

Gilles Deleuze

Seminar On Cinema: The Movement-Image

Lecture 15, 20 April 1982

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Part 1

... So, what I want to do today – and it will be for the last time – is to make a comparison beginning from two examples that at first glance might appear difficult. First example, I would say, well, what is the degradation of a character in cinema? Why is this of interest to me? Because it's very... it's curious the way a particular art represents decomposition or degradation. It's not a cheerful subject. Which doesn't at all mean that I'm pessimistic, simply that these are phenomena that can occur. Here I would like to make a test of the difference between expressionism, naturalism and realism, at the level of this notion of degradation, and more specifically... at the level of the degradation of a character.

And then, the second key example: I would like to consider a problem that I've barely touched upon, even when I was speaking about the close-up – or, rather, I only touched upon it very furtively but from now on we will have to consider it more and more, which is the problem of the actor and acting. So I would like to ask myself: How does an expressionist actor act? How does a naturalist actor act? How does a realist actor act? It goes without saying that this is not an exhaustive list of the different styles of acting. There is no exhaustive list of styles of acting, and besides, I can't even say that these three cases are particularly interesting. It seems to me that what is interesting in the actor's style of acting or in the problems pertaining to the actor are things that we will only be able to grasp later, which is probably to say never, since by then the year will be over... or maybe not, maybe we'll manage to grasp them next time.

Regarding degradation, very quickly I would ask: how do you recognize expressionist degradation? It's like the history of a painting, how do you recognize it? What is expressionist degradation? I would have to say, actually, oh, I don't know; it's not really degradation. What it is – and I've already touched upon this, but I'm placing it here because I want to... it's a kind of fall. The great expressionist directors have represented the degradation of their characters in the form of a fall, but a fall into what? A fall into a more and more intense darkness, as though the character were attracted, sucked in, by a kind of black hole.

A fall... well, this fall, how is it achieved? It is achieved in particular by something that also concerns the actor's style, the famous use of the diagonal. The body is inscribed in the expressionist actor, as one of the things that the expressionist actor was able to introduce not only in theater but fully in cinema, probably even more in cinema than in theater: to inhabit the diagonal with their whole body, whether it be the backward-leaning diagonal of *Nosferatu*¹ who dies... who dies in the early morning, or the forward-leaning diagonal of the *The Last Laugh*² at the moment of the man's despair, a kind of very subtle, very beautiful use of the diagonal, because as they say: "the diagonal is the true line of intensity". But intensity of what? *Intensity of the fall*.

So, in the end, it's not degradation that we have in expressionism, it will only become degradation when what happens? Only when expressionism leaves these any-space-whatevers, these dark, smoky spaces, in order to attain a certain social realism. At that moment, it will retain all sorts of expressionist coordinates and determinations but will have them play out in a determined space-time, in a determined milieu. At that point the expressionist fall will be able to assume the outward aspect of a degradation, and this will be the case of Pabst's *Pandora's Box*,³ or Murnau's *The Last*

Laugh, which are the great expressionist degradations. To the point that, if you like – here I'll be quite brief – if you remember the opposition I had established between what I called Sternberg's lyrical abstraction and expressionism, an opposition that was really quite violent... the objection you surely had in mind, but which you were kind enough not to make, is the case of *The Blue Angel*⁴, which seems to be almost an expressionist film, and which in fact recounts the story of a long process of degradation.

Now I would say that in *The Blue Angel* – I'll just say this very quickly because it's a question of a small detail – with *The Blue Angel*, Sternberg in fact finds himself completely unable to make an expressionist film, because in my view, that's not at all what it is, but instead he mimics or competes with a kind of expressionism, competes using his own means, namely through the adventure of light and no longer that of chiaroscuro. To compete with expressionism precisely because expressionism, for its part, emerged from smoky any-spaces-whatever, and here we can compare this with the degradation of the professor in *The Blue Angel* – one that concerns all professors – the degradation of the poor professor we have in *The Blue Angel* is typically presented as a fall into a hole, into a black hole. This would be expressionist degradation.

Naturalist degradation is a quite different matter. If you take Stroheim's great degradations, the famous degradation in *Greed*⁵ or the degradation of *Foolish Wives*⁶ which in a sense seems to me even more interesting because more subtle... One could say that the degradation of the hero of *Foolish Wives* is more significant than that of the couple in *Greed*, though it is a very different type of degradation. I remind you very briefly of the formula – I don't want to go back over these analyses but on this occasion what we have is *the slope of the impulse*, which is very different from the idea... Here I would say that these are like metaphors to guide us... It's not at all... it's no longer a question of falling into a black hole; it's no longer the ship that sinks, this diagonal position that expresses something like a sinking ship, that drowns, that is sucked down, that's not what it is. It is, rather, the declination, the steepest slope of the impulse. This is what we saw when we analyzed naturalism: this phenomenon of the entropy of the ordinary world, the entropy of the ordinary world where the impulse follows a slope, an irresistible slope that will lead the hero of *Foolish Wives* from the seduction of a worldly woman, for example, to the attempted rape of the mentally disabled girl, and finally to his own death and his corpse being thrown in the rubbish tip, all this constituting the slope of the impulse. Each time, it will tear off a piece, because the impulse is an odd thing, since it is double. This is the horror of the impulse and of the cinema of impulse.

The horror of the impulse is that, each time, how can I put it... it takes what it finds, and at the same time... it only takes what it finds, and at the same time, it chooses a piece. It takes what it finds, and it chooses a piece, these are like the two contradictory tensions of the impulse: whatever I find, I'll be satisfied with. Ah yes! But whatever I'm satisfied with, I'll elect a piece, I'll tear off a piece, which will be mine! Impulse is a terrible thing. So that's what constitutes this kind of degradation because I'll find things that are lower and lower, I'll have to scrape lower and lower. That would be... that would be the irresistible slope, and I'll take pieces that are more and more rotten, a kind of ever-steepening slope. It seems to me that naturalist degradation... is very, very different both conceptually and visually, in terms of its images... it's very, very different from expressionist degradation.

And finally, what would American degradation be? Well, you can easily sense that Americans... no, no, for them expressionist degradation or naturalistic degradation would be things that in the end they wouldn't be able to comprehend. Actually, they would understand them since they are extremely cultivated, but it's not their thing. They would say that these are all European concerns, so it's no wonder that Stroheim... [*Interruption of the recording*]

... a large part of whom are alcoholics. Indeed, the manifestation of American-style degradation, I would say is in realist degradation; it's realist degradation, and this would be a third formula. So, what would be fun would be... You see how inexhaustible all this is, we have to go quickly because we could expand on it... my three degradations aren't the whole story, there are obviously many

others. There are symbolist degradations, there are degradations... and then, perhaps the most beautiful, but we'll look at that later, nothing is exhaustive in what I'm saying. You yourselves can expand upon these attempts at classification.

So, to understand realist degradation, I would say yes, there is one great manifesto of American-style realist degradation, and it's Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald's famous short story "The Crack-Up".⁷ And you remember how the "The Crack-Up" begins with the phrase: "Of course all life is a process of breaking down". So, I would say, of course Fitzgerald's story is a text of universal beauty, but at the same time, I would say it's a great American text. And what a pity it is that Fitzgerald never managed to encounter a great filmmaker, since the American films based on Fitzgerald's work are really not very good, but never mind.

Because the films of American degradation that would echo Fitzgerald are certainly not to be found in the Fitzgerald adaptations. So, what are they? I suppose, they can't be considered major films. But we have the alcoholic degradation of Billy Wilder's *Lost Weekend*,⁸ or the degradation in Miloš Forman's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.⁹ And that reminds me of something that interests me greatly. Miloš Forman¹⁰, do you see why? Those who make the finest American films – and we'll see why this is, it makes for some quite simple and pleasant research – why are they all recent immigrants? Why is the best American cinema that made by Elia Kazan¹¹ and all of Kazan's successors? Why is it they who launched... why do they constitute American cinema's true realism? Maybe it's because they are the ones who make the law of the American dream.

So, what is this degradation, this American-style degradation? It's the SAS' type of degradation, the S' being much worse than before, or even nothingness, there being nothing left. It's that this is what traverses American cinema. Generally speaking, regarding degradation – I could have spoken instead about salvation, and in that case, I could have spoken about expressionist salvation or naturalist salvation, but that would have been less fun, so – because in American cinema, you always have these guys, the guys who crack, but who do so in an American way. They don't crack the way we do; it's not the same. It's not the degradation of the impulse, and it's not the degradation... so how do they crack? They're too tired, they've done too much, but in what sense? In raising and sustaining the required *habitus*, and there you have it, they can no longer find a reason to go on, they can't take it anymore. They're tired, tired, so tired of it all! It's no longer worth it. They won't keep up the *habitus* anymore. Never mind. Or else there are other possibilities – but we'll keep these other possibilities... No, no, they did everything, they did everything they could. They did what they could... So, yes, they are unworthy of America. They are unworthy of America, but America was asking too much. America told them: whatever the situation, you will find the *habitus*, and you will become a millionaire, and then you will no longer be a millionaire, and you will climb the ladder and you will slip down the ladder and so on. And then there comes a day when they can't take it anymore, they stay on the same rung of the ladder. They say: leave me alone, leave me alone, leave me alone, well, alone with a little whiskey, and there you have it. What does this mean?

When Fitzgerald writes this wonderful manifesto under the title "The Crack-Up," what is he saying? How does he paint this state of degradation? The way he paints this degradation is as follows: the situation changes, it never stops changing. There are perpetual changes in the situation. He isolates a change that concerns him, the rise of the cinema... a change: I didn't ask myself what literature was; I wrote, it was my business, and then the movies arrived, then I had to take on new habits. What are the new habits that he had to adopt? To become a screenwriter? He tried it... okay, well, he was treated like a dog by the producer, by the producers. This was the adventure of many writers including Faulkner. They all went through it, it's the American way; something changes the situation, and you look for the right *habitus*, you look for the answer, the right answer to the situation. But all this is very tiring, and while these great upheavals in situations take place, there is a subterranean process, Fitzgerald tells us, that is much more imperceptible. It's the thousand little cracks, a thousand little cracks, micro-cracks that wear us down. And there is a moment when all

these cracks add up, when the cracks add up, well at that moment you have a crack-up. You can't take it anymore; you know that you're no longer capable of raising a new *habitus*. This is the kind of spiral of realist degradation, when you can no longer raise a new *habitus*.

So, what remains? What are we left with? We're left with two American solutions, the two American solutions to degradation. I exclude the third; the third would be to go back up the slope, which would be salvation. American films, American realist cinema is very fond of showing us the process of degradation, even in Westerns. You see how the Western has presented us with some very fine processes of degradation: the old sheriff turned alcoholic, one of finest figures of degradation in the Western is in Hawks' *Rio Bravo*¹² there is the former deputy who's now a drunk, and who in the depths of his degradation, barred from the saloon, is forced to kneel before a spittoon in order to drink his dose of whiskey. But in Fitzgerald too you have images of this type. However, you see how the Americans don't like their people falling into despair, and usually the hero manages to climb back up the slope. Even in *The Lost Weekend*, alas, he will be saved though he shouldn't have been. It's not right that the alcoholic at the bottom of his great spiral of degradation is nonetheless saved.

But I would say that if we exclude this solution, which is only one of the many possibilities, if we exclude this solution, what's left? Well I would say that it's game over. In Forman's film, which is a kind of western set in a psychiatric clinic you have the everyday degradation of the Indian chief. It is even the most interesting thing about the film: there is the double degradation of the Indian chief and the white man, who will manage to escape it... the white man will escape through death and it's the Indian chief who will kill him out of pity. Well, there is a kind of spiral of a very powerful degradation, which is precisely what makes the film interesting. But this American-style degradation is only interesting precisely because it's not one particular situation that renders you incapable. It's the continual evolution, the perpetual changes in the coordinates of the situation, that is to say the spiral that increasingly wears you down, that introduces micro-cracks in you – I say this because it will be very important for the realist actor's mode of acting – that it introduces micro-cracks in you. You understand who I'm referring to, obviously it's the type of actors who emerged from the Actors Studio¹³. You have the introduction of a whole set of micro-cracks, and it is from the accumulation of these micro-cracks that eventually you will have a sudden degradation: "Oh no, I can't take it anymore. I give up!"

Or if it's not a renunciation that leads to death, what will it be? It will be what Fitzgerald called the only way out: a real act of rupture, a real act of rupture, when finally nothing matters any longer, nothing matters any longer, and this is different from the other form: to become like everyone else again, to lose everything, beginning with one's own self-respect, losing self-respect, becoming like everyone else again. And, as Fitzgerald says, ending his text in such a beautiful and moving way, "and if you throw me a bone with enough meat on it, I may even lick your hand."¹⁴ To become like everyone else again, and that's what is to make a break, to make the big break, "to become like everyone else again," or to embark on an attempt, to embark on a kind of "act for nothing" with no way out, except to survive, survive.

And, once again, I take some examples from the Western, the Western or what is precisely called the Neo-Western – we'll see if it's right to make these distinctions – presents us all the time with an aging, tired cowboy who can't take it any more... he can't take it any more, it's all over with, "Oh, the law of the west, yes, okay, that was back in the old days", but he no longer believes in it, he doesn't want anything to do with it, he's too tired, leave him be. And what if we don't leave him be? Well, I'll show you what I'll do to survive. See, you either leave me alone with my whiskey, or if you bother me again... In any case I've lost, I've lost, but I'll behave like everyone else, I'll lick the bone if you want; I know I've lost, but I keep going.

And one of the most important directors of the Neo-Western is, I think, Peckinpah¹⁵. He's the one who's pushed furthest this question of degradation, not only in all his films, but in his television series, notably in a great series called *The Losers*¹⁶ where there's... where he describes his hero, his

type of hero, in fact he gives us the formula for this American-style degradation. “They have no façade, they have not a single illusion left: thus, they represent disinterested adventure” – that's it, the rupture, a disinterested adventure; you either drown in alcohol or you embark on an adventure of pure survival: “thus they represent disinterested adventure, from which no advantage is to be gained except the pure satisfaction of remaining alive.” It's a beautiful phrase, that “except the pure satisfaction of remaining alive.”¹⁷ So, this is the formula of realist degradation. You see how it is completely different from Expressionist or Naturalist degradation.

And so, I'll continue on from here. Let's move on to a second question: how could we define the style of the SAS-type realist actor, in the SAS or SAS' form in contrast with the actor? Oh sorry, I want to add something here... let me make a quick parenthesis... I'm so far from having exhausted all the possible forms of degradation that even, and above all from the point of view of cinema... just think for a minute, what else could we say about this subject? I haven't even started, because where would one put a school of great filmmakers who were able to discover another type of degradation that is neither the fall, nor the slope, nor the micro-crack, which is to say the loss of *habitus*? Meaning – and you can see right away who I'm thinking of – there would be a whole cinema of degradation, though not just degradation, but where degradation would be a fundamental theme, where degradation is simply and solely *time*.

But this time-degradation constitutes another figure entirely, and so you will understand why I move so slowly towards it. We don't yet have the means to be able to deal with it right now. We won't have the means to deal with this other type of degradation until we get to the *time-image*, but for the moment, we're still floundering within the movement-image. When we come to approach the time-image – if it happens to us one day – when we come to approach the time-image, then we will once again meet some great directors, but who come up against a type of degradation that has nothing to do with these three: a degradation, what should we call it? Should we call it idealist because it is the degradation of time itself, by time, the time-degradation? Or should we find another name for it? Perhaps we'll have to find it, we'll find it in the future.

But who do we immediately think of in this case? Of Visconti, of Visconti, and as I said before Visconti was attempting to confront, or to attain – because it amused him in some way, or it interested him for a while, especially just after the war – he was trying to confront the phenomenon of impulses. Except that Visconti, once again, was so aristocratic that he could never approach the reality of impulses, which would require a vulgarity, a genius vulgarity like that of Stroheim or even Buñuel. Visconti couldn't do this, he couldn't because his concerns lay elsewhere. What degrades, what decomposes for Visconti, are not impulses; it is time and nothing but time, and it is the very existence of time that already constitutes a degradation that always contains its counterpart, which is salvation. But then what is salvation? Salvation is also time, and it's no wonder that until the end of his life, he imagined staging – and undoubtedly, he was one of the only two filmmakers who could do so, *La Recherche du temps perdu* – which is to say, degradation.

There is indeed a degradation, there are also local phenomena of impulse-type degradation in Proust. Charlus, for instance, provides us with a fantastic example of degradation of the impulse-type, where we have the slope of the impulse, where he chooses less and less, and tears off increasingly rotten chunks. In *La Recherche du temps perdu*, Charlus is, I think, a naturalist character, he is the novel's great naturalist character. But taken as a whole, *La Recherche du temps perdu* is not really concerned with this... the whole of *La Recherche du temps perdu* shows one of the aspects of time – and this would trigger a whole analysis of the time-image – it shows one of the aspects of time as being *degradation in itself*. Time in the form of *time as degradation*. As such it constitutes a *process* of degradation, and this, I believe, is what Visconti lived through in all of his cinema. Why is this? Because there is a structure of time that it would be necessary for us to analyze quite profoundly – unfortunately this is not yet our object - there is a structure, it is by virtue of time's very structure, it is by virtue of the structure of time that something is necessarily given to us *when it is too late*.

So, the problem of time in Visconti's work would be... one part of the problem of time in Visconti's cinema would be the following question. Why is this and what is this time that is of such a nature that it necessarily gives us something only when it is already too late? Then, at that moment, we understand that the grasp of time or the grasp of an aspect of time is at one with the process of degradation. Which means that there will be many others. And so – and this amounts to the same thing – what are the main differences between expressionist acting, naturalist acting and realist acting? Now, if you don't mind, I have to go to the secretary's office. Is it closed? Is it open?

I hardly dare venture into a problem as complicated as the question of the actor. But it is clear that there are problems pertaining to the actor... but we can only consider these problems of the actor insofar as we begin from the assumption that an actor *does not represent* a fiction and does not represent a fictitious character. I mean that regarding this point, the question of whether the actor identifies or not with their role is a question that is both meaningless and is of strictly no interest since acting begins from the moment when another problem arises and when the actor is in another element. This is not to speak badly, for example, of Brecht's ideas on the distancing effect,¹⁸ since I believe that, on the contrary, Brecht's ideas of distancing involve and respond to a problem that has nothing whatsoever to do with the actor in terms of their playing a role. It is from the moment that the actor is defined as someone who does something other than play a role that we can speak of a problem of the actor.

So what does an actor do given that he or she doesn't play a role? And I suppose that any actor sees themselves as doing something other than playing a role. Playing a role is a notion that seems to me, absolutely meaningless. No great actor, and I suppose not even the bad ones - well, maybe the bad ones are the ones who do play a role... so what is it that actors do? What do they do? Since once again, this is something important insofar as it goes beyond a problem pertaining merely to the actor in themselves, because what the actor does is actually what the spectator experiences.

Well, I would say – I return to Pierce's categories, since they are very useful to me: firstness, secondness, thirdness – I would almost say, well – and here again I'm not going to be exhaustive – there are actors of firstness – and this is all the more reason to go back to my eternal refrain – I'm not saying they are worse than others, I'm not saying that actors of secondness will necessarily be any better than actors of firstness, or actors of thirdness, if such a thing exists. But you will remember that, according to Pierce, firstness was pure affection, or affect, which related only to itself or to an any-space-whatever; secondness concerned power-qualities, which is to say affects as they are actualized in different milieus... in fact secondness was a question of duels – hence the expression “secondness” – and thirdness was, as Pierce told us, something related to a mental space. So of course, there was already something mental about the affective, but he was thinking about the mental in a very particular sense.

So, I like this, because I find it useful. It's not simply that I like it, I would say: let's try to see if it works. There would be actors of firstness, actors of secondness, actors of thirdness, and then naturally, the future is quite open. Maybe we'll discover all sorts of other types of actors. But at least, let me say this, as I think it's worth noting, even if it's not yet completely solid, let's say that the expressionist actor was typically an actor of firstness. Why is this? And in his field, he is strictly unsurpassable, because how does he define himself? He doesn't play a role. What does he do? He expresses affects, affects not being states of mind, affects being what?

Affects – I remind you from our previous analyses – being entities, intensive entities that take, that seize hold of someone or else don't seize hold of them. These are extrinsic powers or qualities that the actor will express. So, he doesn't play a role; he expresses affects in this sense, and this is the famous intensive acting style of the expressionist actor. In this sense, he is an actor of firstness, and it is in this sense that I can refer to him as an "actor of firstness" since he essentially conceives his function as that of expressing affects as entities.

And so, one immediately understands that the fundamental trait of the expressionist actor in all his

methods is what the great expressionists constantly referred to as *the process of intensification* since it is only by acting out intensities – intensity of gesture, intensity of sound, intensity of the body – that they will be able to capture these entities, the affects they have to express. An example would be this use of the diagonal that is a typical feature of the expressionist actor's style. Now, I want to move on very quickly. I remind you that, therefore, this style of firstness has in fact two poles – we saw this for expressionism as a whole – meaning that the actor, through his expression of affects, necessarily participates in these two poles, what I called the non-organic life of things and the non-psychological life of the spirit.

And the non-organic life of things, he will express fundamentally by way of a whole geometry of the broken line, both in his gestures and in his active participation in the decor, in the broken lines of the decor – the decor itself comprising diagonals, counter-diagonals and so on, a little bit like in a Soutine¹⁹ painting. In fact, I would say that Soutine seems to me a very great expressionist painter, and is so precisely through his perpetual construction of diagonals counter-diagonals and of faces that are no less than expressions of pure affect. So, and then we have the other pole... but this participation of the broken gesture in the broken lines of the decor, is very, very important. It's something you find in Fritz Lang in his German period. Fine.

So the other pole is the pole of light, the luminous halo that expresses the non-psychological life of the spirit, either in the form of the great melancholic face that reflects the non-organic life of things – the mask of the demon – or in the form of salvation, the expressionist ascent at the moment that a being is saved. For example, the admirable mounting of light in the woman when Nosferatu dies, which is opposed to the diagonal of Nosferatu dying, which gives us the two poles of the expressionist style. But in any case, I would say that in this sense, yes it's never simply a question of the non-psychological life of the spirit or the non-organic life of things as such, it's in their relations to the decor, their relations, the breaks in their gestures, this kind of disarticulation.

There is a recurring idea of the actor becoming a marionette, you will find this everywhere, this idea of the actor becoming a kind of puppet, okay, fine! But this still doesn't mean anything in itself. All great actors have done this, except that there is an expressionist way of understanding it. In fact, there are a thousand ways of interpreting the idea of the "actor-marionette". One must be wary; one must not believe that such a formula already qualifies an acting style. There is an expressionist marionette of a very, very particular type, whose spasmodic gestures always indicate the broken line that skips over transitions. Because what is at stake here is to express the affect in its intensity together with the two poles, participation in the non-organic life of things and the actor as a being of light that rises to the non-psychological life of the spirit.

Well, that's very... now the naturalist actor – I'm skipping on though I'd have to say, we'll have to go back to this... I would just point out for those who are interested, that the great actor in this sense, the one who brought a naturalist style of acting to the French theater, was a famous man by the name of André Antoine²⁰. Now Antoine – see Sadoul's *Histoire du cinéma*²¹ – was a very important figure in cinema. He tried his hand at cinema, but I don't think that it's in Antoine's work that we should look for the essence of the naturalist style of acting; it would much more on the side of Stroheim, the way Stroheim acted is very mysterious, but it is much more in Stroheim's acting. So, this time, we should consider Stroheim as an actor, and as a naturalist actor.

At this point, I would say very quickly, that we recognize a naturalist actor precisely through this question of impulses. It's an actor who points, it's an actor who... it is very interesting the way Stroheim acted in a film that he influenced without having made it, namely he acted in Strindberg's *The Dance of Death*²², an adaptation of Strindberg, and the film is highly influenced – it's a film by Marcel Cravenne – it's very influenced by Stroheim, even if he only acted in it²³. Now it's very strange, this style of acting: it's a question of acting in a determined milieu, but at the same time – I don't quite know how to put this – at the same time, of inhabiting, of occupying this determined milieu... I would say, at the same time in the manner of a beast. But that's not quite it... it's a bit like that, in the manner of a beast. It can be a noble beast, it's not necessarily a vile beast; think, for

example, of Stroheim's acting in *The Grand Illusion*²⁴. It can be a noble beast; it can be whatever you like. But it's always a question of evoking in this determined milieu and through a realistic style of acting, the originary world from which this milieu supposedly arises, that is to say to arrive at this type of violence which is really the violence of origins, but which is played out in a bourgeois salon or in a principedom and so on. There is a formula for the naturalist acting style, which is very, very curious: the violence of impulses. Which is what I was saying about this slope, finally.

What interests me, then, is the other type of acting that we can well call "realist" acting, because it has had such an influence on the cinema, and I already mentioned why, it seems to me, it left such a mark on American cinema. It has marked American cinema to the point that it gave rise to a whole school of acting through which the majority of American actors have passed, the famous school known as method acting or the Actors Studio. But in what way is this acting style? I would say that the Actors Studio method is quite simple: it is the magic formula of American cinema. So, once again, it's not better; we'd have to say that at the present moment, and not before time, things will have to change. At the moment, I have the impression that it's coming to an end, for reasons that also have to do with the way American cinema has evolved, but it has informed, and continues to inform what every year we'd have to call the classic American film; each year a very successful, high quality film is released, which is the American film of the year and which always consists in confronting, through the S-A-S' scheme... in confronting one or more characters with the American requirement of S-A-S', that is to say, Oh central character – I'm speaking to the character – will you be able, oh central character, in accordance with the variations in the situation shown by the image... will you be to raise a *habitus* through which you can respond to such a situation and know how to transform it?

Now if this is the task of the actor, he doesn't play a role. But there was someone at that time – what I'm saying here is well known, but for those who don't know, I'll make a quick summary – a very great inventor and a follower what he claimed to be of naturalism, but which was in fact realism, it wasn't naturalism at all. And this was Stanislavski²⁵, and Stanislavski was extremely important. And then he was introduced or rather his method, which was actually called "the method", was introduced in America, through this institution which was the Actors Studio, founded by Lee Strasberg who died just recently and Elia Kazan. Kazan, a perfect case of a recent émigré, much like Forman. And of course, these are the directors who make the classic American films! At the same time that America inspires them to discover the great S-A-S' formula, it is their own invention of the S-A-S' formula or their own discoveries within that formula that draw them towards America.

So, in all of Kazan's cinema, that's what you have. No matter what the cost, I, that is, my hero, will be able to construct the *habitus* needed to confront the situation. And what will S' be? S' will be America as we dream of it: Kazan's *America, America*²⁶. In the end, the little Greek boy arrives, and he can kiss the pier, he can kiss the pier of New York, and it's good that it's shown in this dreamlike way, through what is a kind of oneiric image: "finally New York", "finally the Statue of Liberty". The S'. The poor little Greek boy started off from the Turkish Empire, S, a series of actions, A, where each time he raises the *habitus* necessary to overcome the obstacles, thus proving himself worthy of arriving in America. Worthy, worthy, but at what price? Sometimes one that borders on cowardice, sometimes one that borders on being a gigolo – I can't find the word, well, on living off a woman – sometimes one that borders on... sometimes it's murder, sometimes it borders on denunciation. Well, Kazan, had some dealings with that! He knows all about it, but he keeps something pure in his heart, because despite everything it was the *habitus* required by the situation. And this is what makes *America, America* a classic American film. Okay, in all his films Kazan never stopped talking about his own case. Well, it's the great formula S-A-S'. Or if it's not S'; if S' is not the America of our dreams, it will be the America that has disappointed its immigrants, but there too, we have to get used to it, we have to deal with it, we have to create the *habitus* that will let the hero understand that America is also this and yet it remains the most beautiful country there is. So then, *America, America* is remade every year, and each time by a very talented guy. It's the classic

American film. The last one was Arthur Penn's *Four Friends*...²⁷ He made his *America, America*. All right. One more time, this is the twelfth time. Every time, we are told that it's new, that it's great. It's the American film of the year and typically it still fits the S-A-S' formula and comes from the Actors Studio.

So what is an Actors Studio actor? I imagine him like this – you know, I don't know anything about cinema, and that's perfect – but I imagine it like this: he's an actor, an actor of secondness, of milieu-action, milieu-response, milieu-behavior, and the behavior is supposed to bring about a change. What does this imply? It implies two moments. It implies that – now the actor doesn't play a role – in a first moment, he has to internalize the givens of the situation; he has to internalize the situation, the givens of the situation, but in what form? In the form of micro-movements, movements that might be barely perceptible, a whole method of micro-movements. Stanislavski was not so much interested in the gymnastics of the body as in micro-movements of hands, micro-movements of the face. Those who don't like the actors of the Actors Studio, how do they recognize them? The reproach made to them is normally this: "but they should calm down! They never stop, they never stop. It's not that they move all the time, but even when they are still, they never stop. This is why Hitchcock hated Paul Newman; he said with Newman, there was no way to get him to hold still. I mean, you couldn't get a neutral look from him. He doesn't how to... all the time he's internalizing the givens of the situation, micro tics, micro-tics, ... well. When they're brilliantly directed, it's great, whether it's Brando or Newman. When they're well directed, when they have... but when it's a hack director, at that point, obviously, it's terribly ticcy; the tic is a kind of internalization of the givens of the situation.

You see, it is not a question... for the Stanislavski or Strasberg actor it is not at all a question of identifying with the character, it's a completely different operation. That's why the actor of the Actors Studio can't be said to act any more than another kind of actor. Actors never play a role. What they do is something else: they identify the givens of a situation with certain elements that exist within them. This is what the internalization of givens is all about: it's a question of the actor identifying the elements of the situation with pre-existing elements that exist within him, and it's by this method of internalization through micro-movements, that he will proceed, until... until what happens? These micro-movements have a purpose: to arouse what Stanislavski already called an "emotional experience" and what Strasberg, under the influence of psychoanalysis, what Strasberg will push much further than Stanislavski, and this will even be his most original contribution, namely, to discover a real emotional experience that has been lived by the actor in his own past, and that must be made to connect directly or indirectly with the situation, with the given situation... with the theatrical or cinematic situation.

For example, let's imagine an actor has to play a scene where he's drunk. Here it's a question... through all kinds of micro-movements the actor will internalize the elements of this situation until he reaches a core within himself of an analogous past experience. So, this can be the actor himself no longer just as an actor, but as a human being at a moment when he was really drunk. But it may very well be that he has never been drunk, if he is a good American. So, it doesn't matter; he'll access a similar emotional experience, for example, a fever where he had a dry mouth and wobbly legs, and it is a question of reactualizing this emotion he has personally experienced. It is important, Strasberg was keen to insist, it is important that this isn't a recent experience. Because, in that case, he starts to mime. But here it is not a question of miming but of attaining this emotional core, which is why it is an operation relatively close to certain conceptions of psychoanalysis.

And if he can't do this, Strasberg says, then there must be some reason. Why can't he do it? Why can't he internalize a given situation? And this is why he conceived his task less in terms of training actors than of responding to the difficulties of an actor, responding to the problems an actor has. And this is why all the actors kept going to Strasberg and saying, well, I can't do it, there's something that's not working. In other words, they couldn't generate the emotional experience, the memory – that's the exact word Stanislavski and Strasberg used – the emotional memory. So, all this

would be the first movement of the Actors Studio. This internalization of the situation.

And then we have the second movement: once the situation is interiorized, once it has been connected to the emotional core proper to the actor – you see that the actor isn't acting, he is doing something else, something very positive. We can define what he is doing independently of any reference to a form of play such as a role-playing game – once he has achieved this internalisation, he is able to perform the act. But what act? The cinematographic or theatrical act, that is, an act that must have all the freshness of an act that is actually performed, even though we know that it is a fictitious act. Of course, the actor doesn't really kill his victim. Or if he brushes his teeth, he doesn't really brush his teeth. Even if he does brush his teeth, it's fictitious, since he does it at a moment when he doesn't really need to. What happens is that the act performed by the actor according to the requirements of the script must have the spontaneity of a real act, which would be the response of Strasberg or already of Stanislavski... It will have... [*Interruption of the recording*]

Part 2

... invention and spontaneity. So here we have two... to make this clear, I can think of a text by Bergson which obviously has nothing to do with all this, but let's use everything we find. Bergson explains that in life there are two processes that either divide or link up with each other. He says that life is a two-stage, double operation. First operation: storing energy. What is it that does this? It is actually the role of plants. A plant stores up energy to signal that it is not mobile, it's immobile. And it has sacrificed mobility precisely to store up energy. Okay, but then we can say that it is traversed by a whole series of micro-movements that accompany the storing up of energy, micro-movements that happen in one frozen spot. And then you have the second process, Bergson says, which follows on from the first. Having stored up energy, life being a continuous process of storing energy, the second process consists in a *discontinuous discharge of explosive acts*. This is the animal side. In the great branchings of life, the plant is responsible for storing up energy while the animal has the task of exploding in discontinuous actions.

But from the point of view of life, this constitutes a sequence. Life is an inseparable process by which a living being stores up energy, which it then uses to trigger discontinuous actions, to detonate the explosive. We store up the explosive and we make it detonate in discontinuous actions, hence the kind of acting style favored by the Actors Studio that occasionally borders on hysteria. These periods of slowness – in this you can immediately recognize an Actors Studio actor – this is what I called the realist style, and you know it corresponds to the S-A-S' formula, the S-A-S' formula which is the classic formula of American cinema. As a first step, from S to before A ... from S to minus A, if you like, or to almost A: storing up energy to arrive to the core emotional experience, at least... no, to the memorial core, to get to the memorial core of the emotion.

Second step, violent discharge of the explosive. Now this is the formula – which is why I won't say any more about it – this is the formula of the great Kazan films, and it's also the formula of the actors trained by Kazan and Strasberg. If you think about the style of James Dean who was so important, or Brando's acting or that of Newman, as well as a number of great American actresses who act in a kind of hysterical style. At the same time, what tells us that the actor is not reduced to this is that it no longer counts with the new generation of American actors, so at least we have a future before us. It's no longer about that. And in the same way, to the best of my knowledge, you will hardly find... I don't even know if there are any French actors who... or if not, they must be very bad ones... who act in this way. There is one French actress who is quite Actors Studio, and as I admire her a lot, I can tell you who she is: it's Delphine Seyrig²⁸. Delphine Seyrig who has a certain very odd Actors Studio style, this perpetual storing up, storing up of energy with explosive acts. For example, *Muriel* is wonderful. She acts in that. But in the end, it is not so typical of her, but nonetheless it seems to me...

So, I come back to Arthur Penn's film, *Four Friends*, because I suppose some of you must have

seen it. So in what way... how is it a typical Actors Studio film, meaning a film in the lineage of Kazan? It's fairly easy to see how. Take the major scenes: what happens in them? The young guy, the poor son of a recent immigrant, arrives at the family home of the millionaire tycoon whose daughter he wants to marry. So what happens? An icy family lunch, the atmosphere is glacial, the tension rises. At this point, you see that each of the guests is internalising the situation in their own way. The tension mounts, which means there is a whole system of micro movements of waiting, the father who glares at his rival, his future son-in-law, all this and then the daughter who has her nose in her plate and so on. One has the impression that, even if they are immobile, nothing is still. This proves Hitchcock's point about it being impossible to get a neutral moment of rest from this kind of actor. Everything, they will do everything except play the scene neutrally, they're like a ruminant species. This is all rumination, it's a great rumination, it's the storing up of energy. And it responds to the situation though a corresponding internalisation.

And then the father pronounces an action-sentence. The action-sentence is: I'm not used to letting something that belongs to me be taken away.²⁹ The daughter crows down over her soup a little more because she's not used to this. And afterwards, it's not only the actor who learns, it's conceivable that he does learn something, after all he's supposed to learn, but what does the spectator learn? – You can't imagine, those of you who haven't seen *Four Friends*, how this is connected to the overall story, but the guy learns something fundamental that is already S'. The sentence was an explosive action of the father. A sentence can be an action in cinema; a sentence is an action. A sentence is a form of behaviour. What is it? None of this is normal. S was: the father is reluctant to let his daughter marry because the young guy is beneath her social level. After the sentence, you have S', namely that the father in fact has an incestuous relationship with his daughter. So, you have the S-A-S' structure in full.

So, internalization, what does this mean? How does he act, this father who plays his role so wonderfully – it's pure Actors Studio, quite wonderful? He's there, completely icy. He stores, he stores up the tension – and being a great actor, ah yes, he passes it on so it acts upon the spectator, it's really effective – he stores up the tension. Well, and then he unleashes his sentence, he throws his sentence like a punch at the son-in-law. And the son-in-law will respond, it will be a duel. The situation has changed, everyone understands: this is not a father who wants to let his daughter marry. It is a father who wants to keep his daughter to himself because he is in love with her and there is a real incestuous relationship between them.

Then comes the wedding. And we have a typical image that could have Kazan's signature: you have the party, the garden party, so there is the party. The father again has to internalize the situation: there's an enormous window, a darkly transparent pane of glass behind which the father stands rigidly looking down at the party. His face expresses all kinds of micro-movements, a kind of mix of hatred and disgust as he reflects on what he will do and so on. Everything passes through the face. Indeed, he can't calm down. You could shake him, but he would still stand stiff as a post. It's impossible to get him to calm down. There's no way you can get that from an Actors Studio actor.

And then, well, there is a small detail which really enhances the tableau, which is that nobody sees the father, except a small boy who happens to pass by and thinks: what a strange figure. So we see this little kid looking at the figure of the father, stiff as a post, and then a long, slow storing up. And then finally you have the action: the father goes out and kills his daughter with a revolver. You couldn't have a more explosive act. And then he shoots his son-in-law. He has turned to murder. And here you have the typical S-A-S' formula. Now this is really the style, I would say, it's the style of the Actors Studio, a style that we find as much in theatre as in cinema, what was the American style par excellence, which is to say the style of secondness. You have these perpetual duels, situations, internalization of the situations, the duel, then the modified situation. And then it starts again: the modified situation, replaying of the duel and so on, and this is what you essentially have in Kazan's – by which I mean, once again, classic American – cinema. And this is also the structure of Forman's films.

And I would say that not by chance is this finally the great trial, the parable of the guy who comes to America. It seems to me that in the story of the great filmmakers who have lived in America, it turns out well if you submit to this form, yet in a sense it's been ruinous. It has produced some great things, but it's also been disastrous. It was a question of: if you submit to this form, we accept you, we'll take you in". Any person who wants to emigrate there has to compete within this form. Forman passes through this. It's beautiful, but at the same time it's sad. Yet finally, the future is bright because once again, American cinema like all cinema is continually evolving and once more I have the impression that the current generation of American actors is very different.

But you see there is still one last problem in my story, in my trial. So, much as we now feel sure of the cinematic categories of firstness and secondness, we haven't really defined thirdness yet. We've seen a little bit of what thirdness is for Pierce. But I can't use this here, because what he tells us, it seems to me, is an analysis – I'm sorry to say, and you should take this with all due caution – too weak an analysis of thirdness. Everything he tells us about the law and so on. All I will retain from Pierce is that thirdness is something you don't obtain by simply multiplying duels. That is to say, it is not by making several duels that one obtains a third. He just tells us – and this is the only thing I want to keep – that thirdness is the mental. But what is the mental? This is what we have to discover. We can't expect to find it in Pierce.

All I'm saying, to keep the question open is that there will obviously be actors of thirdness. And maybe there were certain actors of thirdness in the past, but this is clearly one of the major problems that today's actors face, and that it's not only American cinema – maybe we've had enough of that, it could be that it's exhausted itself by now but once again, it's not a question of what is better; it's a question of change and mutation, and at the moment, the problem of cinema, and we'll see this in myriad ways, is how to introduce thirdness, or the purely mental, into the cinematographic image, and there are a number of great actors from all countries, including some French actors, who have for a long time been acting in a style that could be defined as a style of thirdness.

And here we will tackle a field which I find quite fascinating, the idea of the actor who... no more than anyone else does not play a role, the idea of the actor-marionette or as a great theorist of the theater says, the uber-marionette actor or the hyper-marionette ³⁰. And the whole idea of "death to the actor"... but "death to the actor" doesn't mean anything, it doesn't mean anything for a simple reason which is that there is no actor. If an actor is any good, he is no longer an actor. We have seen this. If we want to define "death to the actor" it means, death to the one who plays a role, who presumes to represent a fictional character. Again, to my knowledge there has never been a great actor or one in any way aware of his craft who has given himself this task. So "death to the actor" doesn't mean anything, since the actors who would have to be killed have never existed, again, except for pre-packaged actors. Otherwise, any actor who has an awareness of these problems has done something of another nature.

Okay, but let's consider the style of thirdness. So, to establish some things that should be self-evident, let's stay on the level of questions, and this will have an influence upon the whole of the corresponding cinema. So, we'll start with the famous things we are always hearing about, of which there are a lot, such as Brecht's distancing effect. We haven't yet asked ourselves if this has had an influence on cinema. Maybe, maybe not... I don't know. But anyway, wouldn't this be a way of introducing thirdness into the image? Is it not a way of introducing the mental sphere into the image? Or one of the ways, one of the ways, because... well, it would be only one. But let's put that aside for the moment.

But there is someone in French cinema of direct concern to us, on account of his very strange conception of the actor, namely Bresson. ³¹ Who is Bresson and what is a Bressonian actor? He refuses to use the word marionette because he is a man who doesn't want to offend anyone, although this in itself wouldn't be offensive. And what he says is that he's not an actor, he's a *model*, a model, but after all a model is exactly what sculptors identify with the marionette. Well, here we

have a model. So, what is Bresson's model? What is this style of acting that is so recognizable?

Well, I can think of many, many other actors who are really actors of the mental, actors of thirdness. Does this mean that they pretend to think? Of course not. That's not how an actor of thirdness functions. It's not by pretending to think. It's something else. So, what technique does this imply? What does it mean considered as an actor's problem? Well, if you put together – though I would say there are many different kinds – the generation of modern actors, the generation of actors who are now in their thirties, I have the impression that among them, you have many actors who are really – we'll see why this is – after the cinema of the Nouvelle Vague you have a very odd conception of the actor. We'll see this, the Nouvelle Vague actor, the Bressonian actor, we'll look for other things.

I would say, I not going to reveal everything for the moment. I'm saying, you can see that here too, as we saw earlier in the case of degradation, we still have a very long way to go regarding the time-image. And if at the end of this short presentation on the question of the actor, we still have a very long way to go, a huge programme to cover, this time on the thought-image, what will thirdness have to with all of this? So, this is what I wanted to add ... but I still want to accelerate things, do you think you can keep up for a bit longer?

So, I would say: well, you see it's not difficult to understand. We've just finished one pole of the action-image. The one thing we hold on to is that for each of our image types, we obtain two poles provided that it's not just a simplistic schema. So, we had two poles of the affection-image; this is just to be clear, in fact it could be four poles, or even five. We had two poles of the affection-image, two poles of the perception-image. So, I need another pole of the action-image, and fortunately, fortunately, it arrives quite naturally, it's something I really needed but, in any case, it's self-evident. So what is it? I only have to take the opposite of what I just said and then see if such a thing exists. In this way you can even anticipate what I'm going to say, which is that the second pole of the action-image is what we should call *the small form*. It's the small form.

So, there is a small form of the action-image. And would it have a formula? Well, yes, it would have a formula. It would be – we saw this last time, when we were just starting... I think, we had just started this – it would be A-S-A'... A-S-A'. Indeed, it's very different. Already, I can ask myself, keeping it open for the future: do the two forms mix? Can the two be mixed, the small and the large form? Of course. But perhaps it's only some very extraordinary filmmakers who have been able to mix the large and the small form. Otherwise, you have directors who are specialists in the large form and others who are specialists in the small form, but let's remember that the small form is no less great than the large. Or there are directors, great directors who alternate, sometimes making a large form film and sometimes a small form film, because they like to vary the combinations. And perhaps also because the small form, as its name indicates, is often less expensive than the large form, it's cheaper. But this isn't an iron law. There are some small form films that were very expensive. There have been a number of big budget small form films. But when you've no money small form films are easier to make.

But what is this A-S-A'? Well, you see how it's actually the inverse, since instead of starting from the situation through a rather complex process which, if you remember from last time, implies parallel-montage action sequences, a whole series of duels and reactions upon the situation, all of which is very costly in terms of set design, editing and the general *mise-en-scène*. But in this case what you have is the following: you begin with an action, and the situation is only established in terms of what the action can show... and what it shows you of the situation provokes a new action.

In other words, what is the fundamental characteristic of the small form? The ellipsis. If you remember, before, to employ the technical terms we borrowed from Pierce regarding the large form, we moved from *synsign* to *index*, that is, from the milieu to the duel. Now we're doing just the opposite. We go from the index to the situation in ellipsis, which will plunge us into an A', that is, a new action or, as we saw before, the repetition of the same action, in which case you will have A-S-A. In many of the gags you find in burlesque comedy, for example, you often have an A-S-A

formula. But A-S-A can also be A- S-A' since repetition elevates the matter to a new power, or even a constant process, such as the custard pie fight, a process that is taken up and brilliantly reinvented by Laurel and Hardy, and so on. So, this is my starting point.

I would say that the figure proper to this formula is no longer... it is no longer the spiral. It is the ellipsis (*ellipse*). At the same time, I seem to be playing on words. But this is just appearance because I have used the word ellipsis in two quite different senses. I began by saying: there is ellipsis in that you only know about the situation what the previous action has shown you. And there, I was using ellipsis in the rhetorical sense of something that is missing. Etymologically speaking, ellipsis denotes a lack. So now when I say that the figure of this formula is the ellipse ³², I blithely slip to another meaning – which would be inadmissible if I did not explain what it was – to another sense of the word ellipse, the ellipse as a geometrical figure. Why the same word? It isn't by chance since ellipse in the sense of geometrical figure derives from the same root as ellipsis in terms of lack, which means that the geometrical ellipse is also a kind of lack. But a lack in relation to what? It refers to the theory of conical forms: the ellipse being a lack, the hyperbole an excess in relation to the circle. It's not for its own sake that I refer to this. What concerns me is to show how at the level of the A-S-A' cinematographic image, the two are necessarily linked, that is to say, an elliptical form in the geometrical sense of the succession of images and an ellipsis in this same succession in the rhetorical sense are inevitably connected, and one leads to the other, as we shall see.

So, okay then, in the case of S-A-S', I had begun with an example that I considered to be typical, exemplary even, Sjöström's *The Wind* which seemed to represent the S-A-S' structure in its purest state, and we saw that this confirms – I remind you that *The Wind* is the first film that Sjöström made when he arrived in America – this confirms the tendency of American cinema towards the S-A-S' formula. But, but, but... now I need a similar example for A-S-A', and thank God, it is provided in the histories of the cinema.

And it's a famous film by Charlie Chaplin, namely *A Woman of Paris* ³³, a silent film in which Chaplin's tramp didn't appear though he directed it, and the fact that he directed it no doubt irritated some people who said that he had nothing to do with cinema, that he used cinema but that – and here he makes his apprenticeship as a director, it is not that he invents anything, one can always find precedents, but he establishes a new formula that for the time *A Woman of Paris* was made is nonetheless completely new. There had been comedies before of this type, such as the comedies of Cecil B. de Mille, but this film of Chaplin, *A Woman of Paris* was to have an extraordinary influence on some of the great directors to come.

And why is this film so celebrated? I'm trying to give you a sense of what A-S-A' really is. So, to take an example – these examples are all quite famous and as I said are mentioned in all the histories of the cinema. So, I'll recap them here so you can follow better what I'm saying. A train arrives, but you don't see the train. When I said the small form is less expensive, obviously it means that it costs less money. Besides, Chaplin couldn't get the kind of train he needed. So, we don't see the train. But what do we see? The train arrives at a station platform, and we see only its shadow, that is, the action of the train, the action of the train, the effect of the train, the shadow of the train sliding up to the platform and – in an admirable image – passing across, through an alternation of lights and shadows representing the train – passing across the face of the heroine who waits on the platform. Well, you see how this is already an A-S structure. This time, it's beginning from the action of the train upon the platform, and upon the heroine's face that I infer a situation A, the train's arrival and the fact that she's waiting for someone.

Second example – here we have a very powerful ellipsis - second example: a man comes to see the heroine, Marie – the heroine's name is Marie – a man comes to Marie's house, and he goes to fetch a handkerchief from the dresser. These are examples cited by Chaplin himself, by Chaplin himself, who sketched out the tableau of what innovations he was trying to introduce at the time. He fetches a handkerchief from the dresser, and everyone understands that he must be her lover. A strong

ellipsis. It's from a very simple action that we are able to infer the situation. And here you have the A-S structure.

Another more complex case, even if its of the same type: Mary is looking for a dress in front of her former lover, and while she's looking for the dress in the wardrobe, in the chest of drawers, she drops a detachable collar from the chest of drawers. The lover understands everything. The lover is in the foreground, and he looks at Mary with love. And she is looking for her dress, she's in the background. And the man's detachable collar falls, and he understands everything. He understands that she has a new lover. There too, it's typical A-S. Well, the film is... A critic of the time employs an expression that seems to me very apt: "The film proceeds like a mosaic of details", a mosaic of details, that is, it is really A-S-A'.

It is apt, and at the same time it is not apt. Apt and yet not apt, but why? I would say that... I will use mathematical terms, even if I will only be able to justify these next week. In mathematical terms, I would say that the formula S-A-S' – the large form – is a "global" formula and defines a global image or a global treatment of the action-image. And I would say that the formula A-S-A' is a "local" formula and consists in a local treatment of the action-image – global and local being terms which mathematicians like to use in what is called the theory of functions. What does this mean? Why do I prefer these words? We mustn't let ourselves be led astray. "Mosaic of details" is not quite right because that would imply that the formula A-S-A' moves from one part to another while the formula S-A-S' moves from the whole to the parts. This would be a very inadequate understanding, although it wouldn't be completely wrong. But it would be an insufficient way of understanding this because I believe that in both formulas, you have the formation of a totality, but by way of two quite different procedures. So also, in the second formula – the local formula – there will clearly be the constitution of a whole, but it will be through procedures completely different to those of the S-A-S' totality.

To make this even clearer – and I would like to end on this point – I'll take another case. So let's now look at who the great directors are... the great directors of the old silent cinema. So afterwards you have... I'll take an example: Lubitsch ³⁴; Lubitsch never hid his fundamental debt to *A Woman of Paris*. And what is called the "Lubitsch touch" ³⁵, this famous Lubitsch touch, what does it consist of? Precisely in a particularly deft, particularly tight, particularly advanced handling of the formula A-S-A', one that lets see of a situation only what is expressed by an action in the process of being performed, and all of Lubitsch's great effects come from this, his art of what we call... his art of suggestion and innuendo, that is, his art of ellipsis.

Another example... does this mean that they are both authors of the small form? Maybe, we'll see, it would be something to investigate. Another example I want to give you to think about between now and last week, uh, I mean next week ... It's odd that I would say last week – is Pudovkin's *Storm over Asia* ³⁶. There's a statement by Pudovkin ³⁷, this great Soviet filmmaker that I find very striking. He says: "What was decisive for me, I knew I was going to make this film when the following image came to me." Listen carefully: we see an English officer – this is interesting because he already had the idea for the script, of everything he wanted to say, but it didn't work. What made it work for him so he could say to himself: "I have my film" is the following detail: he imagines an English officer – one can even think that it could be a just a close-up of his boots, whose boots are well-waxed and who is walking on a very dirty sidewalk, walking in the manner of an English officer who's very careful about his boots, which is to say, avoiding puddles and making sure the boots stay immaculate. Good. Next shot: the same, we assume we have the same close-up of the boots but this time he's dragging his feet, and he's walking through puddles and so on and his boots are filthy. And Poudovkin says, what has happened between the two scenes? What has happened? We have the typical A-S-A'. Pudovkin's answer is that in the meantime the English officer has committed an action so contrary to the honor, to the honor of an upstanding officer that he no longer cares about his boots or their state of cleanliness because it's his soul that is soiled. Pure A-S-A' structure. ³⁸

Could I from such small examples arrive at the idea that there are particular genres that correspond to the small form? I would say yes and leave it at that. Yes, I could. There was a Flaherty documentary corresponding to the large form, this is the Flaherty pole, as we saw, of situation-milieu, situation-action – I have already spoken about this at length, so this is the last time I'm going to mention it and I won't come back to it. Against Flaherty what very quickly took shape was the so-called "English school", the pre-war English school whose great theorist was John Grierson³⁹ and which was developing an A-S-A' type documentary. I'll explain a little bit about this, and I'll delineate my oppositions point by point.

Second case: we had looked at the psycho-social drama, to which is opposed a small form. So then, the large form would be the psycho-social drama which would be opposed the small form of the comedy of manners such as *A Woman of Paris*. It's very different. We had seen the large form in the historical epic; the small form here – the Germans have a word for it – would be the costume drama; it seems to me very different from the historical film. And is it surprising that the great director of the costume film in German cinema – in German silent cinema, before he came to America – was Lubitsch?⁴⁰

Large form: we had looked at the film noir gangster film of the *Scarface* type. In this case the small form is necessarily the detective film, the detective film, even if it's a big budget production is necessarily a small-form film. What else can it be in comparison to the film noir?⁴¹ The gangster film is necessarily a large-form film, whereas the detective film is necessarily a small-form film because there you go from the index... you go from the index to the situation.

And finally, you have the large form of the western, and wouldn't this be the case with Ford? And then the small-form neo-Western – but let's be careful, this opens a whole new can of worms – because is it legitimate to adhere to the classical distinction between the epic Western on one hand and the tragic or romantic Western on the other? Maybe not, maybe the two don't coincide. Maybe we'll have to take up the question of the Western from the point of view of the action-image if we want to see what constitutes the large form and the small form in this case.

So, we've now reached a point where we can see the possibilities open to a director such as Hawks, for example. He continually alternates – almost as if he occasionally needed a rest – between large- and small-form films. The greatest directors, in my view, manage to combine the large and the small form to create something wholly original. But then there also great authors who are mainly specialists of the large form, and others who are specialists of the small form, all of which will complicate matters for us.

But the problem we've now reached, and which I'll tackle next time, is how to compare, and what distinctions we can make, between the laws of the small form that we haven't yet looked at and the laws of the large form that we've already seen. [*End of the recording*]

Notes

¹ *Nosferatu: a Symphony of Horror* (Orig. *Nosferatu – Eine Symphonie des Grauens*, 1922) is a silent horror film directed by F.W. Murnau starring Max Schrek as the vampire Count Orlok. The film is an unofficial adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula*, for which Murnau was unable to secure the film rights. It was remade in 1979 by Werner Herzog as *Nosferatu the Vampyre* with Klaus Kinski in the Schrek role.

² *The Last Laugh* (Orig. *Der letzte Mann*, 1924) is a film by Murnau starring Emil Jannings and Maly Delschaft. It tells the story of an ageing doorman to a plush hotel who because of his infirmity is demoted to the lowly rank of washroom attendant, a humiliation that when discovered alienates him from all his family. A bizarre reversal occurs, however, when he inherits the fortune of a millionaire patron of the hotel who died in his arms in the washroom.

³ *Pandora's Box* (1929) is a German silent expressionist film directed by Georg Wilhelm Pabst, starring Louise Brooks, Fritz Kortner, and Francis Lederer. Based on Frank Wedekind's plays *Erdgeist* (1895) and *Die Büchse der Pandora* (1904) the film follows Lulu, a seductive, thoughtless young woman whose uninhibited nature and raw sexuality leads both her and those who love her into ruin.

⁴ *The Blue Angel* (Orig. *Der blaue Engel*, 1930) is a German musical comedy-drama film directed by Josef von

Sternberg, and starring Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings and Kurt Gerron. Loosely based on a Heinrich Mann novel, it tells the story of a respectable professor's pursuit of a nightclub singer that leads to his ruination as he becomes a cabaret clown and eventually descends into madness.

⁵ *Greed* (1924), considered Erich von Stroheim's masterpiece and perhaps the greatest film of the silent era, is a meticulous adaptation of Frank Norris's novel *McTeague*, which tells the story of McTeague, a San Francisco dentist, who marries his best friend Schouler's girlfriend Trina. The film was brutally cut by the studios and the original version forever lost.

⁶ *Foolish Wives* (1922), Stroheim's second major film is a silent erotic drama about a bogus Count (played by Stroheim himself) who uses the status of his forged identity to seduce and exploit rich women. Like many of Von Stroheim's films it was drastically cut on release.

⁷ *The Crack-Up* is a collection of essays, letters and notes by F. Scott Fitzgerald first published in 1936. In the title essay Fitzgerald recounts his alcoholic breakdown and subsequent detachment from human affairs. Deleuze and Guattari refer extensively to this text in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

⁸ *The Lost Weekend* (1945) is a film by Billy Wilder starring Ray Milland and Jane Wyman, about a chronically alcoholic writer and the events of one weekend he spends battling his addiction in his increasingly futile attempts to write a novel about it.

⁹ *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) is a film by Czech-American director Miloš Forman starring Jack Nicholson and Louise Fletcher, based on Ken Kesey's novel about a group of inmates of a mental institution. One of them, the rebellious Randal McMurphy who has faked insanity in order to escape a lengthy jail term, attempts to lead the others including a Native American chief in a campaign of resistance against the redoubtable Nurse Ratched and the hospital's brutal regime.

¹⁰ Miloš Forman (1932-2018) was a Czech director, screenwriter and actor and an important figure in the Czech new wave of the 1960s before he emigrated to the US in 1968 following the Soviet crushing of the Prague Spring. After his early Czech films *Black Peter* (1964), *Loves of a Blonde* (1965) and the *The Fireman's Ball* (1967) gained international recognition for their ironic portrayals of life and romance under communism, Forman shot to fame with *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975). His subsequent films included *Amadeus* (1983), and two portraits of American provocateurs, *The People vs Larry Flint* (1996) and *Man on the Moon* (1999) about situationist comedian Andy Kaufman.

¹¹ Elia Kazan was an American director of Greek origin, one of the co-founders of the Actors' Studio which, under the leadership of Lee Strasberg, developed the school of method acting that was to dominate American cinema for several decades and which produced such luminaries as Marlon Brando and James Dean. Kazan's most famous films include *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951), *On the Waterfront* (1954), *East of Eden* (1955) and *Baby Doll* (1956). After he chose to testify against colleagues with communist sympathies before the House Committee of Un-American Activities in 1952, Kazan fell into disfavour. His last film was the uncompleted *The Last Tycoon* (1976), one of the adaptations of Fitzgerald novels about which Deleuze is somewhat less than enthusiastic.

¹² *Rio Bravo* (1959) is a Western by Howard Hawks, starring John Wayne, Dean Martin, Angie Dickinson, Ricky Nelson, Walter Brennan and Ward Bond. It tells the story of a town sheriff who arrests the brother of a powerful the brother of a powerful rancher for murder and who finds himself having to defend the jail where the man is kept from assault by the ranchers' men by allying with his drunken former deputy and a couple of other unlikely though capable helpers. Hawks would go on to remake the story twice, first as *El Dorado* in 1967 and then as *Rio Lobo* in 1970. It was also a major influence on John Carpenter's *Assault On Precinct 13* (1976).

¹³ Founded in 1947 by Elia Kazan, Cheryl Crawford and Robert Lewis, The Actors Studio is a training school for actors that under its director Lee Strasberg, who joined in 1951, became famous for promoting the method school of acting, influenced by the theories of Konstantin Stanislavski, that was to dominate post-war American cinema up until the 1980s. Its members have included such esteemed actors as Marlon Brando, Karl Malden, James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, Paul Newman, Anne Bancroft, Steve McQueen, Sidney Poitier, Dustin Hoffman, Jack Nicholson, Robert De Niro, Jane Fonda, Harvey Keitel, Al Pacino and Ellen Burstyn.

¹⁴ See F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Crack-Up*, Penguin Books, 1965, p. 56.

¹⁵ Sam Peckinpah (1925-1984) was an American director best known for his pioneering of the revisionist or neo-western genre and for his stylized set-piece scenes of graphic violence, which were to have a considerable influence on the development of Hollywood action cinema. His most famous films, which include *Ride the High Country* (1972), *The Wild Bunch* (1969), *The Ballad of Cable Hogue* (1971), *The Getaway* (1972), *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid* (1973) and *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia* (1975) typically feature disillusioned anti-hero figures adrift in a cruel and cynical landscape whose residual sense of honor and loyalty often spells their doom.

¹⁶ *The Losers* (1963) was a single story episode of the Dick Powell Theatre Show, directed by Peckinpah and starring Lee Marvin and Keenan Wynn as a couple of amiable card-sharps who are on the run. At one point there was an idea of turning the short film into a series though nothing came of it. Peckinpah had previously created another series, *The Westerner*, starring Brian Keith, which ran for a single season in 1960.

¹⁷ See *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, op. cit p. 168.

¹⁸ The *Verfremdungseffekt*, *V-effekt* or distancing effect (variously translated as alienation, estrangement, defamiliarization, distanciation) was first conceptualized by Brecht, though it is closely linked to Viktor Schlovsky's notion of "making strange", which he claimed was the essence of all great art. It typically involves the actor acting in

such a way as to prevent the viewer from directly psychologically or emotionally identifying with him, by presenting his character choices consciously and deliberately as something almost objectively understood. The technique, which can involve actors directly addressing the audience, was designed to render obvious the fictional contrivances of the medium. Though more commonly adopted in theatre than in cinema, Brecht's techniques of distancing have been influential in the work of European directors such as Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Chantal Akerman and Hans-Jürgen Syberberg as well as American independent filmmakers like Monte Hellman and Hal Hartley.

¹⁹ Chaim Soutine (1893-1943) was a Belorussian painter who spent most of his life in France and whose work is associated with the expressionist movement. Though ostensibly figurative, his works are characterized by an attention to texture, colour and shape that anticipates certain aspects of abstract expressionism.

²⁰ André Antoine (1858-1943) was a French actor, theatre manager, film director, author, and critic who is considered the father of modern *mise en scène* in France. Antoine founded the Théâtre Libre in Paris in 1887, whose productions were characterised by a mixture of realism and naturalism.

²¹ Georges Sadoul (1904-1967) was a French film critic, journalist and cinema writer. Known for his encyclopedias of film and filmmakers, many of which have been translated into English, after the Second World War he published his mammoth *General History of Cinema (Histoire générale du cinéma)* in six volumes, which surveyed films from around the world with a particular focus on non-western cinema.

²² *The Dance of Death* (Orig. French *La danse de mort*, Italian *La prigioniera dell'isola*) is a 1948 French-Italian drama film directed by Marcel Cravenne, starring Erich von Stroheim, Denise Vernac and Palau. Based on August Strindberg's play of the same name, it charts the poisonous relationship of an embittered married couple – he a military officer, she a former actress who sacrificed her career to be with him – in a secluded fortress on a remote Swedish island.

²³ Stroheim was also credited as one of the co-writers of the script.

²⁴ *The Grand Illusion* (Orig. *La Grande Illusion*, 1937) is a French war film directed by Jean Renoir from a screenplay he co-wrote with Charles Spaak and starring Jean Gabin, Dita Parlo and Ernst Von Stroheim. The film concerns a small group of French military officers being held as prisoners of war during World War 1 and the class conflicts that emerge among them as they plan their escape. It is commonly regarded as one of the greatest French films of all time.

²⁵ Konstantin Stanislavski (1863-1938) was a Russian and Soviet theatre practitioner and actor. Regarded in his own lifetime as one of the finest theatre directors of his generation, Stanislavski is today most celebrated for his 'system' of training actors, which favoured "the art of experiencing" over "the art of representation" and which gave rise to the American method acting school of the Actors Studio.

²⁶ *America, America* (1963) is a film directed, produced and written by Elia Kazan, adapted from his own book, published in 1962. Featuring a cast of relatively unknown actors, it follows the epic journey of a young Greek man as he escapes from the Turkish massacre of Armenians where his friend is killed, first of all, to Constantinople where he is exploited, humiliated and at one point left for dead, and then across the Atlantic to the USA.

²⁷ *Four Friends* (1981) is a film directed by Arthur Penn from a semi-autobiographical script by Steve Tesich, starring Craig Wasson, Jodi Thelin, Jim Metzler and Glenna Headley. It tells the story of four high-school friends from the perspective one of them, the son of a stern Yugoslavian immigrant father, an aspiring writer who attempts to make his way through college into American high society with tragic results.

²⁸ Delphine Seyrig (1932-1990) was a Lebanese-born French actress. She is most famous for her roles in Alain Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961) and *Muriel* (1963), Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975) and Marguerite Duras' *India Song* (1975). She was also the co-founder with Carole Roussopoulos of the 1970s feminist video collective Les insoumuses.

²⁹ The actual line from *Four Friends* that Deleuze is trying to recall here is: "You are looking at a man who gives nothing away that he wants to keep."

³⁰ In his comments here on the actor-marionette it is not entirely clear whether Deleuze is referring to Italian actor-director Carmelo Bene to whose work he dedicated the essay "One Manifesto Less", originally published in Italian in the book *Sovvrapposizioni* along with Bene's translation of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, or to Edward Gordon Craig, a pioneer of modernist theatre direction and set design who worked with Stanislavski and had theorized the idea of the actor as marionette much earlier in his essay "The Art of the Theatre", published in 1911.

³¹ Robert Bresson (1901-1999) was a French film director who is regarded as one of the fathers of modern cinema. Among his most celebrated works are *Diary of a Country Priest* (Orig. *Le journal d'un curé de campagne*, 1951), *A Man Escaped* (Orig. *Un condamné à mort s'est échappé ou Le vent souffle où il veut*, 1956), *Pickpocket* (1959), *Au Hasard Balthazar* (1966), *Mouchette* (1967) and *The Devil, Probably* (Orig. *Le diable, probablement*, 1977). Bresson's austere minimalist ideas regarding *mise-en-scène* and the direction of actors were extremely important for the filmmakers who emerged from the French *Nouvelle vague*, particularly Godard and Straub-Huillet. He theorized his approach to cinema including the notion of the actor as model in a short, highly influential book, *Notes on the Cinematographer*, where he argues that the traditional theatre-trained actor with his expressive tics has no place in the cinema and states his preference for "Models who have become automatic (everything weighed, measured, timed, repeated ten, twenty times) and then dropped in the medium of the events of your film – their relations with the objects and persons around them will be *right*, because they will not be *thought*." See Robert Bresson, *Notes on the Cinematographer*, trans. Jonathan Griffin, London: Quartet books, 1986.

³² Here Deleuze plays on the multiple meanings of the French word *ellipse* which are translated in English by the two words “ellipsis” (in terms of a temporal omission or gap) and “ellipse” (in the sense of a geometrical figure).

³³ *A Woman of Paris* (1923) is a film written and directed by Charlie Chaplin but in which he did not star, though he has a small uncredited cameo role as a porter. It tells the story of a girl who separates from her painter lover when he is prevented from marrying her by his sick mother. She briefly revives her romance with him after she has taken up with a rich businessman, but the hopelessness of the situation drives him to suicide.

³⁴ Ernst Lubitsch (1892-1947) was a German-born director who was one of the leading filmmakers of German silent cinema but who is more well-known for the scintillating comedies he made after he moved to Hollywood, including, *Design for Living* (1933), *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife* (1938), *Ninotchka* (1939), *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940), *To Be Or Not To Be* (1942) and *Heaven Can Wait* (1944).

³⁵ The “Lubitsch touch” is a phrase that has long been used to describe the unique style and cinematic trademarks of director Ernst Lubitsch, a brief description that embraces a long list of virtues: sophistication, style, subtlety, wit, charm, elegance, suavity, polished nonchalance and audacious sexual nuance.

³⁶ *Storm Over Asia* (Orig. *Potomok Chingiskhana*, 1928) is a film by Vsevolod Pudovkin, the final instalment of his revolutionary trilogy after *Mother* (1926) and *The End of St Petersburg* (1927). Set against a fictionalised British occupation of Southeastern Siberia and Northern Tibet it tells the story of a Mongolian trapper who becomes a Soviet revolutionary partisan before falling into the hands of the British who refashion him as a puppet leader though he eventually rebels.

³⁷ Vsevolod Pudovkin (1893-1953) was a Soviet film director, screenwriter and actor who developed influential theories of montage. Pudovkin's films differ from those of his contemporary Sergei Eisenstein in that montage is used in a more classical sense to foreground the heroism of individuals rather than the force of the masses. Perhaps for this reason he was more favoured as an effective propagandist during the Stalinist period.

³⁸ See *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, op. cit. pp. 179-180.

³⁹ John Grierson was a pioneering Scottish documentary maker who is often considered the father of British and Canadian documentary film. In 1926, it was reputedly Grierson who coined the term “documentary” in a review of Robert Flaherty's *Moana*. A friend and sometime producer of Flaherty, Grierson, though he only directed two films himself, had a long and varied career and was instrumental in the founding of both the British GPO film unit and the National Film Board of Canada.

⁴⁰ See *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, op. cit. p. 163.

⁴¹ Deleuze's peculiar use of the term *film noir* to describe large-form gangster movies like Hawks' *Scarface*, which he opposes to the small-form “detective film”, cuts against a more common usage of the term to describe a particular “hard-boiled” universe of crime and paranoia which includes both small and large form films. In *The Movement-Image* for example, Deleuze categorizes Hawks' *The Big Sleep* and Fritz Lang's *Beyond A Reasonable Doubt* as small-form detective films, even when they are acknowledged to be among the finest examples of the film noir genre, whereas *Scarface* is not normally categorized primarily as a film noir.