or less by audio-visual media or just in words, which they allow us to develop as a commentary, writing, their "writability" if you like.

Thus, from one side of the brain to the other, we can say, where film is concerned, that only the analysis that we can make of it is authentic. An analysis

that is both finite and infinite. In itself, in one sense, it has only the endurance of its reading, as Barthes said at the beginning of *S/Z*, before giving in to the starring of the text, to the myriad effects of its unbridled structuralism. He wrote for example: "There is no other *proof* of a reading than the quality and endurance of its systematic."[31]

In this sense, there is no science of the cinema. There is no science of the viewer; there are only the spectator's thoughts and experiences. Advances in science enable us, as far as possible, to pinpoint the spectator's thoughts; though they cannot compensate for them. If we accept that the day will come (soon or in the distant future?) when it will be possible to have an exhaustive super-scanner of all a spectator's cerebral and corporal information while watching a film, we will still have to know how to read and interpret this huge score. After that, we have to know that it will be valid, in spite of all it might imply, for only one film and even for only one spectator. There is always the fear that the film and the spectator are all the more average, standardised, attuned to the dominant cinema, that one wants to address a supposed truth of the film and its spectator in a sort of monstrous, targeted freeze-frame. This is why, in their dogmatic application of knowledge of the cognitive sciences, most cognitive theoreticians of the cinema are, for example, inevitably attracted by Steven Spielberg's films and Hollywood blockbusters.

On the contrary, this is forever the priceless lesson of Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962) (and that of *Je t'aime, Je t'aime* [1968] by Alain Resnais, who repeats the attempt in a different way): we understand that the experience of the subject in search of a truth that is peculiar to the production of images turns back on itself in accordance with a specific subjective time, in order to fulfil a man's individual destiny, even if this man is also testifying for the species. All science of art therefore lives in the tension between real science and the impossible science of the single being reached by Barthes at the turning point of *Camera Lucida*, when confronted

with the photograph of his mother as a child, the so-called winter garden photograph.[32] He said: "a new science for each object,"[33] to take to the limit the paradox whose terms must be kept alive.

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1. This article is the result of two presentations, one at the Sorbonne at a workshop devoted to Gilles Deleuze and the other a more complex lecture in Istanbul on 4 April 2007 as part of a cycle on Deleuze and the cinema organised by Ali Akai. [Originally published as "Une pensée du cerveau", in *Gilles Deleuze et les images*, ed. François Dosse et al. (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 2008), 187-95.] (E.N.)

2. Repeated in Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990,* trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 60-66. (E.N.)

3. Repeated in Deleuze, "The Brain Is the Screen: An Interview with Gilles Deleuze", trans. Marie Therese Guirgis, in *The Brain Is the Screen: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Cinema*, ed. Gregory Flaxman (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 366-67. (E.N.)

4. Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990*, 60.

5. Ibid., 61.

6. Deleuze, "The Brain Is the Screen," 366-67.

7. Gilbert Simondon, *L'Individu et sa genèse physico-biologique* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1964). Not translated into English, except the Introduction which appears in Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter, eds., *Incorporations* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 297–319. (E.N.)

8. Raymond Ruyer, *Genèse des formes vivantes* (Paris: Flammarion, 1958). Not translated into English. (E.N.)

9. Steven Rose, *The Conscious Brain* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973). (E.N.)

10. Jean-Pierre Changeux, *Neuronal Man: The Biology of Mind*, trans. Laurence Garey (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997). (E.N.)

11. Gilles Deleuze, *The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London and New York: Continuum, 2000), 203-05.

12. António Damásio, *Descartes' Error: Emotions, Reason and the Human Brain (* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1994); *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1999); *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2003).

13. Damásio, *Descartes' Error*, xiv.

14. Damásio, *The Feeling of What Happens*, 188.

15. Damásio, "Film, Conscience and Emotion: From the Perspective of the Brain." This article was originally published in German in the catalogue *Kino im Kopf. Psychologie und Film seit Sigmund Freud* on the occasion of an exhibition concerning Freud in Berlin organised by Filmmuseum and Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek, Verlag Bertz+Fischer, Berlin, 2006.

16. Daniel Stern, *The Interpersonal World of the Infant* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

17. Stern, *The Present Moment in Psychotherapy and Everyday Life* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004).

18. See "Le dépli des émotions," *Trafic* 43 (Autumn 2002).

19. Stern, *The Present Moment*, 75ff.

20. G. Rizzolatti, L. Folgassi, and V. Gallese, "Les neurones miroirs," *Pour la Science* (January 2007): 44-49; V. Ramachandran and L. Oberman, "Les miroirs brisés de l'autisme," *Pour la Science* (January 2007): 50-57.

21. Vittorio Gallese, "The 'Shared Manifold' Hypothesis. From Mirror Neurons to Empathy," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 8, nos. 5-7 (2001): 33-50; "The Roots of Empathy: The Shared Manifold Hypothesis and the Neural Basis of Intersubjectivity," *Psychopathology* 36 (2003): 171-80.

22. Gallese, "Intentional Attunement. The Mirror Neuron System and Its Role in Interpersonal Relations" (paper published in an online conference about the mirror-neurons, 2005), acessed 20 October 2010, http://66.201.40.136/mirror/papers/1.

23. This is why Gallese refers to Stern's founding book in the second of the articles quoted (175).

24. A problematic evaluation was presented by Robin Curtis, "Expanded Empathy: Movement, Mirror Neurons and Einfühlung" (paper presented at the colloquy *Narration and Spectatorship in Moving Images: Perception, Imagination, Emotion*, Academy for Film and Television, Potsdam, 20-23 July 2006).

25. Stern, *The Present Moment*, 35-58.
26. Ibid., 28.
27. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 197.
28. Ibid., 209-10.
29. Ibid., 215-16.
30. Deleuze, *The Time-Image*, 205. Bely wrote "everything that has flickered by — was only an irritation of the cerebral membrane, if not an indisposition of the cerebellum." (Andrei Bely, *Petersburg*, trans. Robert A. Maguire and John E. Malmstad [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979], 21).
31. Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 11.
32. Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), 67.
33. Ibid., 8.

MUCOUS, MONSTERS AND ANGELS:

IRIGARAY AND ZULAWSKI'S *POSSESSION*

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This article will offer an analysis of Andrej Zulawski's *Possession* (1981) with the work of Luce Irigaray to suggest female desire both is and can create monsters. Through the parabolic configuration and ultimate collapse of the transcendental mystical with the carnal, mucosal monsters can be understood as angels enveloping and unfurling configurations of pleasure beyond phallologocentrism. Extending this exploration I will suggests spectatorship as mucosal, and the screen as angelic-monstrous, which through shifting from signifying to mystifying, forms with the spectator a mucosal ethical relation. Irigaray states: "Perhaps the visible needs the tangible but this need is not reciprocal."[1] She directs us away from the visible as the phallic apprehensible through demarcation of form as solid, subjectivity as rigid and recognition or repudiation as objectifying dialectic distance toward mucous as feminine carnal interaction.

Historically, monsters have been the objects of knowledge, of analysis, and of study. The reason to study monsters is to know the unknowable by forcing the monster into phallologocentric structures and hence control that which proves social structures are arbitrary. Essentially monsters are able to emerge as perceptible as failures or aberrant versions of the dominant, or they are rendered unregistering. Women have long been the objects of monster studies, of scientific, psychoanalytic and philosophical treatises. The uterus is now available synthetically while men rage against women who abort. Women do not own their monstrosity; it emerges through an isomorphic logic of science on one side and the religious right on the other. "As for [women's] own history," writes Irigaray,

> we must reexamine it thoroughly to understand why this sexual difference has not had a chance to flourish, either on an empirical or transcendental level, that is, why it has failed to acquire an ethics, aesthetics, logic or religion of its own.[2]

In cinema studies, numbers of film theorists have highlighted the two tendencies in film to either align the woman with the monster or have her abducted and coveted by it. Both demand being saved by the hero to restore her place in phallic regimes, which is of course no place except subsidiary to, but less than, the male. Most importantly, the desire to know the monster alleviates its threat and wonder. If women's sexuality is monstrous for its failure to be equivalent, then should women's sexuality be thought it would be thought with difference not constituted as a heterocentric discourse of lack and phallus but of an undifferentiated monstrous merging; monstrous only because it collapses binary machines and liberates desire through becoming-more-than-one without subsuming difference. Women's sexuality may be monstrous but here the monstrous lover is that which catalyses thought, pleasure and fluid mystic carnality. In this sense, for the purpose of this article, monstrous acts of pleasure can be understood through Irigaray as angelic openings, and monsters as angels. Monstrous sex is neither reproductive in the actual or the performative virtual sense and is not located in one spatial configuration. No dialect exists, so creation is necessary; production over reproduction. It has no genesis or expiation but is fluid spatially and temporally. Nothing lacks, so no fulfillment is required.

> The consequences of such non-fulfillment of the sexual act remain […] to take only the most beautiful example […] let us consider the *angels*. These messengers are never immobile nor do they ever dwell in one single place. As mediators of what

> has not yet taken place […] these angels therefore open up the closed nature of the world, identity, action, history.[3]

Female morphology is constituted through qualities of the monster — multiple, ambiguous, openings without lack, folds without hierarchy. Female sexual organs refuse to be singular or nomenclatured — they are more than one but less than the one of the phallus. The most influential example of this expression of female corporeality as a carnal morphology of difference comes with Irigaray's model of the two lips. If the two lips, always touching and touched, never alone but never subsumed by the other, the same but entirely unique, configure a model of anti-phallic excess and pleasure, then the matter of connectivity is the mucous. "The mucous, in fact, is experienced from within. In the prenatal and loving night known by both sexes. But it is far more important in setting up the intimacy of bodily perception and its threshold for women."[4] Here body *is* threshold and nothing more than perception, as Irigaray's is a temporal configuration, thus the morphology of the two lips is not a structure but a metamorphic infinitesimal plane, and the mucous the consistency of that plane. Beginning on a material and tactically simple level, woman's sexual fluid as mucosal is a monstrosity — it is not delineated, not well defined and not present, only at the time of orgasm. Women's desire, like the monster itself, is literally, slimy. Monsters are not particular taxonomical teratologies. They are, rather, aberrations — the multiple, the metamorphic, the hybrid, the in-between, that which is without genealogy or genesis and whose destiny is unpredictable. They are both germinal and excessive, not yet formed and teeming with over-formed incomprehensible elements. How can we affirm female difference without essentialising woman? How can we affirm female sexuality independent of

complementing or fitting in with male sexuality? Is female sexuality a teratological enquiry? This is the ultimate and unanswerable question of Zulawski's *Possession*. *Possession* is the story of Anna (Isabelle Adjani) whose sexuality is suffocated by her husband Mark (Sam Neil), with whom she has a little boy. She also suffers a forced freedom by her lover Heinrich (Heinz Bennett) who says to her "I can take you because I am free." His words indicate that unless she submits to infidelity and on-tap sexuality she is not free. This kind of rhetorical faux liberation is reminiscent of the sexual "revolution" which freed men from having to use manipulative seduction techniques and account for insemination. As a result of Anna being bookended by the machinations of oppression as either refusal or pressure, she becomes "pregnant" and, in a Parisian metro tunnel, howlingly gives "birth" to a messy viscosity of blood and white fluid. In excess of form, the liquefied state of this "phenomenon" that Anna produces is blood; white fluid which could be seminal, pus, sap, a fluid integral to a non-human monstrosity, and a sticky slick of undifferentiated mucosity. Irigaray offers "the flesh of the rose petal. Sensation of the mucous regenerated […] somewhere between blood, sap and the not yet of efflorescence."[5] The rose petal's resonance with female genitalia is clear in its multi-labial form where each petal is divisible and indivisible from the next and the presenting and beneath planes are singular expressions. The petals are membranes of within and without and their shiny appearance belies their subtly furred texture. Any relation with it is inherently inflective and enveloping. Anna puts this amorphous fluid mass in a rented flat and slowly this mass develops through larval stages from blob to vegetal (florescent?) entity, to tentacled creature, and eventually it ends up as the double of her husband. However, stating this is its final form is misguided as the film ends before the double Mark's next form can be gleaned. At its early stage, Anna is involved with a formless

form, a liquid elemental with which her carnal unions could only constitute an enveloping, a bi-invagination rather than phallo-penetration. Anna's female sexual slime literally evolves into another form of person, a double but with nothing in common with the primary male. Here Zulawski extends the satisfaction women get from animals and other non-human lovers in innumerable monster movies, such the various King Kongs and Beauty and the Beasts. The monster is far more liberating for Anna than her phalloanthropomorphic options.

> In fact, the grisly glimpses of Rambaldi's hippogriff aren't nearly as upsetting as the ravenous pas de deux of the protagonists, who come close to simply sinking their canines into each other's throats.[6]

While Atkinson's description of the monster as hippogriff seems unimaginative, his emphasis on the antagonistic nature of one sexuality being consumed by another seen in the human-human sexual encounters in *Possession* is crucial. Like Anna's seething, foaming lover, women's sexuality is undefined, amorphous, unreliable, mobile, and pliable. This is not necessarily what women's pleasure is, but it describes the way it is yet to be conceived. "Already constructed theoretical language does not speak of the mucous. The mucous remains a remainder, producer of delirium, of dereliction, of wounds, sometimes of exhaustion."[7] Because women's desire is this in-between it shares much with the great icon of the in-between, the anomaly, the monster. In this film the unbound desire of a woman literally externalizes and becomes a monster. The monster is the object of adoration and aberration. To human sexuality Anna's response seems to suggest "if you don't want to partner me as monster, I'll make my own partner." In referencing Irigaray's

crucial confirmation of woman's relations of pleasure as it could be understood in this article as a relation with monsters, and woman as themselves monsters, Boothroyd affirms "a key role of the Lips in Irigaray's account is their figuring of the (female) sexuate relation to self."[8]

The monster evokes fascination and disgust. In the film, Anna shows disgust, not at self, but at the rigidity of phallocentric male sexual paradigms. Those who uphold these paradigms show disgust at the monster lover she has created. Monsters are not spectacles to be observed and exiled or rectified. Monsters given a spatial genesis and destination as outside, but whose protean-temporal aspects and indeed any specificity or singularity whatsoever was repudiated. Fascination produces wonder which is desire as aversion and disgust as irresistible. Monsters, unlike sticky mucous but not mucosal aliens (such as those of *The Thing* [1982] or the *Alien* films [1979, 1986, 1992, 1997]), do not exist in space but within a very concrete world of being apprehended by the third. *Teras* refers not to the monster but to its verb-affect. They are not unto themselves and thus not self-authorized. Authority, authorial intent and authorization are only present from the desire of the third. Where Anna and the creature create a two-within-as-one, the spectator is the third that may take their relation, the image and the screen itself as events of desire which are mucosal, a relation of opening to infinity, not distance, objectivity and othering. Thus ethical monsters must be the third that refuses to speak or know but which opens to the voluminous absence of both discourse and molar perception of the monster as thing (or too much thing, or nothing) which is liminal relation itself, no longer two forms but one enveloping matter. Irigaray sees woman's ethics precisely as this: "The woman's ethics, which is an opening of and to another threshold."[9]

Anna's creation explores the relationship between a feminine, fluid sexuality and modern monsters — hybrids, animal, vegetal and molecular unnatural participations,

devolved subjectivity, techno and viral-selves. The face of Anna is subjugated to being Marian, mother, lover, but cinematically it refuses the fetishistic Eurydice face which allows woman to be known through the atrophy the phallic gaze causes with its phantasy of revelation and consumption. Irigaray sees the woman's face as a form of germinal illumination, light without form reflecting the mucosal plane:

> The beloved woman's face […] is full of what cannot be said but is not nothing — thanks to the already and the not yet. A taking shape of matter that precedes any articulation in language. Like vegetative growth, animal anticipation, a sculptor's roughcast. An aesthetic matrix that has not yet produced results but is recognised as a prerequisite to the completion of all gestures.[10]

The in-between-ness of these bodies, Anna's, the monster's, their relation as an in-between-ness, and especially in-between-ness in gender and finitude, creates an open space, a pure potentiality of feminine desire. "The mucous refers to an in-between medium. And because it is in-between the mucous remains (associated with the) unfinished, the in-finite."[11] Like women, monsters are what they evoke, and like demons thus are evoked. Numerous films show us the identity of the be-between as threateningly monstrous — the witch child, both woman and girl, both naïve and too knowing, and the vampire woman. Vampires splice animal-human-fog. Vampires pose threats as they are the seducing rather than repellant monster. They offer an unfurled potentiality for alternate desire, so many women find them enigmatic and their own vampirism is both carnal and carnivorous. Their misalignment of blood resonates with *Possession*'s use of blood abjection. Where *Don't Look Now* (1973) misidentifies what red symbolizes, resulting in death, *Possession* uses Anna's productive, creative, abortive

blood to flood and wash away signifying symbolic systems, showing the female and desire itself as fluid.

Anna goes crazy as a natural progression from her mimetic sexuality, a strict sexuality which is made to conform to and complement and be controlled by male desire in which she is simply a cog. *Possession* shows what happens when heterosexual women are unable to express sexuality through their difference from rather than annexation to male. *Possession* shows the conundrum of woman as reflection of Mark's male narcissism/ego/infantile need, and disgust at female sexuality *and* female lack of sexual interest. Her other option, Heinrich, is a new age false assimilation of another but a no less restrictive paradigm. Inevitably both force themselves upon her whether in the name of ownership (Mark) or freedom (Heinrich) claims. Mark is neither adult nor child. Their own child is in a permanent state of crisis — he runs around making ambulance sounds, Mark calls Anna mummy in reference to both of them. Anna is both Mark's mummy and lover, the monster both Anna's child and lover. So the mother/whore double is actually simultaneously the contraction of the sexuality of two into one, yet not morally defined. "You are mucus and always double, before any speculation."[12] Female sexuality in phallocentrism is speculative as reflective — two women, the double of Anna, the mysteriously arrived schoolteacher/virgin also played by Adjani, Helen (in white) and the virgin mother dressed in blue, Anna. One key aspect of female sexuality's subjugation to the male is the shift of female sexuality to that of maternity. In a perverse turn of the virgin-mother barren-whore paradigm, *Possession* shows that the mother has failed because she is not a whore. In the scene where she kneels before the crucifixion in Church, Anna's pleasure staring up at Christ is pleasure in god as unseen/unseeable pleasure, the sexual mystery, sexuality as mystery or volitional idea from the woman herself.

Anna masturbates while looking at Christ's bleeding forehead. Anna cuts her throat because she is choking on traditional sexuality; she minces meat, less castrative than opening up the mucosal wound. Mark makes multiple wounds in his arm; vulvic symbols but also a giving up of dominance for autoeroticism or non-traditional eroticism. Anna says to him "doesn't hurt does it?" meaning castration does not hurt; rather it opens up desire to new paradigms of flesh and desire. Irigaray's morphology of the lips offers openings through closing and pressing. She states angels create openings. Anna is constituted by opened flesh, she expresses vulvic sexual stigmata and so shows openings form multi-faceted folds and closings open out flesh potential. Nothing is empty nor full, nothing concealed nor revealed, and the wound creates rather than slaughters. Anna passes through the various stages which oppression elicits. She is hysterical, she is violent toward herself, she abandons her son, she shows psychosomatic symptoms and finally because nothing works she physically externalises her desire and it exits her body as a result of frustration. It is the opposite of neurotic expiation or cathexis, it is creation. Anna's is not an expulsion of hysteria or repressed desire; it is an act of generative love.

Blood as feminine in the film is menstrual because repudiative of maternity and simultaneously not signifying death. The presence of ambiguous and arbitrary blood in the film spans the blood of sacrifice, woman dying for the sins of man — dying as sexual pun but more importantly female sexuality sacrificed for the primacy of the male. Anna vomits white when she kills and when she miscarries. She vomits out the symbol of male sexual satisfaction but she is also vomiting milk, vomiting out the subsumation of her sexuality through being a mother. She vomits blood with the white fluid — merging the sacred viscosity of semen with the sanguinity of menses as an indicator of women's sexuality without fertility. This recalls the vampire. Anna is

doubled as mother and wife but antithetical to Mary and Mary Magdalene. When she is in her blue Virgin Mary dress it is usually unbuttoned, but here she is reluctant to be touched in a traditional way. When she is sexualized her form of desire, perhaps like Magdalene's desire for Christ, is neither necessarily sexual nor non-sexual but exists along another line altogether. The ecclesiastic theme asks questions, such as what is faith and what is chance? Faith is the belief in something one cannot believe in logically. Faith is belief in the unseeable and unknowable but nonetheless that which affects reality adamantly. Faith in female roles is the faith of which Anna speaks. She must choose between faith in her plight as a mother and a wife, faith that this role will fulfill her, directly mirroring the faith in Christianity which demands the same. Or chance. Chance is the becoming to faith's being. Faith is in the word without speaker, thus acquiescence without mediation or mucosal relation.

> The contrast between the saying and the said as the disjunction between *jouissance* and being, drive and signifier […] another figuration of the sensible transcendental, bringing together the antithetical figures of the angel and the mucous […] as a marker of *jouissance* ethical saying would be a passage between the anarchic diachrony of the past that has never been present and the infinite future of becoming.[13]

Faith adheres to tradition without knowing why, accepting without questioning. Chance is accepting pure unbound possibility, questioning met with cacophony. Anna is forced to choose between faith in heterosexuality or chance of something else through unbinding desire. Faith is phallic sexuality, chance is monster sex, sex in transit, nomadic sex. Anna's monster is her lover, but it is never itself a "thing," it keeps changing, transforming. Its mucosal expression says much with the opening of its labial

seduction, mouth, amorphous genitals which traverse its entire form, but nothing is said. Anna does not care, it is chance which offers her a lover that will never set down a sexual narrative. Carnal mucosity in Irigaray makes this monster angelic.

> The angel is what passes through the envelope or envelopes from one end to the other, postponing every deadline, revising every decision, undoing the very idea of repetition […]. They are not unconnected with sex […] it is as if the angel were the figural version of a sexual being not yet incarnate.[14]

Anna says "I have seen half of god's face here. The other half is you." Like the two Maries, the film offers up continuous doubles. But the second double is not the alternative to the first. The second is the repudiation of the paradigms which allow the first to exist. Unbound Anna is not virgin, not whore, not frigid, not hysterical, she is precisely this, the *not* of all these things but not able to be defined positively or fixed. The second Mark which the tentacled lover becomes is never expressed; he escapes at the film's conclusion. Like the double, he escapes definition, we never know what he is, all we know is what he is not, which is the original Mark. "You are mucus and always double, before any speculation."[15] He is the creature without a genealogy in traditional sexual paradigms. He has no sexual memory, nor tradition, nor even humanity. Like a real monster, he is a creature without parents. But there is a third Anna. And the third is the holy innocent, the truly sacred figure. Anna's third persona is neither chance nor faith. Mark's is the child, neither fake nor real, neither adult nor child. Anna's self-made lover shifts through many metamorphoses. The most interesting is the male body, with which she has sex in a relatively "normal" missionary way. But the head of the monster at this time is formed of many tentacles. The tentacles as multiple phallic symbols but

more than this is the multiple projectiles do not have their functions pre-signified. We see her having sex with the thing and we hear she has had sex with it way before it had a body or head. Which leads to the question "*what* does she do with it?" What is this sexuality? More correctly we ask "what is (the) becoming of these two/union/proliferation?" It is emphatically sexual but entirely extricated from any hetero or even perverse paradigms. She is happy. It is like female sexuality itself, unformed, incomplete, unpredictable but nonetheless desirable for what it can do that is not laid out in pre-established sexual acts or paradigms. It is an actual materialization of female desire as not repressed but that which has never been allowed to be acknowledged outside masculine paradigms at all. Like female sexuality, the creature is sticky, amorphous, and monstrous. And it continues to develop without quickening; unformed, unbound, and unstoppable. Unleashed female sexuality is not symbolically but actively and materially monstrous. The flesh as fold itself is a fluid inflection, blurring and mucosal. This resists the risk in creating yet another binary from the mechanics of fluids versus solids. Mucosal describes the fluids emergent of and from the vulva which connects the vulva's folds with itself and blurs demarcations of externality. The prevalence of the visual, the solid, the demarcated, the relegated, the known, the phantasy of objectivity, even the question itself ablate and atrophy fluidity, connectivity, accountable subjectivity, thought, the multi-sensorial and speech which is not through the language of the same/one. In the fold, alterity is encountered within the self, through the other, and the other encounters the self in ways the self cannot autonomously express. Each element has aspects which are present to self and not present to self but to the other, and, simultaneously apprehends aspects of the other not present to itself.

The breakdown between subject and object, other and same, is desire, according to Irigaray "which cannot be equated with that of the masculine world, as a result of the

way it lives in mucous."[16] So the relation between the fascinated and the event-monster constitutes a mucosal life. Monstrous desire is the driving force of the ways in which subjectivity unfolds and refolds, shifting paradigms and self as metamorphic, always and in spite of itself launching upon new becomings. The politico-ethical moment of sexual difference for itself comes when the self seeks to fold with the unlike or inappropriate. Mucosal folding is stickier, the folding becomes a gluing, and the texture of the element dissipates into shared luminal skin. Dialectic desire maintains distance and therefore subject and object do not involute, reducing the unfold-refold potential of the subject. The creature is evolved because it is devolved, away from two genders to both more than one and less than one, both part of Anna and entirely different to Anna. Anna says that the creature is like an insect, that insects are not gendered. It looks like a squid, also a non-gendered cephalopod as cephalopods do not have sex intimately. A female cephalopod reproduces through her head; here the female produces her sexuality from her head as a cerebral carnal corporeality, the "logic" of difference. There are symbolic resonances between the monster and female sexuality — it is leaky, unbound, revolting, unpredictable, dangerous, fascinating, multiple, a world of interest, potential and threat to existing sexual narratives. But also the threat of interkingdoms or meshed worlds themselves is raised. The skin, the texture and the threat of monsters are constituted as scaly, slimy, infective, bacterial, blood-sucking and ultimately it is the choice of the spectator as to whether they will enter into creative relations with these monsters or reify traditional lines of dominance by slaughtering the monster. Unlike many interpretations of compassion, monstrous desire does not allow other things to exist because of what they are but that they are — no equivalence, no seriality, structure or proportionality, it is perception of imperceptible presence. The grace toward monsters as that which negotiates thresholds of female/male and non-

human opens to possibility without dialectic encounter — accidental, inevitable or volitional. Women are not "things" but continuity. Planes affect and synthesise with each other based on inflective folding and refolding. Our monstrous desire for cinema forms the final, greatest and most gracious of monstrous love hybrid pleasures.

Anna creates and explores her mucosal monster beyond a love object toward becoming an angel of passage. She, like we, sees it only in half light, but it is always enough in that it is tactile and viscous, teasing and exploiting the viscosity of the eye as seeing beyond its capacities of recognition, making the visual a protean fleshly matter without form and the "image" as the screen itself a mucosal skein. Just as Irigaray associates the mucosal with angels and Anna's monster is an angel, so we can think the screen as a form of angelic mediator, passing us within and through a mucosal screen. Lorraine emphasises Irigaray's are "angels of passage"[17] and in relation to the eye shutting off to see with the body, flesh and touch Vasseleu suggests "The blink maintains the eye as mucous as a latency which, while not of the visible, resuscitates the eye as a body passage."[18] We blink at the incoherent screen, not to believe our eyes posits an option toward a revolutionary turn to belief without recognition, or blindness to connectivity with the event of the image where the dialectic compulsion of distance and the phallic eye against the smooth screen is maintained. "From beyond," writes Irigaray "the angel returns with inaudible or unheard of words in the here and now. Like an inscription written in invisible ink on a fragment of the body, skin, membrane, veil, colourless and unreadable until it interacts with the right substance, the matching body."[19] Anna in her monster lover and we, with(in) the screen, trail the unreadable text-ured flesh of unrepresentable but no less perceptible mucosal fold. The image is without form, colour, script, until we become angelic with it or allow the angelic mucosal rapture to take us away, not

toward a register which privileges flesh or touch (as Irigaray has been criticised for doing), but which collapses with us only when we have opened our spectatorial selves as porous matter we do not recognise. Irigaray attempts to collapse touch as antagonistic to, a feminine version of, or even an independent sense from, touch.[20] This is not to suggest that the invisible is revealed, that there will come a moment of transcendental recognition through resonance and relation as identification. In her reading of Merleau-Ponty, Irigaray warns against any exploration of invisibility as the perceivable event beyond recognition risking, in a phallic specular mechanisation, "wanting to appropriate the invisible."[21] For each image, each frame and flicker the spectatorial self adapts to the specificity and molecular intensity of the image, and we are neither independent from nor dependent on its content to register meaning and/as pleasure. The image, like mucous itself, is not a visible plane but a sticky blurred envelopment, and each inflection of the envelope opening out and folding in creates a new plane of relation of spectatorial pleasure. We are not differentiated from image or screen. Thus we can no longer know what parts are us, what parts the image and hence we no longer know who we are or what it represents or reflects in a scopto-phallic regime. We see the image through a mucosal filter, seeing in a mucosal way that refuses demarcation and apprehension and most importantly, relation through opposition, "a look that is too close to make use of a certain perspective, of discrimination, distance or mastery."[22] Mucosal spectatorship, the angelic image, the screen as passage, offer an ethics of difference which exploits the pleasures of cinema art as they allow us to succumb and gift ourselves to the experience of the image without sight and the self without subject. Just as Anna gifts herself to the monster she has created without submission or domination but with mucosal love, so we create the image with us as mucosal spectatorial pleasure.

> Nor will I ever see the mucous, that most intimate interior of my flesh, neither the touch of the outside of the skin of my fingers, nor the perception of the inside of these same fingers, but another threshold of the passage from outside to inside, from inside to outside, between inside and outside, between outside and inside.[23]

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1. Luce Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 135.
2. Irigaray, "Sexual Difference," trans. Sèan Hand, in *The Irigaray Reader*, ed. Margaret Whitford (London: Blackwell, 1992), 173.
3. Ibid.
4. Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 93.
5. Ibid., 166.
6. Michael Atkinson, "Blunt Force Trauma: Andrej Zulawski," in *Exile Cinema: Filmmakers at Work Beyond Hollywood*, ed. Michael Atkinson (Albany: State University of New York, 2008), 84.
7. Irigaray, *To Speak Is Never Neutral*, trans. Gail Schwab (London: Athlone, 2002), 244.
8. David Boothroyd, "Labial Feminism: Body Against Body with Luce Irigaray," *Parallax* 3 (1996): 73.
9. Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 212.
10. Ibid., 211.
11. Anne-Claire Mulder, *Divine Flesh, Embodied Word: Incarnation as a Hermeneutical Key to a Feminist Theologian's Reading of Luce Irigaray's Work* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 239.
12. Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, trans. Joanne Collie and Judith Still (New York: Routledge, 1992), 66.
13. Ewa Plonowska Ziarek, *Ethics of Dissensus: Postmodernity, Feminism, and the Politics of Radical Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 171.
14. Irigaray, "Sexual Difference," 173.
15. Irigaray, *Elemental Passions*, 66.
16. Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 109.
17. Tamsin Lorraine, *Irigaray and Deleuze: Experiments in Visceral Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 227.
18. Cathryn Vasseleu, *Textures of Light: Vision and Touch in Irigaray, Levinas, and Merleau-Ponty* (London: Routledge, 1998), 70.
19. Irigaray, *Sex and Genealogies*, trans. Gillian C. Gill (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 36.
20. Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 157.
21. Ibid., 153.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid., 142.

FILM THEORY MEETS ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY; OR, FILM STUDIES AND *L'AFFAIRE SOKAL*

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> [A]nalytic philosophy is primarily known for its detailed and subtle discussions of concepts in the philosophy of language and the theory of knowledge, the very concepts that postmodernism so badly misunderstands [...]. Because philosophy concerns the most general categories of knowledge, categories that apply to any compartment of inquiry, it is inevitable that other disciplines will reflect on philosophical problems and develop philosophical positions. Analytic philosophy has a special responsibility to ensure that its insights on matters of broad intellectual interest are available widely, to more than a narrow class of insiders.[1]

Last summer's academic farce involving the unwitting publication, by *Social Text*, of a physicist's parody of a poststructural, relativistic critique of science has generated a great deal of heat, and a little light along with it. In this respect, the event conforms to the unchanging laws of academic debate, if not the physical laws at stake in Alan Sokal's satire. To my knowledge, though, there has been little discussion of what it all might mean for film studies in particular. It would be nice to think that this was because film scholars were too smart to fall into the kind of trap laid by Sokal, that the adherents of poststructuralism within our community are not guilty of the kinds of sloppiness, ignorance or confusion that Sokal's hoax revealed among the editors of *Social Text*. But I doubt this. My sense is that many in our field just do not want to be bothered with the rather abstract, epistemological questions raised by *l'affaire Sokal*. After all, theory has been displaced by history, has it not? And do we not know, thanks to Richard Rorty, Jacques Derrida and others, that epistemology is a fruitless exercise in trying to provide some absolute foundation for our claims, a foundation as elusive, indeed as mythical as the Loch Ness monster?

These are just the kind of assumptions that the Sokal parody, however, throws into relief and brings into doubt. It begs the question, therefore, simply to assume that the kinds of question Sokal has posed are irrelevant to film studies. One of the finest commentaries on the affair, which actually brings out the pertinent issues in a clearer and more nuanced way than Sokal does himself, was written by the philosopher Paul Boghossian. In the quotation from this commentary at the head of this essay, Boghossian makes the point that the kinds of question raised by Sokal's hoax — epistemological questions, questions about truth and knowledge — are questions of pertinence to almost every field of enquiry. These are, moreover, questions which the tradition of analytic philosophy — the "core" tradition of Russell, Moore, and Quine, along with the tributaries of the pragmatism of James and Peirce, and the "ordinary-language" philosophy of the late Wittgenstein and Austin — has devoted itself to throughout this century. It is striking, then, that the fields of cultural enquiry — literary studies, film studies, and so forth — which in recent years have been preoccupied with epistemological issues (look no further than the various debates around realism and ideology, for example), should have so systematically disdained this tradition.

This was the starting point for a collection of essays, begun a few years ago by myself and Richard Allen, in which we hoped to bring to bear ideas drawn from analytic philosophy on problems in film theory (thereby continuing, and expanding, the efforts of writers like Noël Carroll and George M. Wilson). But we were acutely conscious, from the beginning, of the bias against analytic philosophy within film and related fields of study, along with a concomitant commitment to Continental philosophy. Of course, there are historical reasons for these prejudices - ones discussed by Allen and myself in the introduction to *Film Theory and Philosophy*[2] — but these no longer, if they ever did, provide a sufficient warrant to overlook the intellectual resources available to us within the analytic tradition. Rather than

rehearsing this argument here, however, I want to take a look at Peter Lehman's recent intervention on the question of pluralism in film studies,[3] published in *Cinema Journal*, as a way of showing an analytic approach in action, as well as demonstrating that the analytic tradition is itself pluralistic in character — and not the narrow, monolithic approach it is often mistakenly described as in hostile discussions of it.

Lehman's essay makes an argument for pluralism, which in many ways I am sympathetic to, but his argument undermines itself in certain crucial ways, and connects pluralism, unnecessarily, with certain undesirable implications. Consider the following passage:

> A prominent film scholar told me a few years ago that she did not believe that there was such a thing as the unconscious. Obviously, this position challenges the validity of Freudian and Lacanian methods of critical analysis. Just as obviously, we could say that either the statement is true or false, we should find out which, and we should adjust our methodologies accordingly. *But that may be neither possible nor desirable.* It would be more accurate to say that film scholars who proceed as if there were no unconscious will produce different kinds of knowledge about film than those who proceed as if there were an unconscious.[4]

The first thing to note about this passage is that it reduces questions of *truth* to questions of *utility* — or, to put it another way, it implies that epistemic criteria (what kind of knowledge does a claim provide? how can we assess its truth-value?) can or should be supplanted by pragmatic criteria (how useful is a claim relative to a particular end?). The effect of this is to relativize the notion of truth - Lehman speaks of "different kinds of knowledge" depending on one's own assumptions (in

this case, psychoanalytic or non-psychoanalytic assumptions). In slightly more technical terms, this is an example of *framework relativism*, according to which "truth" is only possible relative to a given framework of assumptions.[5] Lehman's statement advancing this position, however, is self-defeating. This becomes apparent when we arrive at the phrase "It would be more accurate...", because "accuracy" here is just another way of applying epistemic criteria, or talking about truth. (Note that Lehman does *not* write, at this point in his essay, "It would be more useful...").

To maintain that knowledge *is* our goal, and that this cannot be reduced to utility — or power, another great pretender — is not to assume that our truth claims have the status of absolute certainty.[6] Rather, one can strive for knowledge, and make truth claims, within the context of a *fallibilist* epistemology, in which no claim is assumed to be forever unproblematic, but in which competing claims or theories can be assessed according to the weight of evidence and argument that supports them.[7] Contra Lehman, then, it is certainly *possible* to ask epistemic questions about, for example, the existence of the unconscious, and to make judgements about the relative plausibility of claims that the unconscious exists, or does not exist, without assuming that our current judgements have the status of Absolute Truth.[8] Perhaps the key phrase here is "relative plausibility": just because we abandon any claim to final and absolute certainty, does not mean that we have to abandon assessing the likelihood of particular truth claims being true. Just because we cannot know for sure that our current theories about disease are correct, does not mean to say that we cannot say they are more plausible than, say, the misasmic theory of disease. And how many of us would want to live in world in which such radical scepticism was acted upon — a world in which, to follow my example, it was merely a matter of random choice whether a doctor followed the implications of the miasmic theory of disease or those of modern medicine? It is not only possible, then, but *desirable*,

that we observe epistemic criteria — indeed, it is far from clear that we could do without such criteria, as Lehman's own references to "accuracy" suggest.

Such a position does not rule out pluralism — to return to the object of Lehman's concern — but it does demand a more robust pluralism than the type Lehman seems to be calling for. A robust pluralism demands that we argue about the relative plausibility of psychoanalytic and other accounts of human motivation, on the basis of evidence and the soundness of arguments adducing this evidence, rather than ducking this responsibility and opting for a spurious democracy-among-theories (all theories are valid — it is just a question of finding their "useful" role). If the only criterion we have for assessing the value of research is its "usefulness," then clearly anything goes, because any claim is useful in one way or another, if only in the attainment of a fatter CV. Though Lehman's remarks are clearly well-intended, and directed against a kind of theoretical conformism nobody wants, they fall into the trap of wholly uncritical, "peaceful coexistence pluralism," to use Noël Carroll's phrase. In contrast to this, the robust pluralism of the analytic tradition is such that any claim can be considered, but if it is to be defended it must be honestly measured against epistemic criteria, and in the light of the consequences of the argument for related and competing arguments and assumptions.[9]

POSTSCRIPT

This short piece was originally delivered at the Society for Cinema Studies conference in Ottawa, Canada, in May 1997. Why republish such an antique piece now, thirteen years later? Reading the essay afresh, it strikes me that while there have certainly been significant changes in film studies, the fundamental questions that Sokal raised with his hoax are as important now as they were then. The

changes, first: analytic philosophy has a presence in the study of film in 2010 that it lacked in 1997. Perhaps the most obvious symptom of this is that it is common now to speak of "the philosophy of film," to mark out a sub-community of debate sustained by a mix of analytic philosophers and film studies scholars. The community was nascent in the mid-1990s but is more firmly established and institutionalized now: consider Paisley Livingston and Carl Plantinga's compendious anthology, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film*, published in 2008. But philosophical debate on film continues to be marked by the long-standing schism between analytic and Continental philosophy: even where the same or similar questions are posed, discussion usually proceeds within particular communities defined by their stance towards this underlying divide. Nowhere is this more evident than in relation to the "film as philosophy" question, where debates led by ideas from the Continental and analytic traditions proceed in parallel but with minimal interaction. A more unified forum for philosophical debate on film is one good *raison d'être* for *Cinema: Journal of Philosophy and the Moving Image*, the new journal that you are now reading.

There are exceptions to this general state of fragmentation: "analytic phenomenologists" such as Alva Noë and Shaun Gallagher draw in roughly equal measure on Continental phenomenology (Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty) and contemporary cognitive science, and argue in the analytic manner. In any event, beneath these trends, the two really fundamental issues raised in this brief essay persist. It remains true that all disciplines will (in the words of Boghossian) "develop philosophical positions" — even if these are buried in the assumptions of the field or particular debates within it. There is thus a philosophical job to be done — whoever does it — in bringing these "positions" or assumptions to light, and assessing them. And second, it remains true that truth counts, even as its doubters and detractors continue to cast it as an emperor without clothes. I think I can safely

venture that there will not be a contribution to this issue that does not bear the tell-tale signs of epistemic ambition, that is, the goal of saying something not merely useful, or powerful, or beautiful, or good, or shocking — but truthful. For such truth-seeking is an inescapable feature of all those human endeavours which inquire into the nature of the world, whatever banner they fly under.

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1. Paul Boghossian, "What the Sokal Hoax Ought to Teach Us," *Times Literary Supplement*, 13 December 1996: 15.

2. Richard Allen and Murray Smith, eds., *Film Theory and Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

3. Lehman's essay was originally delivered as a paper at the 1989 Society for Cinema Studies Conference. It is "recent," though, insofar as the paper has just been published, along with an afterword written in 1996. See Peter Lehman, "Pluralism versus the Correct Position," *Cinema Journal* 36, no. 2 (1997): 114-19.

4. Ibid., 117 (my emphasis).

5. The phrase "framework relativism" was coined by Paisley Livingston. See Paisley Livingston, *Literary Knowledge: Humanistic Inquiry and the Philosophy of Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 23.

6. As Lehman implies, "Pluralism versus the Correct Position," 116.

7. Fallibilism was propounded by C. S. Peirce, who wrote: "the first step toward *finding out* is to acknowledge that you do not satisfactorily know already; so that no blight can so surely arrest all intellectual growth as the blight of cocksureness" in Peirce, *Collected Papers*, vols. I and II, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), xi.

8. Perhaps I should add, to avert claims that this is just another exercise in Freud-bashing, that there are analytic philosophers who defend psychoanalysis. It is, though, no coincidence that this is the example that Lehman lights upon, as the claims of psychoanalysis continue to be among the most contentious in contemporary western culture.

9. In a response to a briefer, oral version of this paper, Lehman defended his argument by insisting that it was intended as a reflection on matters of pedagogical practice, not theoretical argument among professional scholars. Once again, I would certainly agree with him that it is the responsibility of teachers to give the arguments and theories they teach a fair shake. I, for one, am not in the business of dispensing Truths to students, but rather teaching them how to think critically. But teaching them how to think critically precisely involves teaching them to assess the claims of various theories against various criteria, including epistemic criteria. Students ultimately have to make up their own minds, and that is as it should be. But we renege on our responsibilities as teachers if we fail to give them the means to do this.

GEORGES DIDI-HUBERMAN :

« .... CE QUI REND LE TEMPS LISIBLE, C`EST L´IMAGE »

Entretien réalisé par

Susana Nascimento Duarte et Maria Irene Aparício

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À l'occasion de son passage à Lisbonne, à la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, pour la conférence "Peuples Exposés", intégrée dans le cycle de conférences *A República por vir – arte, política e pensamento para o século XXI*[1] (*La République à venir – art, politique et pensée pour le XXIème siècle)*, nous avons rencontré Georges Didi-Huberman pour l'entretien qui suit, autour de son livre *Remontages du temps Subi. L'œil de l'histoire, 2* (Éditions de Minuit, 2010).

CINEMA (C) : Pour contextualiser, on peut dire que Remontages du temps subi. L'œil de l'histoire, 2 *poursuit ce que vous essayez de penser tout le long de votre œuvre, c'est-à-dire, « les conditions de la pensée des images ». Ce livre traduit ce souci au niveau particulier de ce que vous appelez vous-même « le questionnement du rôle des images dans la lisibilité de l'histoire » et dans ce sens, il intègre et prolonge le même univers problématique de vos ouvrages les plus récents, tels que* Survivances des lucioles *(2009), et surtout* Images malgré tout *(2004) et Quand les images prennent position.* L'œil de l'histoire, 1 *(2009). Pouvez-vous commenter ces deux contextes, le plus global et le plus local, du rapport de votre livre au reste de votre œuvre ?*

GEORGES DIDI-HUBERMAN (GDH) : Le plus global est probablement que chaque fois que j`ai étudié un objet qui m`intéressait, je me suis posé la question des conditions de sa description historique. C`est-à-dire que, par exemple, quand je me suis intéressé à Fra Angelico en Italie, pour rendre compte de ses images, l'iconologie traditionnelle ne me suffisait pas. D`un côté, je m`intéressais à l'objet, et

de l'autre côté, pour comprendre l`objet il me fallait critiquer le discours qui correspondait jusqu`a présent à ces études. Je pense qu`à chaque objet nouveau, on doit reformuler ses cadres conceptuels. J'ai toujours eu un souci épistémologique, depuis que je travaille.

Tout ceci s`est subitement dramatisé lorsque j`ai décidé de travailler sur les images d`Auschwitz et que, à ma surprise complète, il y a eu cette polémique, à la tonalité très politique. *L´œil de l´histoire* est d'abord un jeu de mots, c`est le renversement de *L`histoire de l`œil*. C`est un hommage inversé à Bataille, et c`est l`oeil de l´histoire. Depuis cette polémique sur *Images malgré tout*, j`étais presque contraint d`intégrer une sorte de perspective politique à la perspective épistémologique, que j`ai déjà de toute façon. Le résultat, c'est *L`œil de l`histoire*, c`est-à-dire, une série indéfinie pour l`instant.

J'ai un plan pour la série. Il y aura cinq volumes normalement : le premier était le cas précis de Brecht ; le deuxième est un montage de deux études principales autour de la question du cinéma ; le troisième est celui que je viens d`écrire et de publier en espagnol pour l`Exposition du Museo Reina Sofía (*Atlas. Còmo llevar el mundo a cuestas ?*), et quand il paraîtra sous le titre *L'œil de l'histoire, 3*, il s'intitulera *Atlas ou le gai savoir inquiet*. C'est sur la notion d` Atlas d`images : repartir de Warburg, et même de plus haut, de Goya, de Kant, de Goethe.... Le quatrième est déjà écrit en partie et portera sur la question de comment on montre les peuples, les peuples sans nom.

Quand je m`intéressais à la peinture de la Renaissance, il y avait le Christ, la Vierge — on les reconnaît —, et, moi, je me suis intéressé au fond. Au cinéma, on peut dire, d'un point de vue plus social ou politique, que très souvent il y a des héros, et puis il y a des fonds. Les figurants sont les fonds et ce sont eux qui m`intéressent. C`est pourquoi le quatrième volume s´appellera *Peuples exposés* et parlera de Pasolini, d'Eisenstein, de certains photographes contemporains.

Le dernier, j'ignore si je serai capable ou pas de l`écrire. Je commence à comprendre que notre rapport à l´histoire et aux images doit être éclairé d`un point de vue non seulement épistémologique, mais aussi fantasmatique. Quand je parlais hier avec Jacques Rancière, qui n`aime pas *a priori* les idées d`inconscient, je disais que si l'on parle d`inconscient, de fantasme, à un moment donné, il faut bien s`inclure soi-même ou se poser la question, soi-même, comme sujet. Je suis émerveillé par la façon dont Walter Benjamin a réussi à parler de lui, dans *Enfance Berlinoise*, par exemple, sans aucun narcissisme. Ce qu`il a fait est extrêmement difficile. Donc, je vais essayer de me confronter au problème des images qui m`ont bouleversé dans mon enfance et je ne suis pas sûr d`y arriver. Si je trouve que je fais quelque chose qui est trop narcissique, je ne le ferai pas.

C : Remontages du temps subi *se présente comme le deuxième tome de Quand les images prennent position.* L'œil de l'histoire, 1 *mais il semble aussi être une suite d'*Images malgré tout, *en proposant de se pencher « non plus sur des images produites depuis le camp d'Auschwitz, mais sur des images après coup ». On dirait que le dialogue avec Images malgré tout est plus évident dans la première partie du livre, consacrée à l'analyse du documentaire de Samuel Fuller filmé à l'ouverture du camp de Falkenau, et que la deuxième partie du livre, à savoir, l'essai sur le travail du cinéaste Harun Farocki rimerait plutôt avec le livre sur Bertolt Brecht. Seriez-vous d'accord avec cela?*

GDH : Tout est en relation, donc c`est vrai. C'est-à-dire que j`ai l'impression d`écrire un seul livre, mais on est bien obligé de faire plusieurs livres.

La question que je me pose, en ce moment, c`est : «Est-ce que j`arriverai à écrire ce dernier volume, un jour?». Pour le dire très simplement, quand j`étais enfant, j'étais extrêmement bouleversé, sans avoir les moyens de le penser, par des images qui avaient été prises par les bourreaux, par les nazis eux-mêmes. Et pas seulement les nazis. J`ai, plus tard, trouvé ces images cauchemardesques, prises par les soldats

japonais en 1937, lorsqu'ils ont envahit Nankin et tué les populations civiles. Toutes ces images ont été trouvées dans leurs poches. Alors, c`est très difficile de parler de son propre rapport spontané à ces images. *Images malgré tout* est le point de vue des prisonniers ; à son tour, dans *Remontages du temps subi*, je m`interroge sur le point de vue des soldats, en fait, des soldats américains. Mais déjà, dans le développement sur Harun Farocki, il y a cette circulation qu'il fait lui-même, que j´admire beaucoup, et que probablement choquerait Claude Lanzmann : c`est la circulation dans *Bilder der welt und Inschrift des Krieges* (*Images du monde et inscription de la guerre,* 1989), le film de Farocki, entre le point de vue américain, le point de vue nazi et le point de vue des prisonniers (puisqu'il montre nommément une des quatre photographies, réalisée à Birkenau, en août 1944, par les membres du *Sonderkommando* au crématoire V). Farocki multiplie les points de vue avec une grande aisance. Et moi, je vais avoir plus de mal à travailler sur certains points de vue. Par exemple, je me rappelle d`une célèbre photo d`un soldat de la *Wehrmacht* qui tue une femme avec un petit bébé dans les bras. J`aimerais pouvoir un jour écrire sur cette photo. Mais c'est très difficile, parce que c`est le point de vue du salaud. Mais j`aimerais le faire, je dois le faire, en particulier par rapport à la polémique avec Claude Lanzmann, parce que son idée c`est que regarder une photo qui a été prise par un salaud, c'est être un salaud. Ce que je ne crois pas. Je crois que nous devons regarder les photos prises par les salauds et pouvoir renverser la perspective correctement. C`est extrêmement difficile. J`ai une hypothèse de travail pour cela : c`est l`idée de la chasse. En français, un massacre veut dire tuer des gens et c`est aussi un nom technique des chasseurs — quand vous avez une tête de tigre sur le mur, que le chasseur a tué, cela s`appelle un massacre. C´est-à-dire, à la fois l`acte de tuer et le trophée. Or, je voudrais travailler sur l`idée que les photographies, quelques fois, sont des trophées, et cela, c`est immonde. C´est l'usage immonde des photographies.

Par exemple, aux États-Unis, les lynchages de Noirs donnaient lieu à des éditions de cartes postales, et les gens en les voyant disaient : «*Tu vois là, c`est moi …! Je suis dans la foule qui rigole*», pendant qu`on est en train de brûler un homme. Donc, qu`est-ce que c`est que cet usage de l´image? Il faut parler de cela...

C : Ce que vous venez de dire sur l'importance de ne pas se soustraire à l'analyse du point de vue du bourreau est en rapport avec votre notion de lisibilité de l`histoire à travers les images. La notion de lisibilité est centrale dans Remontages du temps subi, *alors comment les images peuvent-elles donner à lire l´histoire ?*

GDH : Je dois dire que je me donne des cas toujours assez difficiles, des cas extrêmes… J`écris beaucoup sur des choses que j`admire, et j`écris beaucoup sur des choses qui me font très peur, dont j`ai horreur. J´écris sur des artistes, fatalement que j`aime beaucoup, et j`écris souvent sur des images qui me terrorisent. Dans les deux cas il est toujours difficile de donner une lisibilité parce qu'il y a l`élément *pathos*, il y a l`élément émotif, qui entre en ligne de compte. C'est d`ailleurs là où je me sépare de Jacques Rancière, c'est-à-dire, je pense qu`il estime que donner une lisibilité aux choses, c`est justement ne faire aucune part à l`élément émotif. Alors, moi, je pense qu`il faut l`inclure. À mes risques et périls. Je suis très critiqué souvent pour être trop empathique, pathétique. J`essaie de mener un double travail conceptuel et émotif. À ce moment là, je travaille justement sur le mot « émotion ».

C : C´est aussi la question des sciences humaines...

GDH : Oui. C`est toute la question des sciences humaines. Est-ce qu`on doit objectiver complètement l`objet homme, l´objet relations sociales, l`objet image… ? Ou est-ce qu`on accepte le fait que, étant soi-même un homme, quand on travaille sur les hommes, il y a une subjectivité inéliminable ? On ne peut pas l´éliminer et cela c`est un point de vue, évidemment, que j`hérite de la psychanalyse. C`est

toujours la psychanalyse qui nous aide à ne pas l`éliminer, à ne pas nous croire objectifs de façon unilatérale.

En retournant à la question de la lisibilité — je parlais de Benjamin tout à l`heure — je crois que j´ai très longtemps critiqué cette notion, notamment quand j`ai critiqué l`iconologie de Panofsky. Panofsky tentait de lire les images, au fond, en les traduisant dans des termes linguistiques dont ces images auraient été, selon lui, la traduction. On revient à la source linguistique, au concept : mélancolie, etc., dont l`image serait la traduction. Je me suis longtemps occupé de critiquer cette notion de lisibilité, et c`est pour cela aussi que la phénoménologie était un outil pour moi. Et puis, dans un deuxième temps, j`ai découvert chez Benjamin cette notion de lisibilité que je mets au début du livre, la longue citation que je trouve géniale. Cette notion a complètement changé mon point de vue. C`est un concept assez large de la lisibilité, dans lequel, en effet, ce qui rend lisible l`histoire, ce qui rend le temps lisible, c`est l´image. En tant que dialectique, bien sûr, image dialectique d`un temps.

C : Encore sur la notion de lisibilité : dans Remontages du temps subi*, elle est liée pour vous à la constatation d`une saturation de la mémoire, d´un côté, et de l`autre côté, à l`émergence d`un discours de l`indicible, de l`inimaginable, notamment celui auquel Claude Lanzmann s`associe un peu. Selon vous, cela est ce contre quoi il faut travailler dans la constitution d`une connaissance visuelle, textuelle des camps... Comment se rapporte la notion de lisibilité à ces deux extrêmes qui menacent de l`offusquer ?*

GDH : C`est ce que je travaillerai dans le quatrième volume, dont j'ai parlé : les peuples sont sous-exposés ou surexposés. Ils sont sous-exposés car, bien qu`il y ait beaucoup d`images, beaucoup sont censurées. Et ils sont surexposés parce qu`il y a trop d`images des mêmes choses. Par exemple, les images des tours du 11 septembre, il y en a trop. Le fait qu`on les répète avec une telle intensité fait

que finalement on ne regarde plus rien, parce qu`on croit qu'on les a déjà bien regardées, puisqu'on les a regardées dix millions de fois. C`est la même chose avec le problème que vous posez. Il y a, d`un côté, l`idéal, complètement factice à mon avis, d`une épuration de la mémoire du côté de l`innommable et de l`irreprésentable, qui ferait de ce dont on veut se souvenir un absolu muet; et puis, de l`autre côté, il y a une multiplication du langage, qui notamment se caractérise dans l'art contemporain par la mode de l`archive, le fait qu'on expose des archives, qu'on ne parle que de l'archive. Entre ces deux positions extrêmes, il y en a une troisième qui est justement celle de Warburg, de Benjamin. C`est ce que j`appelle un Atlas. C`est-à-dire, ne rien absolutiser de la mémoire. Et donc, surtout ne pas avoir une image unique ou un mot unique. Et d`un autre côté, ne pas croire que tout accumuler va nous faire nous souvenir mieux. C'est pour cette raison que j'ai parlé de saturation. Entre les deux il y a exactement la pratique du montage, la pratique de l`Atlas. Un Atlas c`est une découpe dans l`archive qui rend lisible, par montage, les éléments multiples dont on se sert. Contre l´innommable et l`unique ce sont des images multiples, et contre l`archive et la saturation de la mémoire, c`est un choix et un montage. C`est une position médiane et aussi une position dialectique exactement dans le sens de Warburg.

J`ai beaucoup insisté dans mon exposition à Madrid sur l`idée que l`Atlas est un choix dans l`archive. Warburg avait des dizaines de milliers de photos et des dizaines de milliers de livres et son Atlas comporte mille images, ce qui est, pour un historien de l`art, très, très peu. Un historien de l'art fréquente des centaines de milliers d`images dans sa vie. Warburg, lui, il a décidé quand même d`en choisir mille. C`est très peu. Il ne faut pas imaginer que c`est une archive. C`est un Atlas. C`est à dire, un choix. Et dans ce choix il a fait des rapprochements incroyables, donc des montages, qui ont un effet de lisibilité.

C : Les rapports que vous établissez entre l'archive et l'Atlas, ce dernier entendu comme constituant une alternative à cette accumulation non critique d'images, font penser à Michel Foucault et à son archéologie…

GDH : Absolument. De toute façon, Michel Foucault est très présent dans mon travail. De plus en plus. Parce que Foucault le dit très bien, que savoir c'est trancher. Savoir c'est savoir trancher. Et savoir trancher pour savoir monter ensuite. Moi, j'ajoute cela. Puisque, pour monter, il faut d'abord couper et ensuite ajointer. Donc, au fond, ce que j'essaie de faire comme disciple de Foucault, c'est une archéologie du savoir visuel, en choisissant mes objets, bien sûr — on ne peut pas tout faire. Mais si l'on devait revenir à notre schéma, on pourrait dire que, d'un côté, il y a une espèce de mystique du mot unique ou de l'image unique (l'innommable, la Shoah) ou, en termes de théorie esthétique, ce que Michael Fried demande à un tableau — un moment de grâce absolue, et puis une espèce d'accumulation typique du post-modernisme, une accumulation qui est faite pour qu'il n'y ait plus aucune hiérarchie, plus aucun choix… Il y a un absolu unique, et il y a une multiplicité non contrôlée, non décidée. Alors là, c'est la dimension de décision politique de l'artiste ou du chercheur. Ce que j'appelle une prise de position, puisqu'on prend des images et qu'on les met dans une position telle qu'on va créer un effet de lisibilité.

C : Selon vous, pour prendre position et pour choisir, il faut du temps. C'est ainsi que, dans Remontages du temps subi*, la lisibilité historique des images produites à la libération des camps semble ne pouvoir être extraite que dans un deuxième temps d'une écriture et d'un remontage. Pourquoi l'événement de la lisibilité exige-t-il de la distance temporelle ?*

GDH : C'est évident qu'il faut du temps. Dans mon exposition à Reina Sofía, il y a un exemple très proche de cela. C'est une série entière de dessins faits par un enfant

de quatorze ans et demi, quinze ans, qui venait de passer deux ans à Auschwitz et à Buchenwald. Alors, quand ce dernier camp a été libéré, il était malade ; il avait le typhus probablement et l'armée américaine l'a contraint à y rester, en quarantaine. La quarantaine est un temps. Il était contraint à une position où il était libre, mais il devait encore rester dans le camp. Qu'est-ce qu'il a fait ? Il a pris les piles de papier administratif des SS, et au dos il a fait des dessins qui sont un atlas très précis, scientifique, probablement antérieur à Primo Levi, de ce que c'est que la vie dans un camp : il mesure les lits, par exemple, et dit « voilà, ils font tant de centimètres », il mesure les baraques… et il dessine cela à la manière des enfants. C'est complètement bouleversant !

Je dirais que pour rendre lisible, il faut prendre le temps. Prendre le temps, comme on dit de façon banale — « Je prends le temps ». C'est pour cela qu'il est tellement facile de critiquer la télé, les journaux, parce qu'ils s'agitent mais ne travaillent pas, parce qu'ils ne prennent pas le temps. Et parce que, pour eux, le temps n'est pas une valeur. Parce que, pour eux, si l'on prend le temps, cela perd de la valeur. Si vous donnez une information avec du retard elle perd sa valeur. Donc là, on a une opposition complète entre ce que c'est qu'une image traitée dans la logique de l'information, qui ne vaut que si c'est la première, et une image telle qu'on essaie de la rendre lisible, c'est-à-dire, de prendre un décalage; ce qui dans l'ordre de la pratique politique fait qu'on est toujours perdant. Provisoirement perdant…

C : Parlez-nous de la question de la pédagogie, justement. Elle survient par rapport au film de Fuller…
GDH : Et chez Farocki, aussi…

C : Oui, vous vous y référez aussi par rapport à Sursis *(*Aufschub*, 2007), de Farocki. Et*

cela notamment parce que Farocki, dans son texte « Comment montrer des victimes ? », publié dans la revue Trafic, *écrit contre le film de Fuller, que selon lui ferait partie de ce qu'il appelle un cinéma de rééducation (où « les documents ne seraient pas analysés, mais plutôt instrumentalisés » — « les morts devenant un moyen de punition »).*

GDH : Je trouve que Farocki exagère. Il faut dire concrètement que Farocki a eu l'idée pour *Sursis* parce qu'il a vu les *rushes* de Westerbork dans un colloque où l'on discutait un peu contradictoirement sur le film de Fuller. C'est-à-dire, lui, il a vu le film de Fuller, dont il était un peu critique, et il a vu les *rushes* de Westerbork, et c'est à ce moment là qu'il a décidé de faire *Sursis*. Et moi, dans le livre, je dis à un moment donné qu'il n'aime pas trop Fuller, mais que je ne suis pas d'accord avec lui.

C : Pour vous, il y a l'idée d'une leçon d'humanité qui serait donnée dans le film de Fuller. Farocki semble mesurer le travail de Fuller à partir d'une éthique du rapport aux images, qui se traduit notamment dans les contraintes qu'il s'impose dans Sursis *— presque pas d'intervention sur les images, seulement le recours aux intertitres, aux arrêts sur image et aux répétitions des scènes…*

GDH : Mais Farocki ne s'empêche pas de faire des interprétations aussi, quand même. Et d'autre part, je pense que c'est surtout Fuller qui avait des contraintes, plus que Farocki, car Fuller, après tout, a obéit à son capitaine. Je pense que ce qui a choqué Farocki, c'est la décision même du capitaine, c'est-à-dire, imposer aux civils de toucher les cadavres, cette espèce de punition. Je trouve cela très violent comme punition — évidemment bien moins violent que les fusillés. Mais, je pense que le jugement de Farocki est un peu anachronique, c'est-à-dire, aujourd'hui ce n'est pas bien sûr ce qu'il faut faire, mais en 1945, c'était ce qu'il y avait de mieux à faire.

C : Il y a un moment où vous comparez le geste cinématographique de Harun Farocki à celui de Jean-Luc Godard dans les Histoire(s) du cinéma *(1988-98) : dans le cas de Godard, ce geste serait inséparable de la présence et affirmation démiurgique de son auteur (ce qu'on pourrait appeler « d'ego-histoire »); dans le cas de Farocki, ce geste renvoie, selon vous, à un cinéma à la troisième personne, témoignant de la dimension collective dans laquelle se fonde le sujet de la politique. On aimerait vous entendre à propos de ce rapport de presque opposition où vous placez les approches des deux cinéastes.*

GDH : J'admire les deux. Dans *Images malgré tout*, je prenais clairement le parti de Godard, d'une certaine façon. Godard, c'est le Godard des *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, mais je dois dire que, dès les premières visions des *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, il y avait quelque chose qui me gênait : c'était le fait que toutes les bribes d'images, enfin les éléments du montage, n'appartenaient qu'à Godard. C'est-à-dire, à moi, ils ne m'appartenaient pas. Je voyais juste un film de Godard. C'est une question d'autorité. Qu'est-ce que l'autorité ? J'avais eu la même gêne justement avec Foucault. Foucault écrit sublimement, mais je n'aime pas chez Foucault cette érudition historique qui ne me donne aucun moyen de la vérifier. Dans *Les mots et les choses*, par exemple, il dit « un tel — par exemple, un médecin inconnu - a dit ça ». Je ne sais pas s'il a dit ça. J'aimerais bien savoir où il l'a dit, qu'est-ce qu'il dit avant, qu'est-ce qu'il dit après. Je n'ai pas la possibilité de le savoir. Je fais là une défense de l'érudition modeste, avec les notes en bas de page. Quelque chose qui est très allemand, parce que les allemands — je pense à Warburg ou à Panofsky —, tout ce qu'ils disent, on peut le vérifier ou, donc, le discuter, dans les notes.

Les français, très souvent, prennent l'autorité au deux sens du mot : au sens de la force et au sens de l'auteur. Donc Godard devient l'auteur des images qu'il cite. Tandis que presque tout le temps, Benjamin reste le citateur de ce qu'il cite. Parce que Benjamin, on peut voir, on peut aller chercher le texte. Il ne cache pas d'où cela

vient. Or, Farocki est plutôt du côté allemand. Alors, si je reviens à ce que je disais sur ma difficulté pour envisager un futur livre, où j'essaierais d'être honnête sur mon rapport presque infantile, en tout cas enfantin, aux images, comment mettre ensemble une sorte d'autobiographie tout en ne se mettant pas soi-même au centre de ce qu'on écrit, et de façon à toujours rendre au lecteur quelque chose de plus que ce qu'on écrit, nous ? C'est pour cela que je mets beaucoup de notes. On m'a beaucoup critiqué, même des amis disaient : « Tu n'as pas besoin de mettre toutes ces notes. C'est toi qui affirme tout ça. Tu es un auteur ». Oui et non. Foucault a critiqué la notion d'auteur, alors que c'est l'auteur par excellence. C'est lié aussi à la beauté de son écriture et on peut dire la même chose de Godard, parce que Godard est un grand styliste, c'est un grand poète. Voilà, ce que Farocki est beaucoup moins. Farocki est plus un pédagogue.

Le passage où j'oppose Godard et Farocki, cela correspond à un moment où j'ai adoré Godard et je découvre quelque chose d'autre ou de plus, entre guillemets, chez Farocki ; mais cela ne veut pas dire que je jette Godard. Pas du tout. J'ai récemment publié ce livre où je critique Pasolini, alors que c'est un de mes cinéastes préférés. La notion de critique, là, doit bien s'entendre dans sa tendresse. Les gens que je n'aime vraiment pas, je n'en parle même pas.

II faut dire aussi que dans le cas de Godard, il a ce paradoxe d'être quelqu'un qui refuse la question du *copyright*. Par exemple, pour mon exposition, c'était vraiment très simple. Je lui ai téléphoné et il m'a dit : « mais vous faites ce que vous voulez ». Il ne prend pas de droits d'auteur. Donc, Godard est généreux de ce point de vue là. C'est vrai que son cinéma est au « Je », comme l'histoire de Michelet est au « je », comme quand Malraux écrit, c'est un immense « je », comme quand Victor Hugo écrit, c'est un immense « je », comme quand Charles de Gaulle écrit, c'est finalement un immense « je », même s'il dit « La France ». Les allemands, ils ont une sorte d'éthique différente. Brecht, ce n'est pas vraiment du « je », Farocki ce n'est pas

vraiment du « je », même quand il se permet de dire que la femme dans l'album d'Auschwitz, il la trouve très belle.

Pour moi la chose magique, c'est Benjamin. C'est totalement personnel. C'est un auteur au sens le plus fort du terme. C'est un poète. Il arrive à parler de son enfance, de ses souvenirs d'enfance, mais jamais il n'est au centre de ce qu'il dit.

C : La forme essai *semble vous intéresser beaucoup. Vous l'utilisez pour parler de ce que Farocki fait avec les images et en même temps, on sent que vous êtes fasciné par la définition qu'en donne Theodor Adorno dans le texte « L'essai comme forme ».*

GDH : C'est à vous de juger si je suis en contradiction avec moi-même, si je suis cohérent. Je ne le sais pas. C'est que par rapport à ce qu'on vient de dire sur le « je », le moi au centre ou pas de ce qu'on écrit, c'est une sorte de fraternité que je découvre avec Farocki. Mais, quand j'utilise le texte d'Adorno, que je trouve magnifique — c'est un texte d'une intensité de bout en bout —, ce texte me semblait interpréter correctement ce que fait Farocki et, sans le dire, interpréter tout ce que j'aimerais faire. Donc, je ne peux pas cacher que j'ai cette relation, très souvent empathique. Derrida l'a très bien dit : « on ne fait que de l'autobiographie quand on fait de la philosophie ». Les objets que j'étudie sont un miroir, mais du coup je n'ai pas besoin de parler de moi. C'est vrai qu'il y a une relation. Je suis un essayiste. Je me souviens quand j'étais beaucoup plus jeune, j'admirais beaucoup Edmond Jabès, qui était un poète et qui me disait : « vous êtes un essayiste ». Je le prenais très mal. Je n'avais pas compris qu'il avait absolument raison. Je suis un essayiste, j'essaie.

C : Vos ouvrages récents sont de plus en plus concernés par l'image cinématographique, où sont évidentes la proximité et l'affinité entre vos préoccupations, entraînées par la question cruciale d'un savoir des images, au moyen des images elles-mêmes, et les pratiques de

l'image de certains cinéastes, tels que Godard, Pasolini, Farocki …. Cependant, vous ne semblez accorder aucun privilège au cinéma dans le travail de restitution de l'histoire par ses images… C'est plutôt le geste de montage qui semble vous intéresser davantage, et cela n'est pas pour vous quelque chose qui appartiendrait en propre au cinéma, même si vous analysez les procédures cinématographiques singulières dont certains cinéastes se servent pour l'accomplir. Mais on ne peut pas s'empêcher de ressentir qu'il y a, dans le travail des « remontages du temps subi », quelque chose qui n'est possible que grâce au cinéma… Qu'en pensez vous ?

GDH : Bien sûr, je suis d'accord avec ce que vous dites, avec votre objection, en quelque sorte; en même temps, ce n'est pas exactement mon projet que de défendre le cinéma comme médium spécifique. Je ne vais pas répondre théoriquement. Je vais répondre pratiquement. Pratiquement, j'ai étudié beaucoup la peinture grâce au fait que j'étais capable d'en faire des photos, c'est-à-dire, j'avais une pratique, je maîtrisais petit à petit la diapo, d'abord, et ensuite, avec des appareils numériques, je pouvais faire mes propres cadrages de tableaux. Le livre sur Fra Angelico (*Fra Angelico – Dissemblance et figuration*, Éd. Flammarion, 1990) est le résultat d'un cadrage, d'un décadrage. Au lieu de regarder la Vierge et le Christ, je baissais un peu le cadre et puis je me suis trouvé devant un Jackson Pollock. Donc, j'ai une pratique très longue de la photographie qui m'a permis d'avoir, je dirais, une possibilité de rendre lisible des choses dans la peinture grâce au cadrage et, évidemment, à la façon dont je classe, quand j'utilise la photo numérique, ces milliers d'images, d'abord dans mes boîtes de diapo, et puis ensuite dans mon ordinateur. Ce n'est que récemment, toujours grâce à l'ordinateur, quand j'ai pu faire des *stills*, des photogrammes, ou découper des séquences dans les films, que j'ai pu parler du cinéma. Car, pour moi, il fallait prendre, par exemple, des photogrammes ou des extraits, et puis ensuite les classer, les remonter à mon goût. C'est depuis que je sais faire cela techniquement

que je me permets de parler du cinéma. Maintenant, ces séquences de films, ces *stills*, apparaissent dans mon ordinateur exactement à côté des cadrages de tableaux ou de photos… Donc, c'est vrai que j'ai tendance à traverser tout cela sans me poser des questions de cinéphilie, c'est-à-dire, de défense et d'illustration du cinéma.

En même temps, quand je parle, par exemple, des gros plans des soldats romains dans *L'Évangile selon saint Mathieu* (*Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*, 1964), de Pasolini, je sais très bien que ce qui compte, c'est le cadrage : ces garçons sont cadrés de près et c'est toute la tendresse de Pasolini pour les gens qu'il filme. Cela, je pourrais le réduire à un photogramme mais je sais très bien que ce qui compte principalement, et cela n'appartient qu'au cinéma, c'est la longueur du plan, c'est le fait que cela dure. Mais c'est l'évidence, on l'a dit bien avant moi.

Si l'on était seulement dans la critique cinématographique, comme il y a beaucoup de gens en France qui l'ont fait déjà très bien, on situerait Pasolini par rapport à Fellini avant lui, ou des choses comme cela. Moi, j'ai pris un point de vue où je le mets en relation avec Ernesto de Martino, ethnologue génial — d'ailleurs, ils se connaissaient, il y a une coïncidence incroyable entre leurs travaux. Ernesto de Martino, ce n'est pas un cinéaste mais il avait une documentation iconographique de photographies, d'enregistrements sonores, et il y a quelques documentaires ethnologiques qui ont été faits sous sa direction – par exemple, le documentaire ethnologique qui s'appelle *La Taranta* (1962). C'est très intéressant par rapport à Pasolini. Ernesto de Martino ne fait pas partie de l'histoire du cinéma, mais les mettre proches l'un avec l'autre nous apprend des choses sur Pasolini. Donc, je m'intéresse à des problèmes, je ne m'intéresse pas à la question des spécificités, de moins en moins. Puisque justement, les artistes qui on fait des atlas ont joué sur les différents médiums. Dans l'atlas d'Aby Warburg, le médium, c'est la photographie; elle s'adresse à des médiums complètement différents, c'est-à-dire, un arc de

triomphe, un bijou, un timbre poste, une photo de presse. C'est cela qui m'intéresse.[2]

1. Ce cycle de conférences, organisé par Rodrigo Silva, a eu lieu les 20 et 27 novembre, à la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, dans le cadre de l'exposition *Res Publica 1910 e 2010 face a face*, et a bénéficié de la participation de Georges Didi-Huberman, Jacques Rancière, Marie-José Mondzain et Bernard Stiegler.

2. Nous remercions Rodrigo Silva pour avoir rendu possible notre rencontre avec Georges Didi-Huberman.

COGNITIVE DELEUZE:
REPORT ON THE SCSMI CONFERENCE
(ROANOKE, 2-5 JUNE 2010) AND
THE DELEUZE STUDIES CONFERENCE
(AMSTERDAM, 12-14 JULY 2010)

William Brown (Roehampton University)

Given that many of the more prominent members of the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image (SCSMI) were contributors to David Bordwell and Noël Carroll's edited collection, *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*,[1] it might seem strange to put a conference report of its 2010 meeting alongside a report of the 2010 Deleuze Studies Conference.

For, in his opening broadside against theory, Noël Carroll comes straight out and says that the growth of (North American) film studies over the two decades preceding the publication of his and Bordwell's book had been influenced — negatively in his eyes — by, among others, Gilles Deleuze.[2]

That said, Deleuze only gets mentioned a handful of times in *Post-Theory*'s significant number of pages and, Carroll aside, he does not really come in for much criticism. (And it is worth noting that Carroll's beef is mainly with those that *use* Deleuze, and not with Deleuze's work itself.)

The next year, David Bordwell mentions Deleuze in one of his solo works, *On the History of Film Style*, but only to give a very brief overview of the Frenchman's two *Cinema* books, before, some thirty pages later, griping that Deleuze has "seized upon the findings of traditional film historians and reinterpreted them according to a preferred Grand Theory."[3]

In other words, Bordwell does not take issue with Deleuze's scholarship, but he does seem miffed that Deleuze might see for himself patterns that others had also

seen — as if confirmation of results through repetition and verification were not the very bedrock of empirical analysis and research.

This is not to overlook the fact that Bordwell disagrees with the idea that cinema has a "grand narrative," something that *does* emerge in Deleuze and for which Bordwell expresses a concern that is in many respects legitimate: when one looks at cinema from a great enough distance, as Deleuze seems to, patterns emerge (the predominant ones being what Deleuze calls movement- and time-images) that may not be visible on the ground level, and which therefore can be contested as being the fabrication of the observer.

However, a close-up of a person is no more or less "accurate" or "true" than a long shot of that same person, even if they reveal completely different levels of detail. And I would wager that the same applies to how we regard cinema: Bordwell's track record for brilliantly detailed analyses of films, both in terms of individual texts and across a range of texts, is no less valid than Deleuze's even more long-sighted look at cinema. Deleuze, from his distant position, may not see all of the details that Bordwell does, but it is particularly interesting to see what cinema does look like from the distance that Deleuze has reached. Like seeing Earth from space, all trace of individual human life has vanished, but the view can lead to greater levels of understanding.

Now, to employ a "relativistic argument" along the lines of legitimating *both* of these perspectives might be the kind of manœuvre that Bordwell and many of his "empirically-minded" colleagues might expect, and which therefore they would refute by virtue of the fact that it is not "empirical" and, precisely, relativistic. But if such an argument to "delegitimize" Deleuze were made, then it might also undermine the work of the "traditional film historians" with whom Deleuze seems in fact to agree — in Bordwell's words — even though his methodology and (as far as my current analogy of space and vision is concerned) perspective might differ.

Besides, it is not as if a science such as physics were not concerned with trying to find a balance between the macro (astrophysics) and the micro (quantum physics) so as to find what Nobel laureate Steven Weinberg has called a "final theory."[4]

In other words, one wonders whether the real cause for the discord between what I shall generalise as cognitivists, such as Bordwell, and "continental" philosophers, such as Deleuze, is not something else, something different. Blogging soon after the 2010 SCSMI Conference in Roanoke, Virginia, Bordwell wrote the following:

> Traditional humanists would decry a lot of what goes on at SCSMI meetings. The appeal to general explanations, the recourse to biology and evolution, the use of quantitative and experimental methods would all smack of "scientism." But more and more, humanists are starting to turn away from the endless reinterpretation of canonical or non-canonical artworks. Many are also quietly defecting from the Big Theory that dominated the 80s and 90s. In film publishing, I'm told, editors have come to an informal moratorium on books on Deleuze. Possibly more people write them than read them.[5]

Given how widely read David Bordwell's work is, I am not about to level any accusations of territoriality among or between these film scholars (not least because Gilles Deleuze is dead). That is, there are no sour grapes from Bordwell, who is doing fine, thank you, and even if there were I (and presumably many people) would have no care to know about them.

What I would say, though, is that Bordwell's contention that there are more books on Deleuze (and cinema) than there are people to read them is not only a hyperbole perhaps typical of the blogosphere, but it is also to misunderstand what a number of those publications do. That is, a number of recent Deleuzian film scholars have not simply been applying Deleuze's ideas to yet more cinemas from more eras and places

in order to offer up "endless reinterpretations," even though in principle this might seem to be the case (as if this were a bad pursuit in the first place — or would Bordwell claim with confidence that he has given us the final word on Ozu and Dreyer?).

Rather many (if not all) Deleuzian scholars have those other cinemas that they consider feed back into Deleuze's work, and they use these other cinemas to expand his taxonomy of images into newer categories. That is, work by Patricia Pisters and David Martin-Jones, among others, has realigned Deleuze within a series of different socio-historical contexts; in Bordwell-speak, we might say that they have used Deleuze's ideas as a springboard to looking at cinema from the perspective of "traditional film historians."[6]

In this respect, then, the "problem" with Deleuze, or rather Deleuzians, is not so much that they ignore film history "on the ground." It is that they persist in using Deleuze, defined here as a macro film scholar, even though they combine this macro scholarship with the micro levels of film history. For example, David Martin-Jones talked at the Deleuze Studies Conference in Amsterdam about how Deleuze's ideas do — and do not — apply to pre-1907 cinema, or what Tom Gunning has called the *cinema of attraction(s)*.[7] Martin-Jones proposes that a new type of "image" emerges, the "attraction image," which may sound high falutin to the "scientist" film scholars out there, but which is an effort to combine the two approaches, and which in itself is a more productive endeavour than the wholesale rejection of Deleuze that otherwise seems to take place.

To give the SCSMI its due, many of its members are concerned with the "macro" view of film history — as psychologist James Cutting's keynote address made clear.[8] Cutting and his team had looked at the rates of change in American feature films dating from the 1930s through to the present day and, in accordance with Bordwell's diagnosis that the continuity system of mainstream filmmaking has undergone an "intensification," they found that films move faster, cut faster, and

generally just *are* faster these days than they used to be.[9] This is macro film history and a more empirical version of it than the rather personalised overview that Deleuze does offer in his *Cinema* books — personalised because one does not get the impression that Deleuze watched any films that he did not want to watch in order to write his books.[10]

But in Deleuze-speak, Cutting's findings are important: for in the same way that Cutting informally linked his findings to a rise in ADHD, so too might a Deleuzian see the intensification of Hollywood cinema as the continued predominance of movement-image cinema over time-image cinema. That is, the predominance of a cinema based upon action and not upon giving spectators room to think, which Deleuze sees in "modernist" filmmakers of the post-war period (Antonioni, Resnais, etc.) and political new waves cinemas that similarly try to encourage critical thinking in their spectators. And while implicitly there is a political agenda to Cutting's worry that fast films provoke ADHD, so, too, explicitly, is Deleuze worried that fast (and violent) cinema in Hollywood leads to "Hitlerism."[11]

The question for both cognitivists and for Deleuzians becomes: is it really the case that films can affect our bodies and minds and produce in us modes of behaviour that are "constructed" at least in part through watching films and other audiovisual media? Those unfamiliar with Deleuze might assume at this point that the latter, Deleuze, would base his understanding of cinematic affect (what cinema does to its spectators) on some psychoanalytic theory predicated upon lack. That is, Deleuze would never have to get up out of his bed to find out what *really* happened during film viewing, because he would have some theory to answer as much.

Well, such an assumption is in part accurate — Gilles Deleuze did not conduct any lab experiments to verify his theories. But it is also inaccurate. Not only was the

book that made Deleuze's (and Félix Guattari's) name, *Anti-Oedipus*, in part a broadside against (Freudian) psychoanalysis, for Deleuze believed that desire is not based upon lack but upon presence, but Deleuze did also become, as Paul Elliott has recently pointed out, increasingly preoccupied with neuroscience and precisely scientific understandings of the human brain — and body.[12]

This was for Deleuze not solely the aim of understanding cinema, but of understanding the processes of thought and creativity more generally — although cinema continued to play an important role in Deleuze's (thinking about) thinking until his death in 1995. However, that this turn did take place in Deleuze's work leads me to my main point for putting SCSMI and Deleuze Studies together in this conference report: namely, to make relatively clear that not only are (some) cognitivist and (some) Deleuzian film scholars preoccupied with answering the same questions concerning what happens during the film viewing experience and how film can and does affect us both physically and mentally, but that both are increasingly incorporating similar methodologies, namely discoveries in psychology and neuroscience, in order to do so. For this reason, it seems that something of a *rapprochement* between the two is becoming overdue.

During its existence, the SCSMI has historically involved an emphasis on Hollywood cinema, something with which Malcolm Turvey took issue at this year's conference, in asking its members to consider films from outside the mainstream.[13] In many respects, Turvey's appeal stands to reason: psychologists have long since offered insights into "normal" brain functioning based upon "exceptional" brain conditions such as autism. Why not, therefore, use unconventional films in order better to understand how conventional films also function?

Daniel Barratt discussed in his paper at SCSMI how film viewers share responses when viewing mainstream films, but that attention quickly diverges to different parts of the screen (and thus we might speculate that they enter into divergent modes of

thought) when watching art house films.[14] Translated into Deleuzian lingo, this might reinforce the notion that movement-image (mainstream) cinema does encourage viewers to "think alike," an argument reaffirmed by the empirical work by Uri Hasson and colleagues in their research into "neurocinematics."[15]

Politically speaking, this may well constitute the kind of "Hitlerism" that Deleuze describes, whereby film viewers are encouraged to think in the same way as opposed to thinking differently. Meanwhile, art house (or, broadly speaking, time-image) cinema does seem to encourage viewers to think differently — and while it would be hard if not impossible to map each and every possible and/or real response or train of thought associated with art house film viewing, we might begin to understand how this divergence of thought happens *as a process*, in the same way that we can understand the mainstream viewing experience as a process as much as we might understand it as a thing.

This is not to reify or to confine to strict categories mainstream/movement-image cinema and art house/time-image cinema, since without question there is a lot of slippage between these two categories — and there are proponents both within the film-as-philosophy/philosophy of film camp (some of whose members do work in/with the SCSMI, such as Paisley Livingston, Thomas Wartenberg, and Murray Smith — not all of whom would agree with the position I am about to put forward) and in the Deleuze Studies camp (such as Richard Rushton, Patricia Pisters, Anna Powell, and Martin Rosenberg) who would argue that any film can inspire "philosophical thought," as opposed to this being simply the preserve of certain types of film. Furthermore, this is not to draw a hard and fast distinction between the body and the brain, wherein a rapprochement between Deleuze and cognitivists can also be drawn by the way in which Deleuze and prominent neuroscientist António Damásio both find their work centring upon the thought of Baruch Spinoza, who famously did argue that all that affects the body also affects the brain.[16]

Both the 2010 SCSMI Conference and the 2010 Deleuze Studies Conference offered far more in terms of papers than any one conference participant could hope to cover — testifying to the fact that both are in rude health (contrary to Bordwell's argument that fewer people read work on Deleuze than write it). The work of Stephen Prince and his team from Virginia Tech, and the work of Patricia Pisters at the University of Amsterdam and Rosi Braidotti at Utrecht University, together with their helpers, respectively organised two conferences that in 2010 allowed participants to feel as though they were part of cutting edge and innovative work with regard to moving image culture. Long may it continue — perhaps even with some dialogue beginning to take place between the two.

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1. David Bordwell and Noël Carroll, eds., *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996).
2. Ibid., 37.
3. Bordwell, *On the History of Film Style* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 116-17, 148.
4. Steven Weinberg, *Dreams of a Final Theory: The Search for the Fundamental Laws of Nature* (London: Vintage, 1993).
5. Bordwell, "Now You See It, Now You Can't," *Observations on Film Art*, 21 June 2010, accessed 12 November 2010, http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/?p=8509.
6. Patricia Pisters, *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003). David Martin-Jones, *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity: Narrative Time in National Contexts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006).
7. Martin-Jones, "Attraction-Image: Early Silent Deleuze" (paper presented at Deleuze Studies, University of Amsterdam, 12 July 2010). Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Cinema, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde" in *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser and Adam Barker (London: BFI, 1991), 56-62.
8. James Cutting, "Attention, Intensity, and the Evolution of Hollywood Film" (paper presented at the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image, Roanoke, 3 June 2010).
9. Bordwell, "Intensified Continuity: Visual Style in Contemporary American Film," *Film Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 16-28.
10. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. (London: Continuum, 2005).
11. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 159.
12. Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Helen R. Lane, Robert Hurley, and Mark Seem (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983). Paul Elliott, "The Eye, the Brain, the Screen: What Neuroscience Can Teach Film Theory," *Excursions* 1, no. 1 (June 2010): 1-16; accessed 12 November 2010, http://www.excursions-journal.org.uk/index.php/excursions/article/view/2/8.
13. Malcom Turvey, "Tati, Sight Gags, and Ludic Modernism" (paper presented at the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image, Roanoke, 4 June 2010).
14. Daniel Baratt, "Attending to the Moving Image: Toward a Computational Theory" (paper presented at the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image, Roanoke, 2 June 2010).
15. Uri Hasson, Yuval Nir, Ifat Levy, Galit Fuhrmann, and Rafael Malach, "Intersubject Synchronization of Cortical Activity During Natural Vision," *Science* 303, no. 5664 (2004): 1634–40. Hasson, Ohad Landesman, Barbara Knappmayer, Ignacio Vallines, Nava Rubin, and David J. Heeger,

"Neurocinematics: The Neuroscience of Film," *Projections: The Journal for Movies and Mind* 2, no. 1 (2008): 1-26.

16. Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988). Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza,* trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1992). António Damásio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorry, and the Feeling Brain* (London: Vintage, 2003). Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics,* trans. Edwin Curley (London: Penguin, 1996).