Texas Film and Media Studies Series
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AESTHETICS OF FILM

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pears on the screen when he comes across a mirror and can "see" his own image. Michael Powell's *Peeping Tom* (1960) also plays with varying degree of coincidence between glance of the spectator, the camera, and a character (especially to create horror effects).

Baudry's analysis of this primary identification aims to bring to light the connection, which until then had been left unexamined, between the cinema's basic apparatus (the philosophical, ideological, and historical presuppositions behind the laws of Renaissance perspective that still serve as the cinema's model), and the "phantasmal" reinforcement of the idealized subject by the cinematographic apparatus as a whole. As Baudry writes, "Ultimately, the forms of narrative adopted, the 'contents' of the image are of little importance so long as an identification remains possible. What emerges here (in outline) is the specific function fulfilled by the cinema as support and instrument of ideology. It constitutes the 'subject' by the illusory delimitation of a central location—whether this be that of a god or of any other substitute. It is an apparatus destined to obtain a precise ideological effect, necessary to the dominant ideology: creating a phantasmatization of the subject, it collaborates with a marked efficacy in the maintenance of idealism."[25]

This reversal of perspectives concerning identification may have allowed a strong theoretical thrust by fueling the debate mentioned above, yet it also had the curious effect of blocking somewhat the reflection on secondary identification in the cinema. Practically ever since, secondary identification has remained in a vague and rather undefined state such as it did before Baudry's uncovering of double identification in the cinema. Since his intervention, film theorists seem to consider diegetic identification as driven by itself and, literally now, rather secondary. Nevertheless, while it may initially seem difficult and perhaps not very productive to push further the analysis and description of primary identification elaborated by Baudry and expanded by Metz, secondary identification remains a rather unexplored terrain that is doubtless rich in theoretical potential. Hence, we will now linger briefly over secondary identification.

Secondary Identification in the Cinema

PRIMORDIAL IDENTIFICATION WITH THE NARRATIVE. "Whether a little more or a little less, every person becomes suspended from *narratives*, from *novels*, which reveal to him or her the multiple

truth of life. Only these narratives, at times read in trances, situate a person before destiny," writes Georges Bataille.

Initially, the film spectator, like the reader of a novel, is perhaps such a person suspended from narratives. Beyond the particularities of the various narrative modes of expression, there is undoubtedly a fundamental desire to enter into a narrative when we go to the movies or begin a novel. In the same way that we have described primary cinematographic identification as the basis of all secondary diegetic identification, we might speak of a primordial identification with the narrative act itself that is independent of whatever form and material of expression a particular narrative might employ. When someone nearby tells a story (even a story not directed at us) or when a television set in a bar shows part of a film, we are immediately hooked by these story fragments, even when we will never know their beginning or end. This capturing of the subject by a narrative, any narrative, reveals some primordial condition of identification by which every story told is, to some slight degree, our story. We may cite here Meir Sternberg's conception of the text as a dynamic system of gaps that the reader confronts with hypotheses. The reading process thereby becomes the text's posing of both temporary and permanent gaps that the reader must confront and test, with a varying degree of conclusiveness.[26]

There exists within this attraction for the narrative act itself, whose fascination may even be observed in infants, a powerful motor for all more finely differentiated secondary identifications, previous to more selective or elaborate cultural preferences. This identification with the narrative in its own right undoubtedly holds, to a large degree, with the analogy that is often raised between fundamental narrative structures and the Oedipal structure. We could say that every narrative, to a certain degree, replays the Oedipal scene, which is the confrontation between desire and the law.

Every classical narrative inaugurates the captivation of its spectator by carving out an initial crevice between a desiring subject and his or her object of desire. The entire art of narration then consists of regulating the constant pursuit of this object of desire—a desire whose accomplishment is always postponed, blocked, menaced, and delayed until the narrative's end. The narrative circuit, therefore, occurs between two instances of equilibrium, or nontension, which mark the beginning and the end. The initial state of equilibrium is quickly marked by a flaw or a gap that the narrative must endlessly try to fill in or bridge via a series of obstacles, false trails, twists of fate, or spiteful human acts. However, the narrative function is to maintain the threat of this gap as well as the desire of the spectator

finally to see the resolution that marks the end of the narrative, the return to a state free of tension. This resolution may be accomplished by bridging all the gaps between the subject and the object of desire, or the opposite, which is resolution with the definitive triumph of the law and its permanent prohibition of any successful union.

In *Structural Semantics*, A. J. Greimas builds on Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Russian Folktale* and Etienne Souriau's *20,000 Dramatic Situations* to forge what he calls an "actantial model," which is to say, a simple structure of dramatic functions that allows Greimas to account for the base structure of most narratives. It is easy to see how this structure is put into place in relation to the confrontation between desire and the law (of interdiction) that is the initial motor of every narrative: the first pair of actants put in place are the subject and the object, according to the axis of desire; second, there are the sender and receiver of the object of desire, according to the axis of the law; and finally, third, are the opponent and helper in satisfying the desire. The actantial structure evidently is a structure homologous to the Oedipal structure (see chapter 3, on narrative codes).

We have already mentioned that identification, as regression, most often establishes itself as a state of lack. As Guy Rosolato writes, "Identification attaches itself to a lack. If a demand is made, the lack may be the other's refusal to fulfill the demand. Satisfaction is delayed, but an opposing will is also refused, and identification is launched."[27] Within this description of the process of "launching" identification we find once again all the elements of the basic structure of narrative wherein desire arrives to articulate a lack and delay the satisfaction that launches the subject of desire (and the spectator) in active pursuit of an impossible satisfaction that is always delayed or even permanently launched again onto new objects.

At this deep structural level, where all stories resemble one another, the initial captivation of the spectator undoubtedly occurs via the simple fact that there is "some" narrative. This primordial diegetic identification is a deep reactivation, which remains relatively undifferentiated, of identifications with the Oedipal structure. The spectator, as well as the listener or reader, certainly senses that there operates within this narrative, from which the spectator is usually personally absent, something that deeply concerns him or her. Moreover, this unsettling element resembles the viewer's own unpleasant dealings with desire and the law so much that the spectator relates it to his or her self and origin. In this sense, every narrative, whether it takes the form of a quest or an inquest, is fundamentally a search for a truth in desire within its articulation to both lack and the law. In other words, spectators search for their own truth, or, as Bataille writes, they search for "the multiple truth of life."

This search involves the most archaic level of the subject-spectator's relation to the film narrative, but barely touches upon the matter of cultural values that allow differentiating or hierarchizing narratives according to their quality and complexity. On this level, the least polished film, as well as the most elaborate, is capable of hooking us. For instance, everyone has had the experience, sitting in front of the television, of becoming caught up in and identifying with the story of a film that we would otherwise judge unworthy (intellectually, ideologically, or artistically) of our interest as easily as a film that we recognized as a classic.

Undoubtedly, this primordial identification with the narrative act itself serves as an essential base for a diegetic identification that is more differentiated by one film narrative or another. We might ask whether this primordial identification with the narrative (like the primary identification with the subject of vision) is not a necessary condition for the film to be elaborated by the spectator as a coherent fiction from the discontinuous mosaic of images and sounds that constitute the signifier.

IDENTIFICATION AND PSYCHOLOGY. The film theorist should keep continuously aware of the fact that usually, when one speaks of a film, one speaks of a memory of the film. Moreover, this memory is already re-elaborated since it is a reconstruction accomplished after the fact, and it thereby lends the film a homogeneity and coherence that it did not really have during the actual projection. This distortion particularly holds true in relation to film characters, who readily seem to us, in our memory, to be endowed with relatively stable and homogeneous psychological profiles that we can refer to as we speak or write about the film, rather as if the characters were real persons.

We will see that this distortion is deceiving and that a character, as a creation of film stock, is usually constructed in a much more discontinuous and contradictory fashion during projection than it is in our memory. After the screening, however, spectators tend to believe (as they are invited to do by film reviewers and casual conversation about films) that they identified via sympathy with one character or another because of the character's personality, dominant psychological traits, and general behavior. This process is not unlike

the way we experience a sort of global sympathy for someone in daily life because, we believe, of their personality.

If it is true that secondary identification in the cinema is fundamentally an identification with a character as a figure of our likeness or as a fellow human being, or as a locus for affective investments by the spectator, we would nonetheless be wrong to consider identification as an effect of the sympathy we might feel for a certain character. Rather, the opposite seems to hold true, and not simply for the cinema: Freud has clearly found that we do not identify with other people through sympathy; "instead sympathy is born out of identification." Thus sympathy is the effect and not the cause of identification.

There is one fairly widespread and banal form of identification that is particularly illuminating: partial identification. Partial identification is "strictly limited," according to Freud, and "restricts itself to borrowing a single trait from the object." This identification via a single trait frequently arises among individuals experiencing no sympathy or libidinal attraction for the object, and it typically functions on a collective level, as in the case of Hitler's mustache or Bogart's gestures.

Having established that identification is the cause of sympathy, we are left with the question of amorality and the basic malleability of the film viewer. Within a well-made film narrative the spectator may be led to identify with and, due to the resulting effects of this identification, sympathize with a character with whom, on the levels of personality, type, and ideology, the spectator would never sympathize in real life. Moreover, were that character encountered in real life, the spectator might even be disgusted by him or her. The film audience's relaxed vigilance allows it to identify with almost any character if the narrative structure leads it to do so. Hitchcock provides famous examples in both *Psycho* (1960) and *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), wherein his spectators are led to identify with principal characters who are *a priori* unsympathetic: Melanie the thief, Norman the murderer, and Uncle Charlie the murderer of rich widows.

The fact of identification causing sympathy also becomes obvious in the naive failure of constructed films that assume that the traits and actions of the "good" character should suffice to produce the spectator's undivided sympathy and identification.

The most compact form generally taken by film in our memory, in relation to the experience of its progressive production by the spectator during projection, allows us to point out a second illusion. This illusion consists of attributing a much greater stability and permanence to the secondary identification than it possesses in reality. We too often believe that the spectator totally identifies with one or occasionally two characters throughout the film and that this identification occurs for psychological reasons and operates in a relatively stable and monolithic manner. Identification would thereby attach itself to characters in a long-lasting fashion for the film's duration, and it would be relatively static.

We do not deny that a great number of films—and, to simplify matters here, particularly the most formulaic and stereotypical films (or even contemporary television series)—function largely according to a rather monolithic identification that is regulated by a phenomenon of recognition and by a stereotyped typology of characters: the good, the evil, the protagonist, the traitor, the victim, etc. We may say that in this case the identification with a character proceeds because of an identification of (and with) the character as *type*. There can be no doubt about the efficacy of this form of identification—after all, its perennial and quasi-universal nature stands as proof. However, this sort of typing effectively reactivates, in a tried and true manner that operates on a level that is both worn and deep, affects directly springing from identifications with the roles of the Oedipal condition. There is, for instance, identification with the character faced with thwarted desire, admiration for the hero who represents the ego ideal, and fear before the paternal figure, etc.

Within this stereotypical manner, which is typically repetitive and lazy and thus all the more manifest and directly readable, something operates that is nonetheless essential to the anchoring of the spectator to the film character. This process is at work, to a certain extent, in all fiction films, and it undoubtedly plays an essential role in all identification with a character in a film: identification has a typological role.

Nonetheless, without some outrageous simplification, this archaic substratum of all character identification cannot account for the complex mechanisms of diegetic identification with the cinema, and, in particular, for the two more specific traits of this identification. First, there is the fact that identification is an effect of the structure—a question of place more than of psychology. Second, identification with a character is never that total or monolithic, but, on the contrary, remains extremely fluid, ambivalent, and permutable during the film's projection, which is to say, while it is being constituted by the spectator.

Identification and Structure

THE SITUATION. If it is not sympathy that engenders identification with the character, but rather the opposite, the cause and mechanism of secondary identification in the cinema remain open to question. It certainly appears that identification is an effect of the structure of the situation, rather than an effect of the psychological relation to the characters.

Hitchcock explains this very process to Truffaut: "Let's take an example. A curious person goes into somebody else's room and begins to search through the drawers. Now, you show the person who lives in that room coming up the stairs. Then you go back to the person who is searching, and the public feels like warning him, 'Be careful, watch out. Someone's coming up the stairs.' Therefore, even if the snooper is not a likeable character, the audience will still feel anxiety for him. Of course, when the character is attractive, as for instance Grace Kelly in *Rear Window*, the public's emotion is greatly intensified."[28] This empirical "law" of Hitchcock's, which was also masterfully illustrated in his *Marnie* (1964), is valuable because it clearly explains an essential point: it is the situation (here someone is in danger of being surprised) and the manner in which it is presented to the spectator (the enunciation) that will, in a quasi-structural manner, determine the spectator's identification with one character or another at a given moment in the film.

We might also find an equally empirical confirmation of this structural mechanism of identification in the experience (made particularly commonplace by television viewing) of watching an extract, scene, or sometimes only several shots from a film you have never seen. This rarely involves a film's beginning. Instead the spectator is rather abruptly confronted with unknown characters whose film pasts are also unknown and who are involved in the middle of a fiction that is barely known. And yet, even in these artificial conditions of film reception, the spectator will quickly, almost instantaneously, enter into a sequence whose thematic ins and outs are unclear; moreover, the spectator will immediately find his or her place and thus become interested in the fiction.

If the audience becomes hooked so quickly by an isolated sequence from the middle of a film, and if it finds its place, it is because there is some identification that operates without a necessary psychological understanding of the characters, their precise role in the narrative, their motives—in a word, all the things that would have required a fairly long period of progressive familiarization with the characters and their story. In fact, for the audience to find its

place, it only needs the space of one sequence or scene (and this is particularly noticeable with child spectators, who quickly become interested in a film, fragment by fragment, without fully understanding the overall plot or psychological motives). All the audience requires to become inscribed within a scene is a structured network of relations, *a situation*. Consequently, it is unimportant whether the spectators know the characters yet: within this rational structure mimicking any intersubjective relationship, the audience will readily organize a certain number of places, arranged in a certain order and fashion, all of which is the necessary and sufficient condition of identification.

> "Identification," Barthes writes, "is not a psychological process; it is a pure structural operation: I am the one who has the same place I have. I devour every amorous system with my gaze and in it discern the place which would be mine if I were a part of that system. I perceive not analogies but homologies. . . . The structure has nothing to do with persons; hence (like a bureaucracy) it is terrible. It cannot be implored—I cannot say to it: 'Look how much better I am than H.' Inexorable, the structure replies: 'You are in the same place; hence you are H.' No one can *plead* against the structure."[29]

Hence, identification is a question of place, an effect of structural position. It follows that the situation is important as the base structure for identification in a classical narrative: every situation that arises during a film redistributes the places and distributes a new network, or a new positioning of the intersubjective relations at the heart of the fiction. Moreover, we know in psychoanalysis that one subject's identification with another is rarely global; instead it more frequently refers to the intersubjective relation via some aspect of the relation to him or her. It is no different in the cinema, where identification passes through this network of intersubjective relations that we commonly call a situation, where the subject finds his or her bearings.

> This identification with a certain number of places at the heart of an intersubjective relation is also the condition for the most everyday language where the alternation "I" and "you" is the very prototype of identifications that make language possible. These two words designate nothing other than the respective places of two interlocutors in discourse, and they necessitate a reciprocal and reversible identification without which every subject would remain trapped in his or her own discourse with no chance of understanding others or entering into discourse. "If we rapidly

take our place within the interplay of intersubjectivities," Lacan writes, "it is because we occupy our own place anywhere. The world of language is only possible insofar as we occupy our own place anywhere."

The Oedipal origins and structural operations of all identification, as well as the specific characteristics of a film narrative (particularly classical editing), are sufficient in determining the fluid, reversible, and ambivalent nature of the cinema's identification process. To the extent that identification is not a psychological sort of relation with some character, but rather depends upon a play of places with a situation, we can not consider it a monolithic, stable, or permanent phenomenon throughout the entire length of the film. On the contrary, during the real process of viewing a film it seems that each sequence or each new sequence (to the extent that it modifies this play of places or relational network) suffices to start identification once again, redistribute the roles, and redesign the spectator's place. Identification is almost always much more fluid and unstable while the spectator constitutes the film during projection than it will seem retrospectively during the memory of the film.

All of this is certainly true for the film during its unfolding, during its diachrony, but even on the level of each scene, each situation, it seems that identification conserves more of its ambivalence and its initial reversibility than one would think. Within this play of places and this relational network established by each new situation, the spectator may be said to be in place anywhere, to paraphrase Lacan. During a violent scene, for example, the spectator will identify at the same time with the aggressor (with a sadistic pleasure) and with the victim (with anguish). During a very emotional scene, the spectator will simultaneously identify with the character in the desiring position (feeling a lack or anguish because that character's desire is stifled) and with the character who receives the pleas (thus experiencing narcissistic pleasure). Again and again, even in the most stereotypical situations, we almost always find this fundamental mutability of identification, this reversible affect, and these ambivalent positions that make film pleasure into a mixed pleasure that is often more ambiguous and more vague than the spectator really wants to admit or remember after a legitimating and simplifying secondary elaboration; however, such pleasure may be a feature of every imaginary relationship.

It certainly seems that the classical novel, which also nevertheless proceeds by successive situations, engages its reader in a relatively more stable identification than does film. This distinction undoubtedly results from the differences between novelistic enunciation and film enunciation. The surface text of a novel generally offers a fairly stable point of view clearly centered on a character. Typically, a novel begins with a first or third person mode of narration that will be maintained throughout its enunciation. By contrast, within the classical narrative cinema, the variability of points of view is, as we will see, actually inscribed within the code itself. Obviously, however, this is only a very general observation on a statistical level, and many exceptions, in the specific cases of both films and novels, could certainly be found.

THE MECHANISMS OF IDENTIFICATION ON THE FILM'S SURFACE LEVEL. It remains to point out, on the level of the surface text's smallest units, the microcircuits where the film narrative and spectator identification will both be produced. This time, however, we will concentrate on the shot-to-shot development in each sequence. What is most remarkable, and seems to be specific to film narrative—even if the nature of this code seems quite natural and invisible since we are so accustomed to it—is that extraordinary suppleness of classical narrative editing. The most banal scene in the cinema is constructed by constantly changing point of view, focalization, and framing. It stirs up a permanent displacement of the spectator's point of view in relation to the represented scene—a displacement that does not fail to inflect the process of spectator identification via microvariations.

Once again we must be very careful in revealing the similarity between what we wrote above regarding the characteristics of identification (apparently characterized by reversibility, the play of permutations, and changing roles) and the permanent point of view variations inscribed within the code of classical editing. If, effectively, it appears as if film's surface text mimics precisely the lability of the identification process via its subtle mechanisms, nothing justifies our seeing any sort of determinism wherein one of the mechanisms serves in any way as the model for the other.

The homology nevertheless becomes quite impressive when we begin to go beyond our cultural familiarity and measure the point at which classical cinema's editing (established as a very pregnant code) is violently arbitrary. There is nothing more apparently contradictory to our perception of a real-life scene than this permanent changing of point of view, distance, and focalization, unless it is precisely the permanent play of identification (within language and the most ordinary daily events) whose importance Freud and Lacan demonstrated within the very possibility of all intersubjective reasoning, dialogue, and social life.

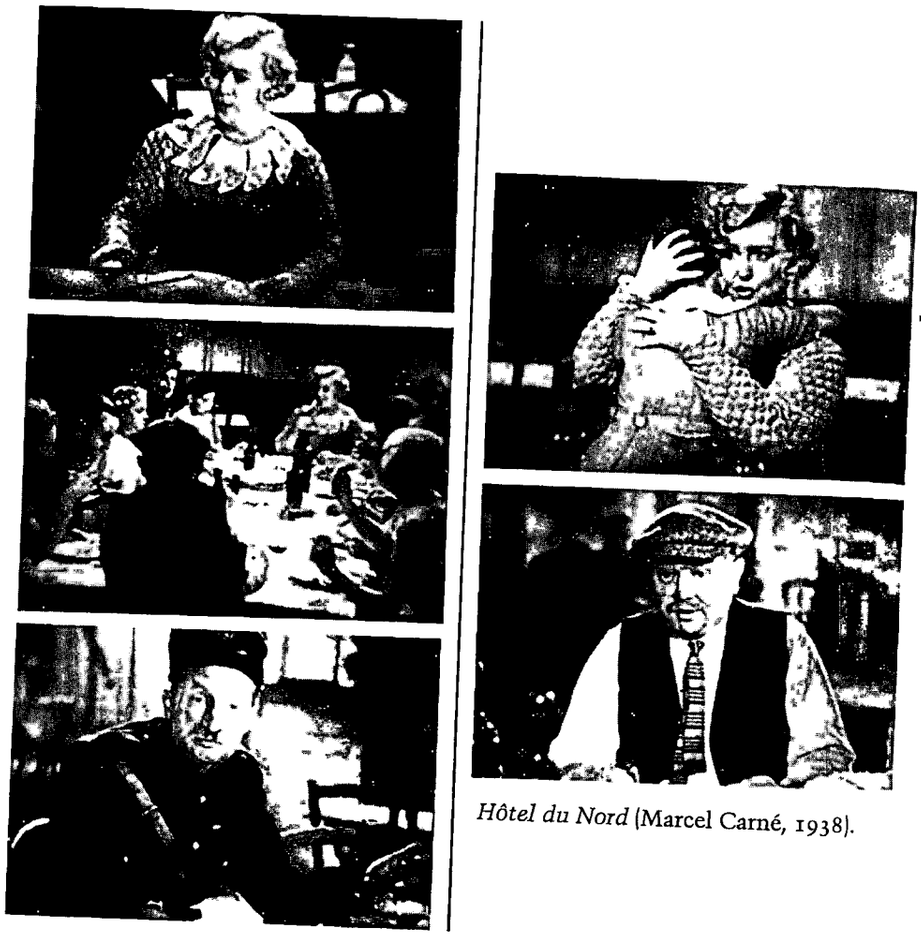
One thing that can be proposed in regard to this homology is that the surface text's positioning of these microcircuits probably inflects the spectator's relation to the scene and characters by small permanent jolts and minuscule shifts in successive directions. This can only be accomplished by designating places and privileged routes and by marking certain postures and certain points of view rather than others. It would take too much space here to describe in detail the elements of the surface text that inflect this play of identification (all the more so since *all* the elements, plausibly, contribute to the play in their own fashion). We will limit ourselves, then, to pointing out those that participate in the process in the largest and most direct manner.

The multiplicity of points of view, which founds the classical editing of the film scene, is undoubtedly the fundamental base of these microcircuits of identification in the surface text. This is the element that makes the play of all other elements possible. In the cinema, the classical scene constructs itself (in the code) upon multiple points of view: each new shot's appearance corresponds to a change of point of view in relation to the represented scene (which is nevertheless felt to unfold in a continuous manner and within a homogeneous space). It is fairly rare, however, for each shot change to correspond to the establishment of a new and as yet unseen point of view in relation to the scene. Typically, classical découpage functions around the return to a certain number of points of view, and these return shots to the same points of view may be quite numerous (especially, for example, in the case of a shot/reverse shot).

> The evolution of the cinema from primitive to transitional to classical depends partly, according to Kristin Thompson, on the shift to multiple camera positions and the systematic staging of multiple spaces. "The various continuity rules—establishing and re-establishing shots, cut-ins, screen direction, eyelines, Shot/Reverse Shots, crosscutting—served two overall purposes. On the one hand, they permitted the narrative to proceed in a clearly defined space. On the other, they created an omnipresent narration which shifted the audience's vantage point on the action frequently to follow those parts of the scene most salient to the plot."[30]

Each of these points of view, whether or not it also occupies a character's point of view, necessarily inscribes a certain hierarchy of the various figures in the scene. The shots confer varying degrees of importance on intersubjective relationships, privilege certain characters' points of view, and underline particular lines of tension and division. The articulation of these different points of view, the more

The multiplicity of point of view in classical editing: the first scene in *Hôtel du Nord* (Carné, 1938) presents a dozen characters dining at a First Communion celebration.



Hôtel du Nord (Marcel Carné, 1938).

frequent return to certain of the shots, and their combination—all of these elements are inscribed in the code and permit us to trace, as though woven into the diegetic situation itself, places and micro-circuits that are privileged for the spectator. These elements also permit the development of the code's identification.

In the classical narrative cinema, these multiple points of view usually accompany a play of variations in shot scale.

> It is hardly by chance that the labels for various shot scales—close-up, medium shot, medium-long shot, long shot—were established in reference to the actor's body within the frame. As we know, the very idea of editing a scene in different shot scales was born from the desire to make the spectator grasp the actors' facial expressions, underline their gestures, and mark their dramatic function, all by the inclusion of a close-up.

Undoubtedly, within this variation in the size of the actors on the screen and the varying proximity of the camera's eye to each character, there is an element determining the degree of attention, shared emotion, and identification with one character or another.

> We should be sufficiently convinced of all this by listening to several of Hitchcock's statements on the subject. According to him, the shot scale is perhaps the single most important element within a director's arsenal for manipulating the audience's identification with a character. He offers a number of examples from his own films. He explains, for instance, that in one scene from *The Birds* it was essential (in spite of all the technical difficulties) to follow Tippi Hedren's face as she rose from her chair and began to move about; otherwise, by simply cutting to a wider shot of her rising from the chair he might have broken the audience's identification with her and her terror.

This manipulation of shot scales, associated with the play of multiple points of view, authorizes within the classical découpage of the scene a very subtle combination, an alternation of proximity and distance, and the disengaging and recentering on characters. It also allows a unique inscription of each character into the relational network of the situation thus presented. For example, it permits the presentation of a character as one figure among many, or as a simple element of decor, or, by contrast, in another scene it may present characters as the virtual focus of our identification by isolating them through a series of close-ups. Using close-ups creates an intense *tête à tête* with the spectator, whose interest is thereby focalized upon the character, even when s/he may play a role that is com-

pletely effaced in the actual diegetic situation. For example, the shot scale may cue us to identify with a character ignored by the other characters. All of this, of course, provides only extreme and somewhat simplistic examples that should not obscure the complex subtlety permitted by the variation of shot scales inscribed in the code.

Within the cinema's microcircuits of identification, eyelines or glances have always been a prominently privileged vector. The interplay of eyelines regulates a number of editing figures, on the smallest level of articulations, which are simultaneously among the most frequent and most coded figures, as in eyeline matches and shot/reverse shots, for instance. This is not at all surprising since, as we have seen, secondary identification is centered on the relations between characters. Moreover, the cinema understood early on that eyelines constituted a governing principle that was specific to the means of expression within the art of implicating the spectator within the film's relations.

The long era of silent cinema, during which the essential codes of classical editing were established, favored the consideration of the privileged role of eyelines all the more in light of the relative absence of expressivity, intonation, and nuance within the dialogue of intertitles.

The articulation from the glance to desire and enticement (theorized by Lacan in "Du regard comme objet petit a") predestined, as it were, that eyelines should play such a central role within an art form marked by the dual traits of being a narrative art (hence the avatars of desire) and at the same time being a visual art (hence an art of glances).

Thus, within many theoretical texts the eyeline match has become an emblematic figure of secondary identification in the cinema. It is often with this figure that a "subjective" shot (supposedly seen by a character) directly follows a shot of the character looking (and the shot/reverse shot may then be considered, to a certain extent, a special sort of eyeline match). Within this empowerment of the glance between the spectator and the character theorists have wanted to see the figure *par excellence* of identification with the character.

In spite of its apparent clarity, however, this example has surely helped warp the question of identification in the cinema by an excessive simplification. Analyzing the process of developing identification by the microcircuits of eyeline (and their articulation by editing) within a narrative film undoubtedly springs from a much more detailed theorization wherein the eyeline match (even if it designates a limit point or a short circuit

The central role of the glance within the shot: top, *Le jour se lève* (Marcel Carné, 1939); middle, *Notorious* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1946); bottom, *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960).

Three shots from the same scene in *Muriel* (Alain Resnais, 1963).

between primary and secondary identification) finally does not play any more than a specific role that is too specialized to prove exemplary.

Identification and Enunciation

We need only recall Hitchcock's account, cited earlier, of building suspense in *Marnie* ("*You show* the person . . . then *you go back* to the person who is searching . . . ") in order to witness that, in creating a scene that builds strong identification, the labor of the instance that shows or narrates is just as determining as the actual structure of what is shown or narrated. Moreover, this principle is fully understood by any storyteller who is not afraid to interrupt the "natural" flow of narrated story events. Rather, such filmmakers are willing to delay and modulate events, to create surprise and even false trails; their artistry consists precisely in mastering a definite enunciation (and its rhetoric), the effects of which determine the audience's reactions more than does the actual content of the enounced.

In our example from Hitchcock, it is obvious that a spectator can only "be apprehensive" on behalf of the intruder if the narrative instance has previously revealed the person mounting the stairs outside. If, however, the scene proceeds very differently and instead surprises the spectator with the person's arrival, it will function with much less identification for the character. All this serves to show that within the process of identification the labor of narration (demonstration and enunciation) plays a clearly determining role. It contributes broadly in informing the spectator's relation to the diegesis and characters. It is narration, on the level of large narrative articulations, that will continuously modulate the spectator's knowledge of diegetic events; it will constantly control the information at his or her disposal as required during the film; it will hide certain narrative elements or, by contrast, anticipate others. Finally, narration will also regulate the progress and delay of the spectator's knowledge and the character's supposed knowledge, thereby continuously shaping the spectator's identification with diegetic figures and situations.

In all likelihood, there exists at some more global and rougher level of identification with the narrative a more massive and less subtle diegetic identification that is relatively indifferent to the specific labor of enunciation within every means of expression and in every individual text. This more inert stratum of identification may be said to arise more from the enounced and diegesis (in their structural outlines) than from the

enunciation itself, and it may be understood to reveal a more regressive or Oedipal nature.

On the level of each scene, the labor of enunciation consists, as we have seen, of shaping the spectator's relationship with the diegetic situation, tracing its privileged microcircuits, and organizing the production and structuring of the identification process shot by shot. This labor by the enunciation is accordingly more invisible with the classical narrative cinema, where it is controlled by the code. Undoubtedly, it is there, at the level of small articulations on the text's surface, that the code is the most pregnant, the most stable, the most automatic, and therefore the most invisible.

Editing a scene according to several points of view, the return to an establishing shot, the shot/reverse shot, the eyeline glance, as well as the use of arbitrary codified elements, helps the spectator participate directly in the labor of enunciation. Nonetheless, the audience, by force of cultural habit, perceives it all as enunciation's "degree zero," or as the most natural method by which a story can be told in the cinema. Certainly classical editing rules, and particularly rules for matching, aim precisely to efface the marks of this enunciative labor and to render it invisible. Its mission is to see to it that the situations present themselves to the spectator as if by themselves and that the code appears sufficiently banal and worn to seem to function quasi-automatically while giving the illusion that the enunciative instant is absent or vacant.

This editing strategy is obviously one of the strengths of the classical narrative and especially classical Hollywood cinema, and one reason behind the extraordinary dominance of this mode of film narratives. The detailed and invisible control of enunciation maintains the audience members' impression that they actually enter the narrative, that they identify with one character or another via sympathy, and that they react to given situations rather as they would in real life. All of this reinforces the illusion for each spectator that s/he is simultaneously the center, the source, and the unique subject of the emotions produced by the film. Yet it also leads the spectator to deny that this identification is also the effect of a manipulation and the labor of enunciation.

Since the 1960s and its valorization of auteur theory (particularly in Europe), we have seen more and more filmmakers asserting themselves by a personal enunciation and also signing, as it were, their films with some more or less flamboyant and arbitrary marks of their own characteristic enunciation. This is certainly the case for famous directors like Ingmar Bergman (*The Silence* [1963], *Persona* [1966]), Michelangelo Antonioni (*Eclipse* [1962], *The Red Desert* [1964]), Jean-Luc Godard (*Contempt* [1963], *Two or Three Things I Know about Her* [1966]), and Federico Fellini (*La Dolce Vita* [1960], *8½* [1963]).

At the beginning of the 1970s, a large theoretical debate surrounded ideology as conveyed by the classical cinema and, in particular, its transparency and effacement of the marks of enunciation. Several filmmakers, in keeping with their political or ideological concerns, believed it best to inscribe the work of enunciation (which is to say the production process) clearly within their films. For example, we may cite *Octobre à Madrid* (1965) by Marcel Hanoun, and *Tout va bien* (1972) by Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin, as well as all the films produced by the Dziga Vertov Group.

It would appear, in the two cases, that a more noticeable and foregrounded presence for the enunciating instance should at least partially block the identification process, if only in making more difficult the spectator's illusion of being the locus and unique origin of all identification because the film reveals the presence of the normally hidden figure of the master of enunciation. However, this assumption would underestimate the spectator's capacity for restoring the film to a "good object." For more intellectual spectators and/or cinephiles, this figure of the master of enunciation has in turn often become a figure with whom to identify. Ultimately, such identification is fairly classic from the structural point of view; the master of enunciation (the auteur, even if s/he contests the role) is also, in his or her way, the one whose will opposes the spectator's desire or delays it (launching identification) with the prestige in addition of a figure incarnating some ego ideal for the cinephile.

The Film Spectator and the Psychoanalytic Subject

Everything that has preceded in this chapter springs from psychoanalysis's classic conception of identification as narcissistic regression and assumes the following as a completely arbitrary postulate: one may test the film spectator's state or activity with theoretical instruments established by psychoanalysis to understand the subject. This assumes *a priori* (and therein lies a sort of wager) that the film spectator is perfectly homological with and reducible to the psychoanalytic subject, or at least its theoretical model. This conception of the spectator is beginning to be questioned more and more. For example, Jean-Louis Schéfer writes that there is a cinematic enigma irreducible to the fiction of the psychoanalytic subject as centered around the ego. Instead, the cinema should be described for its ef-

fects of amazement and terror, and for its production of a displaced subject, "a sort of mutant subject or a less understood person."[31]

The path taken until now in film theory would not allow cinema to be understood as a new process that must be studied outside of the reassuring homology between the subject and the cinematographic apparatus. For Schéfer, however, the cinema is not made to allow the spectator to rediscover himself or herself (as in the theory of narcissistic regression), but also, and more importantly, it was created to surprise and amaze: "You go to the cinema—everyone does—for more or less terrifying simulations, and not for a bit of dreaming. Searching for a bit of terror and a bit of the unknown . . . when I am at the movies I am a simulated being . . . and that is the paradox of the spectator which must be addressed."

Feminist Theory and the Spectator

Feminists too have challenged (and been challenged by) the standard notions of identification. One feminist goal for investigating the film subject and identification involves rereading Saussure, Althusser, Freud, and Lacan in order to confront notions of language, gender, identification, and pleasure. By investigating the cinematic apparatus and its discursive code systems, as well as the diegetic realm a film depicts, feminists have begun a productive interrogation of the cinema's modes of address and ideological implications. That inquiry actively spans a wide spectrum of research, but we will simply point here to three facets of feminist study that relate to our preceding discussions.

First, feminist theorists have expanded and attacked notions of visual pleasure and subjectivity. Certainly one of the most often cited and reprinted texts is Laura Mulvey's exemplary "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," first published in *Screen* in 1975. One of the powerful but also problematic conclusions Mulvey makes is that classical cinema constructs pleasure for a male viewer alone; and thus, feminist cinema must break away from the conventions and codes of that traditional, pleasurable cinema.

Accounting for, defining, and defending sexual difference led to a number of evolving theoretical models during the 1970s and 1980s. Among the many histories of feminist film theory and criticism, *Re-Vision: Essays in Feminist Film Criticism* (edited by Mary Ann Doane, Patricia Mellencamp, and Linda Williams) offers a rich introduction to many of the shifts in strategies and assumptions. One initial concern was whether one must attack all film texts produced

under a patriarchal system or whether certain films could be recouped as representing the failures of traditional film discourse. The division produced two distinct schools. On the one hand were theorist-filmmakers calling for the production and analysis of an alternative cinema; these feminists "were convinced that women's 'truth' demanded radically new forms of representation if it was to emerge at all."[32]

On the other hand were feminists dedicated to "reading against the grain," which allowed them to analyze a wider range of film texts. Work by Raymond Bellour, Luce Irigary, and Julia Kristeva helped guide this rereading process to reveal how males are traditionally represented in Western literary and film discourse while the female is systematically absent. As Janet Bergstrom and Mary Ann Doane explain in their introduction to *Camera Obscura*'s special issue on "The Spectatrix," "Reading against the grain as a feminist, one could salvage texts previously thought to be entirely complicit. . . . It is perceived by many as a way to reappropriate texts and pleasures renounced by a more pessimistic analysis of patriarchy's success."[33] According to Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, one goal of such "rereading" involved making concrete connections between the representation of women and larger aspects of culture and ideology.[34] Feminist theorists such as Kaja Silverman, Annette Kuhn, Gaylyn Studlar, the Camera Obscura collective, and many others helped establish the direction for the analysis of subjectivity, pleasure, and film discourse. The study of popular culture, particularly television, springs directly from these concerns with cultural discourse, patriarchal formations, and methods of feminist textual analysis.

The second aspect of feminist film theory that deserves mention here was the shift to rereading film history. One initial trap for feminism was, and is, the ahistorical analysis of texts; thus, by the 1980s there was a more concerted effort to reexamine large historical constructs and to connect psychoanalysis and semiotics with economics, technology, and aesthetics.

> As Bergstrom and Doane write, "Psychoanalysis seemed to mandate and perpetuate a treatment of spectatorship that was ahistorical. The urge to move beyond generalities, or to test them against particular instances, manifested itself both in a renewed search for historical specificity in modes of spectatorship (in the work of critics such as Haralovich, Spigel, Jacobs, Hansen, Petro) and in approaches inspired by work in British cultural studies."[35] The body of feminist critics currently combining theo-

retical with historical research is obviously a very large and active group that includes the Camera Obscura collective as well as scholars such as Gaylyn Studlar, Maureen Turim, and Diane Waldman.

The third important aspect of feminist film studies concerns the shift toward genre (which is reflected above in Bergstrom and Doane's comments about "salvaging" texts). The work on classic genres, such as E. Ann Kaplan's book on film noir, and on "women's pictures" and melodramas (less rigorous film groupings) has provided another avenue of study and specialization. However, one often unstated claim is that feminist analysis, in whatever form, is somehow more appropriate for those genres (and nongenres) than other forms of analysis. Just as some feminists reduce the entire apparatus of television to a gendered entity, claiming TV is somehow more "feminine" than the motion picture (although just how economic, technological, historical, and aesthetic aspects of a medium can be personified and reduced to a sexual entity is never convincingly argued), some theorists also treat certain areas of genre as the privileged realm of feminist analysis. This notion, along with the persistence of some theorists in arguing that male spectators have "unproblematic" access to the symbolic while the female belongs more to the side of the imaginary, must be challenged by the continuing evolution of the study of spectatorship.

The fields of feminist film theory, history, and criticism are vast and far from homogeneous, as the wealth of texts over the past two decades reveals. We cannot attempt here to list all of them since the discipline is so dynamic as to be evolving daily. However, we would like to point out that feminist projects not only grow out of the long history of film and literary theory; they have also changed it permanently by testing and expanding the notions of subject/object relations, discourse, and pleasure. More work is finally being done on historical aspects of film—not simply in writing histories of women in the industry or outlining dominant "images of women" throughout various points in film history—but in accounting for the relations between spectatorship (reception, fetishism, pleasure), industrial practice (marketing, production, and acting modes), and aesthetics.