

GODARD AND MANET: PERCEPTION AND HISTORY IN *HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA*

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INTRODUCTION

Godard's historical claims in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*¹ offer a certain number of questions about the history of cinema. As they are audiovisual claims, the parameters for such analysis should be aesthetic, so that the historical sense may gain new and unsuspected coverage, as it deviates from the veracity of the written languages' regime. This article intends to analyze the presence of Manet's paintings in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, in order to investigate Godard's claim that Lumière was the last impressionist painter.² Two main parameters will be used. The first is taken from Henri Bergson's philosophy, and the second from later aesthetic concepts, notably through Jonathan Crary and Jacques Aumont. Framework, in its use by cinema, video and paintings, are deepened through Bergson's philosophy. It integrates, as a select action, the perception process. Visuality, on the other hand, responds to the kind of veracity which is implied in an audiovisual history work. The veracity implied in this kind of history work is far from the classical historiographic veracity, although it does encounter, in certain recent critical theories such as intermediality, sufficient support to confirm its procedures.

Furthermore, veracity implies, in experimental cases like *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, differences on the status of historical documents, as well as in the relations between them and their legends. This phenomenon leads to a tension, not just between history as a science and social struggles, but also between culture and art. Ágnes Pethő's intermediality, and James S. Williams' essays on the question of the relationship between culture and art, in Godard, will be recalled, as well as Daniel Fairfax's syndialectical proposal.

In *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Godard uses many different kinds of visual materials, including paintings, photographs, caligramatic writings, and an enormous VHS' movie archive to tell (his)stories about, and through, cinema. The "s" between parentheses has the sense of multiplicity, both quantitative, due to the numerous different types of raw material, and qualitative, because Godard's procedures intended to respond his kind of historical ap-

proach. Resonating Walter Benjamin's historiographic reverse, by taking the point of view of the oppressed in history, Godard effusively plays with the status of the relations between documents and their legends. Godard determines history, as also being the history that did not happen due to oppressive strokes. *Histoire(s) du cinéma* intends to tell the history of films that were never made. It claims, though, for a different kind of approach concerning history documents, and that's what Godard does in a very bergsonian way, by replacing unicity to rhythmicity. Coordination between historical documents and their legends are placed into a montage of multiple environments, which does not recognize stable relations. This procedure is very close to bergsonian descriptions on perception, and it inaugurates a new kind of veracity.

We owe to Gilles Deleuze³ a proper reconciliation between Bergson and cinema's moving images, since Bergson, as well as phenomenology, sees in cinema an ambiguous alliance to talk about perception. One of the most important things in Deleuze's work is precisely how he shows in which way Bergson differs from phenomenology, in his apparently equal attitude towards cinema. However, putting aside Deleuze's explanations, we will also consider Bergson's theory as it embraces, on its own, the nature of perception.

It is quoted by Jacques Aumont⁴ that "cinema is an invention without any future", a statement made by the Lumière brothers which has a great charge of ambiguity. On one hand, we have the history of cinema up until our days, that apparently nullifies Lumière's statement. But on the other hand, the history of painting leads us to another perspective. To confirm this statement, there is the coincidence between the end of impressionism and the beginning of cinema, meaning, in James S. Williams' words, seeing cinema and painting as included in the "universal chain and metamorphosis of artistic form",⁵ Both the first cinema and the impressionism have apparently had the same attitude towards images. Langlois states the imponderable in life, Aumont calls visuality the kind of approach which, differing from the romantic spirituality, was born with modern times, and privileges images where they stand by themselves, that is, on its presence.

Godard's point of view⁶ towards Lumière's statement is that cinema had no future because it was the art of the present. Also, because it was to be interfered by imperialism. The "gentle alert by the two brothers",⁷ as it leads to the present, poses the question about cinema's nature, how it uses human perception, and what is revealed about it. Cinema is intrinsically interconnected with other arts, as it is, in a way, interconnected with itself.

Therefore, co-relating painting with cinema must reveal something of its own nature. As Aumont remembers, painters like Poussin, Velázquez or Chardin had already worked hard towards showing moments of life in its imponderability. However, by the time impressionism ended and cinema started to grow, painting wouldn't show imponderable things, such as shining leaves, or flourishing clouds. Instead, these elements would be presented in an ironic, parodistic way. We can preliminarily conclude that, in a way, cinema substituted impressionism in the task of showing life's visuality, and in that sense, Lumière was the last impressionist painter. It's just natural to think that cinema would also be substituted, and therefore it would have no future. But it is still alive.

When we say impressionism, we are not saying painting as a whole. When we say cinema, what are we saying? Godard establishes a difference between culture and art, as we'll see through James S. Williams' essays,⁸ which work this question with consequences in history's determinations. *Histoire(s) du cinéma* is, in a great deal, about the end of silent cinema. We can primarily say that silent cinema created new documentary and fictional conditions that were neglected further up, notably with speaking films and at the time of the World War II. *Histoire(s) du cinéma* is also, the manifest of this claim. The utilization of Manet's paintings functions as a way to pose questions to these novelties that cinema, as well as other arts, were creating. This is called by Godard the inception of (modern) art.

Lumière's statement appears in *La Chinoise* (Godard, 1967), in a Langlois' quotation. It works as an actualization of these questions in the field of history struggle. Anne Wiazemsky says that "the revolution is a violent insurrection, in which one class overthrows the other", and that hers is a "philosophy class." This puts the question of history in terms of thinking. Thinking though, will be determined as a political gesture, often associated with handwork, such as painting and montage. In this sense, we can ask how the utilization of impressionist paintings by Godard in *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*, privileged by the figure of Manet, elucidate visuality in the way the modern project intended to materialize life's image.

As Bergson might ask, what is the difference in kind shown by Godard's (video) movie re-framing of *The Plum* (*La Prune*, 1878), *Boating* (*En Bateau*, 1874), *The Dead Christ with Angels* (*Le Christ mort et les anges*, 1864), *The Balcony* (*Le Balcon*, 1869), *Nana* (1877), *Olympia* (1863), *Berthe Morisot with a Bouquet of Violets* (*Berthe Morisot au bouquet de violettes*, 1872), *A*

Bar at the Folies Bergère (*Un bar aux Folies Bergères*, 1882) and *The Fifer* (*Le Joueur de fifre*, 1866)? What does it show us at the present time?

CINEMA REPLACES OUR GAZE WITH A PAINTING THAT CONFORMS TO OUR DESIRE

In order to analyze the use of paintings by a number of film makers, André Bazin⁹ evokes an education process which takes place, or should take place, regarding the appreciation for paintings. His well-known point is that cinema is a great ally, considering its larger scope of social influence. For Bazin, cinema appears as a savior, which would rescue painting from its restricted field, educating more people, permitting a spectator to “make that effort of abstraction as a result of which he can clearly distinguish between the mode of existence of the painted surface and of the world that surrounds him.”¹⁰ The idea is due to Bazin’s claim that cinema helps painting appreciation without interfering on its pictorial nature, because cinema intends a “secondary realism” that guarantees painting’s own reality, making an abstraction of it. It means that cinema deals with painting’s abstraction, not exactly with itself—colors, for example, can be put aside, as well as the original framings. It also means that, there are a number of painting characteristics that aren’t brought out, but only appear through the abstractionism operated by the cinema. “Secret virtualities”, says Bazin. Cinema doesn’t betray painting, but it aids painting, revealing something of it, which belongs to it, and most likely would have rested virtual without the aid of cinema. Analyzing *Le mystère Picasso* (1956), Bazin baptizes *pictorial duration* the virtual characteristic of painting, which cinema turns visible, where the moments are its frames. As we see Picasso’s painting being made in front of our eyes, we observe that the forms are completely dependent on the unveiling of the paint. We could even say that, if there are forms, they are made mostly by our minds, when we recognize a point, a trace, a bull, a bird, etc. Cinema replaces our gaze with a painting that conforms to it. Cinema is “legitimately and intimately organized in aesthetic symbiosis with pictorial event”¹¹

How does this process take place? How does cinema aid painting, or interact with it? In order to respond to this question, it is necessary to establish some of the inner differen-

ces between cinema and painting, because their symbiosis is more about its final effect than about the way it interacts, in the genetic sense. In other words, there must be, beyond external differences, an inner distinction, belonging to both painting and cinema. In any case, this is what we can infer from Bergson's philosophy.

When Bazin compares the cinema/painting mixture with early animations, saying that forms engender forms, without the need to ever justify it, he talks about a "shooting time"¹² which, beyond what we see, is considered to be concrete. What we see are forms, but the duration of things has no forms, it just engenders forms. In this sense, one of the main tasks of art is helping us to create good forms. Bazin believes in art as a form of salvation, and that's one of the possible senses to his statement made famous through Godard's quotation: "cinema replaces our gaze with a world that conforms to our desire."¹³ Painting does too, and the reason why Bazin got so excited about Clouzot's film is because it shows, beyond Picasso's forms, its creativity movement, engendering forms.

But let us not forget our problem, which is not about the cinema/painting mixtures and what they make visible, but *how* it happens, and why we need to see each of their inner differences. And here, the confrontation between Bazin's inspiration and Deleuze's interpretation of Bergson, must reveal what that difference is. Bazin's idea is that *Le Mystère Picasso* is a revolutionary film because it shows the duration of the painting creation process. He makes the defense, for example, of Clouzot's "acceleration" technique (cutting some dead spots), by stating that it is aesthetically justifiable to shred the shots, because that's what montage does. This apparent contradiction, between stating cinema/painting symbioses and their radical difference, is dissolved by Bazin when he defines his real praise of Clouzot's film. When he analyzes the utilization of color tricks, his fundamentals become clearer. He makes a difference between "natural" perception and "cinematographic" or "pictorial" perception, defining the last ones as mental.

This is a phenomenologist point of view, and its difference from the Bergsonian becomes clear with the aid of Deleuze. In his defense against what he called Bergson's unfair statement about cinema, Deleuze remembers that phenomenology occurs from a "natural perception condition." In that respect, Bergson considers that it happens from an "a-centered universe of images which acts and reacts immediately".¹⁴ The difference is that in the first point of view the images are illuminated by our minds, while in the second, the images are subtracted, darkened off and enframed, from an a-centered universe. It is possible

to say, in both cases, that, perception deforms the universe of images, and the difference between phenomenology and Bergson is *how* they make this statement.

If phenomenology is right and the way perception modifies the universe of images is by adding something to it (light, color, forms, etc.), then cinema finds in painting, films such as *Le mystère Picasso* its great target, thus explaining Bazin's excitement. But, if perception modifies the universe of image by subtraction, as Bergson states, then Deleuze is right to say that cinema is capable of re-engendering something from an a-centered universe of images. Natural perception leads to nature as God. That's why arts are forms of salvation, because they can aid us to get in touch with the natural world, overlapping human condition. But an a-centered universe of images leads to a stranger definition of the universe, that is, a multiplicity irreducible to unities. And perception would be the way in which living creatures modulate this multiplicity in order to nourish and multiply.¹⁵ This would be the form of salvation implied in the resurrection of matter through its self-engendering process, a continuous and creational struggle for survival.

In this sense, what is important is the way in which the enframing work is done and the contributions of film and painting to it. In other words, it's not that painting and film are symbiotically together concerning the very duration of the artistic process. What seems to be more useful to see is the ways in which film and painting enframes matter. That is, again, the opposite of what Bazin explained. With his centripetal/centrifugal theory, he looked at the manners in which framing was undone. Regarding the nature of Bergson's theory, we ask, on the contrary, how framings are done. It rests to see its political applications regarding history.

FRAMINGWORKS

One of the most common analysis on Manet's paintings is of their framing works. Paul Valery, was one of the first to state that, in Manet, the act of enframing is almost the same thing as the act of showing.¹⁶ This is due to the closeness of the figures to a pure paint materialism, which was one of the novelties brought out by Manet. In this condition, framing, both limits the paint and visually legitimates what the so-called deconstruction of the subject produces in terms of iconicity. For T.J. Clark, analyzing *Olympia* (1863), for

example, "Olympia's face is framed, mostly, by the brown of a Japanese screen, and the neutrality of that background (what is shown is the back of the screen, the unpictured part) is one of the things that make the address and conciseness of the face the sharper."¹⁷ In Manet, framing functions as a renovator of an a-centered heterogeneity which undoes the subject's general lines. For Jonathan Crary, in his remarkable analysis of *In the Conservatory* (1879),¹⁸ Manet makes visible the visuality regime which takes place through XIXth century's transformations. Science and art, as they penetrated the subtlest depths of subjectivity, transformed the dynamics of freedom and control through the social body. This is far from a stable object/observer relation. Crary underlines the multiple senses of the word *serre* in the French original title (*Dans la serre*) which means *greenhouse*, but also *closed place*, as well as, *to hold tight*. This is very close to Foucault's idea, while analyzing *An Bar at the Folies Bergère* (1882),¹⁹ that, one of Manet's most important procedures is the repetition of the frame throughout the paint, which is also, in a way, what Crary called "compression and restriction systems."²⁰

For Crary, it has the sense of showing constraint of bodies implied in modernity's transformations, as well as its correlative change in attention. For Foucault it is a technique that changes the viewers' status towards the painting. And for a lot of others, Manet's enframing procedures nourishes a great number of interpretations, from class struggle to social criticism, from feminism to the pure essence of time. The viewer is forced to work at the picture. That is exactly what's political about it. How does framing work in relation to the viewer? As Malraux would say, when Griffith repeated a plan of an actress which moved him, but with the camera closer to her, he changed the relationship with the spectator.²¹

The idea that framing in Manet is repetition, leads us, for example, to later modernist Alfred Hitchcock. This is related to modern art tendency to show the construction elements rather than to hide them. That is why this political act concerns the critics of the modes of production. In Foucault's words, "far from wishing to make the viewer forget the rectangle on which he paints, he does nothing but reproduce it, insist on it, double it and multiply it in the very interior of his picture."²² This is a way to control the tendencies inside the frame. In this manner, the elements will just produce rhythmicity with the proliferation of geometric forms, instead of being supports for space illusions, like *quattrocento* painting did. The problem with this proliferation which does not involve realistic space

illusions is closer to the problem of time concerning perception. And it leads back to Bergson. Instead of being an illumination in the condition of a *natural perception*, as phenomenology states, Bergson describes perception as a work of “joining together, by the continuous thread of memory, instantaneous visions of the real”, and that gives birth to a “particular rhythm of duration.”²³ This is, in Bergson, the very nature of perception, it is space being just a utilitarian tool, which has no other function rather than to promote action. Besides, space risks to overlap the action realism that is, duration’s rhythm. It becomes clear than, why Jonathan Crary talks about Manet’s images as a “holding action.”²⁴

It remains to be said that this is very close to Benjamin’s historical materialism project, from which Godard takes inspiration, in a great deal. Benjamin states an urgency in rearranging the status of historical elements in historiography, in a way that, the *citations à l’ordre du jour*²⁵ encounter their foundations more in a presentation than in a representation. This similarity between Manet’s enframing, Bergson’s philosophy, and Benjamin’s materialism will be prolonged by Godard in his historical project with three main characteristics: 1) the status of historical elements as painting/film, music/image, fiction/documentary are to be rearranged, not from a fixed position to another one, but in-between multiple relations, as intermediality helps us see; 2) original materiality is to be necessarily manipulated, as it implies the exercise of thinking, which is like thinking with gestures; 3) cinematographic dialectic montage (the *third image*) is to be interfered by videographic fragmentation, not to dissolve it but to repeat it differentially, as we’ll see through Daniel Fairfax’s essays. This also has the function of opening up the original material to the net of relations and senses in which it is inserted. In this sense, James S. Williams says that “Godard’s videographic montage displaces and disperses the potential power of painting.”²⁶

HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA

As *Histoire(s) du cinéma* assumes the role of telling the history of cinema, a genre normally written in book form, it gains in intermediality the status of an in-between work. Ágnes Pethö²⁷ transcends the relationship between different medias, and shows that cinema’s own complexity is due to the fact that it is composed by multiple layers, as intermedia archeological procedure shows. This is comparable to the difference between culture and

art, as we'll see through James S. Williams, once cinema's domain, as a whole, can be determined as cultural with artistic movements in-between (early silent montage schools, *nouvelle vague*, neorealism, etc.). Each of these artistic movements has their particular history, how they were born, grew up, died, and also the specific problems to what they responded. Because cinema belongs to the XXth Century, these problems concern mostly wars and resistance, as James S. Williams shows. The procedures through which Godard distributes these questions through multiple audiovisual materials, are shown by Ágnes Pethő not as an inner look from a film-maker, but an outer look, as his *Histoire(s)* covers the majority of important European struggles, without resting attached to any of the forms it has been through.

Histoire(s) du cinéma systematically deconstructs elements of representation regimes, such as continuity, contiguity and linearity. It does so, by telling political history of the regimes that caused destruction, thus, making a lot of experiments impossible. These practices were driven towards a different direction, other than the classic hegemony. Artistic movements appear and fade through modern times. What we see in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* is an effort to tell how it happened concerning cinema. And it is interesting that, the only way in which cinema didn't substitute the impressionist task—to make imponderable things visible—, was by agreeing with Godard's claim that impressionism was already the silent film— as Lumière was the last impressionist. Of course, they were different things, but what Godard is saying is due to his thesis on the economic attacks to the talking film. It was a mega-range economic solution, and reached the entire world at that time. A lot of thinkers regretted this offensive, although it is not easy to see its objectiveness. This happening is easily included in history's evolution, therefore it gained the character of necessity. Because of that, it is hard to see this attack as a stroke. However, an attentive look at history information should solve this problem.

Attentive, in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* and its multiplicity of elements, means complex. Godard's reflections about the very nature of images which appeared in his first films have a great deal of Bergson's philosophical influence, similar to a number of thinkers and artists such as Robert Bresson, Marcel Proust and Georges Bataille. To "keep a margin of indefinite"²⁸ is one of the lessons from *Notes on the Cinematographer* by Robert Bresson.²⁹ It expresses the director's minimalist way of presenting cinematographic events, through his effort to make cinematographic images gain independence from other representative

regimes. One of the ways through which cinematographic image obtains its independency from other arts is, of course, silence. Here we can consider the economical level in which Bresson utilizes his sound bands. Besides, we can also remember cinema's photography inheritance. From chapter 1B on of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, a number of paintings are added to the inheritance of silent cinema.

Chapter 1B's title, "Une histoire seule" ("A lonely history"), evokes the idea of silence, and the "exhaustion of everything that communicates through immobility and silence."³⁰ Godard had already expressed this idea at the Adorno Awards in Frankfurt am Main: "Histoire is alone, far from man."³¹ In this sense, there is a perfect marriage between cinema and history. That is so, because, if cinema inherits silence as an essential element, then history, being independent from man's interpretations—one of the ways to interpret its loneliness—should find itself a good way of expression. Not only the silence of photography, but that one of an impressionist painting. "Cinema inherited from Zola a family album, that is, Proust and Manet."³² It is important to evoke here Godard's claim that Kodak family photos are not what they could be, that is, an aid to see life in a more positive way and, therefore, improve it. That is due, as Godard says, to the fact that "the century that created (image) techniques, created crap as well."³³ By calling it a family album, what Proust and Manet did, is not just a *blague*, because in fact, both of them utilized everything an artist does to create their art forms, that is, life around them.

THE PLUM (1877)

It is known that *The Plum*—the first Manet to appear in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (chap. 1B), as it belongs to Manet's more naturalistic late period—shows a lot of details, surrounding the female figure, that guide our eyes through an infinite camp of naturalistic interpretations.³⁴ The scenario is probably the *Nouvelle-Athènes*, a café frequented by Manet, Degas, Monet and others.³⁵



Figure 1: Édouard Manet, *La Prune* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC).

There is the balcony that separates, so to speak, the girl from us, spectators, and then, her dress under the balcony. On the upper side there is a grid-like painting which gold frame is enframing the girls' head. We have the sofa, the (unlit) cigarette between her fingers, the (untouched) plum liqueur, and her (lost) gaze outside the frame. These recognitions are determined as naturalists, because they do not intend to create a moral interpretation towards the scene. Instead, it points at something we can call *dynamic differences* that dislocates the fact that is shown (a girl sitting at a table with some plum liqueur and a cigarette). *How* is she sitting there? That's not easy to answer, because the impossibilities implicated in the details—the fact that the cigarette is not lit, the plum liqueur untouched, and her eyes lost—block, so to speak, possible moral generalities, in other words, it prevents a progressive story to be imagined. As it is blocked out, what rests is something like a pure and indomitable fact.

"Everything is relative, we are surrounded by relative truths, and there is nothing but relative truths..."³⁶ says Renoir (the son), in chapter 1B, whose voice is included on a vast, complex and discontinuous net of sounds and images. This is not to say that Godard and Manet's procedures are tautologically the same. But there is truth here, and it's Godard's thesis that both impressionism and cinema were (modern) art's infancy, that they had a project in common. Such a project can be understood as a metaphor to a social political one, but let's stick to its aesthetical dimension, for the time being. *Louis Lumière* (Rohmer,

1968) shows in his Renoir and Langlois' interview the idea that would be used by Godard in *La Chinoise*. One of the most important ideas, expressed by both Renoir and Langlois, is that we can see, through Lumière's work, human thinking being objectively constructive in its four dimensions. Through Lumière's enframing the choices we see are the product of a thought which is occupied with the life of millions of details that compose the most ordinary facts, such as a train arriving at a station, or the workers coming out of factories. "This is a change on history of human thinking transmission",³⁷ said Renoir.

The modern project, as shown in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, didn't work out in the sense that it ended violently with wars and historical catastrophes. Although cinema survived its own history, as the very existence of Godard's work states, some affirm that its own creative evolution movement has come to a stop. It might not be productive to ask questions like, 'what would have been done to close-ups if organic model hadn't become hegemonic?', or 'what if sounds wouldn't have been imposed?'. However, Godard also used cinema techniques (despite reworking these techniques while using video) which were invented at the time cinema could be called kinship with impressionism, and present impressionism paintings included. What we have, as a result, is that history is confronted with itself. The girl from *The Plum* is inevitably listening to what the history of the voice-over has to tell. We can resume it like this: Lumière and the Impressionists are modern art's infancy. An art form that was born full of light and new forms, and betimes would see imperialism and destruction ending (almost) everything. "One or two World Wars would be sufficient to pervert this state of infancy, and would lead to television, this imbecile and sad adult."³⁸



Figure 2: *La Prune* manipulated by Godard.

As the iris extracts the face of the girl in a very Bergsonian way, we can point out two complementary effects it produces. The first one is that, we can no longer perambulate through all the naturalistic details with which Manet used to compose his paintings. Concentrating on the girl's face, we connect affective qualities. Oddly, what seemed to be a lost gaze, as it had lost the tension between the impossibilities that surrounded the girl—unlit cigarette, untouched plum liqueur—now, doesn't seem so lost anymore. As we only see her face, the rest of the world became a virtual dimension that, without an actual point in which stand for its (im)possibilities, encounters in her face and gaze the only points where to bet their possibilities. The second difference is in regards to the voice over, which makes the girl's gesture resemble that of someone who's been listening. Listening to the voice of Godard telling the story of the XXth century, how cinema was affected by it and, also, how his voice affected cinema. Ultimately, we can say that the iris effect concentrates virtual tension on the face of the girl, and, as it goes along with the voice over telling the history of both early cinema and impressionism, the painting is set on a *mise-en-abyme*, in which it is confronted with its own history.

BOATING (1874)

The first consequence is that in history, as knowledge, suffers a polarity change. It stops being something added by human thinking to historical elements, and becomes a thought on itself. In Godard's words, a form that thinks. That's the very nature of the "family album inherited by the cinema from Proust and Manet",³⁹ that is, from modern art. Expressing impressions of everyday life in a different way. Extracted from impressions what would become light, color, forms. Manet's *Boating* (1874) appears straight ahead *The Plum*, and it's the same story, but this time a man stares at the viewer. The model was Rodolph, Manet's brother-in-law at that time.⁴⁰ As Georges Bataille remarks were very sharp, it happened with this painting exactly what we saw about *The Plum*. A certain "delay-action effect",⁴¹ which postpone everything we could generally associate with the elements given to us. In this case, the water, the boat, and the boat ride. In addition, there are some special ambiguities such as, the background rises parallel to the picture plane and blocks the view into the far distance.⁴² The man's hands are somehow suspended before we slowly un-

derstand that he is guiding the ruder. And that, to say it again, it is made purposely in the sense of running out from realism, with the effects of showing imponderable things. There were x-ray demonstrations that showed that Manet even changed the man's hand, which was more realistic, holding a rope, in this suspended gesture.⁴³ Godard's enframing work with the iris, the same as with *The Plum*, intensifies here the virtual qualities rather than realistic ones. What we can see here again is the increase of virtual tension towards the figure, in this case, a man.

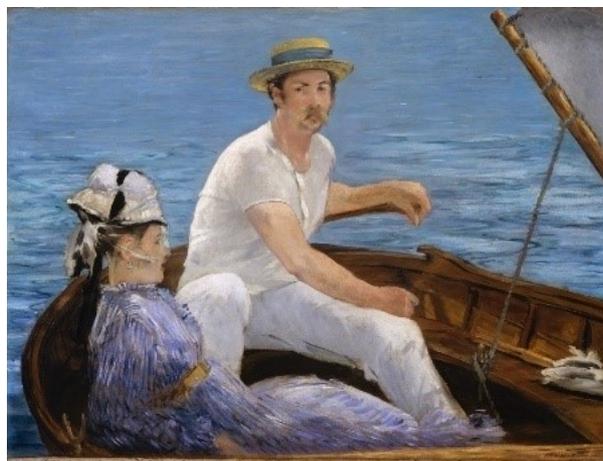


Figure 3: Manet, *En Bateau* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

As this painting appears in superposition to *The Plum* and the woman's intensified gaze, it's not difficult to think about the desire, and the relations between a man and a woman. But on a larger range, just like what was shown in the figure of Nana,⁴⁴ in this context, it makes us think about women's destiny through the XXth century. The man here in *Boating* is guiding the female figure, and this is very symbolic if we think about how Godard comprehends the female gender relations. He said in an interview that men create techniques as women have the task to create other human beings. But techniques became brutal as they overcame imperialism, and women were made do things they hadn't been cut out for. There's a group of analysis which appears through *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, which we won't cover deeply here, being sufficient to say that Godard approaches the hysteria phenomenon, in which he left open for us to think that it is about an effect on women's health, of the kind of life produced by modernity and its error and historical tragedies.

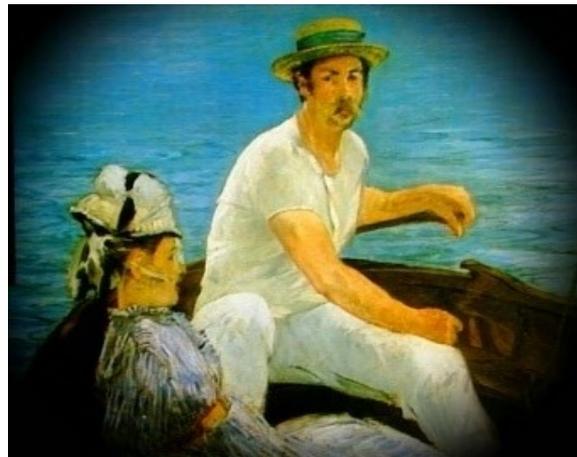


Figure 4: *En Bateau* manipulated by Godard.

THE DEAD CHRIST WITH ANGELS (1864)

The Dead Christ with Angels appear in chapter 2B: “Fatale beauté” (“Fatal Beauty”), in a context in which the voice over is talking about cinema being something beyond an art, or a technique. A mystery, or something related to medicine—Godard’s father was a doctor and he often utilizes the metaphors of medicine, talking about cinema, for example analogies between film and x-rays. Let us remember here that naturalism has always been put next to the function of diagnosis, and to medicine science itself, as Zola’s usage of Claude Bernard’s work manifests. The use of sacred figures, and their confrontation between cinema’s iconic images such as Elizabeth Taylor, is one of the most commented characteristics of Godard’s work. Historical confrontation, here, has the meaning of a judgment. Certainly, it’s not a judgment as we know, the one made by external forces into life on earth. The judgment that Godard produces is more like historical images among themselves, as he remarks, “You can show the past and the present. A thought is there, as well as a wish to judge. There is a story.”⁴⁵

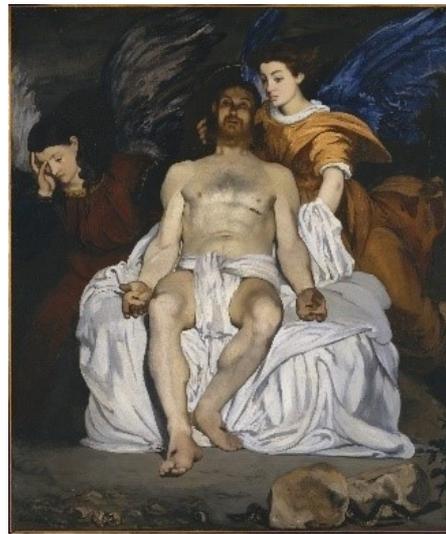


Figure 5: Manet, *Le Christ mort et les anges* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

Here, however, because of a similar effect to the one utilized on *The Plum* and *Boating*, Christ takes the place of a deadly wounded man treated by a woman. This is due to an enframing work on the painting that subtracts a chosen figure from among the elements surrounding Christ and the angel, present on the original painting, and also, because of the relation with the context created by the voice over—in this case, a medical one. According to François Cachin, “critics who reviewed the Salon of 1864 attacked the inappropriateness of the too realistic, cadaver-like body of Christ.”⁴⁶ Godard’s re-enframing kept Christ’s wounds, which is told by the Bible to have been done by a soldier with a spear, while Christ was being crucified. On a joyful, ironic letter, Baudelaire warns his friend that the side of the wound is wrong, as it was apparently on the right side. “By the way, I understand that it was Christ’s right side that was pierced by the spear. In that case you’ll have to change the wound before the opening. And take care not to lay yourself open to laughter.”⁴⁷ Although we can find some paintings showing the wound on Christ’s left side, most of them show it on the right side. The important thing here is the fact that Godard not only kept the wound (he could have enframed only the faces, for instance), but he added a purple color tone into the video reproduction of the paint, emphasizing that this is a dead body. And he did so, because Chapter 2B: “Fatale beauté” is, great deal, about death, mostly of beautiful revolutionary women who died in struggle, as it appears to be, by the fact that this chapter is dedicated to Michele Firk, a French critic and militant who shot herself dead in 1968 when she was to be captured, and Nicole Ladmiral, a French actress that, ten years earlier, committed suicide in a similar situation.



Figure 6: *Le Christ mort et les anges* manipulated by Godard.

One thing gratefully remarked by Georges Bataille on his *Manet*, which Godard quotes in chapter 3A: “La monnaie de l’absolu” (“The coin of the absolute”), is the fact that Manet’s paintings operate a “negation of eloquence”, introducing with Manet, the concept of “the indifference to the meaning the subject.”⁴⁸ This operation gives birth, as we saw, to “imponderable plenitude”⁴⁹ of forms and colors in its presence. Bataille remembers that “Manet once said that he would have to come into the world blind, and then regain his eyesight, so as to see forms and colors independently of the objects and their utility to which, by force of habit, we relate them.”⁵⁰ It happens that, this “indifference to the meaning” makes Manet’s paintings very much vulnerable to the uses of cinema. As Bresson stated, “if an image, regarded apart, expresses something clearly, and if it involves an interpretation, it won’t transform on the contact with other images, (...) it is definitely unusable by cinematography’s system.”⁵¹ Well, Manet’s painting, being as much as “meaningless” on themselves, are totally, in this regard, usable by cinema. From that point of view Godard didn’t even have to manipulate them, change their colors. This fact reflects the very nature of Godard’s manipulation. We can say that Godard just prolongs one of the main features of Manet’s paintings, their indifference, which has an effect, on the other hand, to let differences cross them.

THE BALCONY (1868)

James S. Williams, in his deep analysis of chapter 3A, the one with the greatest number of Manet’s paintings’ occurrences, underlines the increasingly serious fashion in which Go-

dard deals with contemporary events in Europe since the late 1980s. Williams point is that (European) art and culture are open questions in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, questions of form. Godard states that culture is the rule and art is the exception. Asking about the specific nature of art as an exception, he states that European art in XXth century is the diagnosis of a collapse through which European culture fell apart in its modern project. The privilege of cinema here is due to its nature as the avatar of the modern visuality regime. Cinema is able to tell its history, and Godard shows it, by putting into play the instances of perception which aren't anything but rhythm, as we have seen. This accords perfectly with a desire that has been fragmented, impeded to form a cultural unity. It rests that, so called modernist critical strategies such as parallaxes, repetitions and digressions, become the only instruments against narrative progression,⁵² which is very close to what has been called by the impressionists as the rupture with the rhetorical painting by impressionists.⁵³



Figure 7: Manet, *Le Balcon* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris).

Chapter 3A starts with a very piercing speech written by Victor Hugo in 1876, out of a sense of outrage against the brewing of the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-8. The speech, pronounced by Godard, is accompanied by images of barbarism and the contemporary Bosnian war of 1992-5. We can say that Godard is repeating Hugo's speech, with the purpose of actualizing it, and he cuts the speech where Hugo claims for a unifying solution in which western European nations should engage. Godard denies Hugo's conclusion and reproduces only two thirds of Hugo's speech, cutting it after the statement that humanity has its own 'question'—the little child in the mother's stomach.⁵⁴ Cutouts and repetitions

have here the sense of actualization. Godard enframes both the sounds and the images in order to repeat (or reproduce) them, actualizing, there is, creating new tones and relations. This is the history of cinema. After Hugo's speech sequence, Godard reproduces Bazin's essays title, "What is cinema?", actualizing it. If Bazin was preoccupied in defending cinema as an educational art form, Godard uses it to pose questions through its own meanings. One could say that the idea of salvation approximates both of them, but this approximation requires a great deal of discernment.⁵⁵ It is, anyway, a modernist procedure which Godard actualizes. The gesture of actualizing Hugo's speech with Bosnian images resonates that one in which Manet painted Goya's *Third of May*, but with Maximilian.



Figure 8: *Le Balcon* manipulated by Godard.

Imperialist attacks, takeover of media (radio, television, cinema)—digital media's takeover will be questioned later on, in *Notre musique* (2004), *Film Socialisme* (2010), and notably in *Adieu au langage* (2014)—this is cinema in the sense that intermediality will fundament. That's what goes after Hugo's speech, precisely in the dimension of war and resistance, and Godard poses these questions through sound and image. It is important to remember here that James Agee, for whom chapter 3A is also dedicated along with Gianni Amico (Godard's assistant in *Vent d'est* [1970]), wrote a script to Charles Chaplin in 1948, in which the tramp survived a nuclear holocaust. It is in this context that we see the first Manet, Berthe Morisot's face, enframed from *The Balcony* that originally shows three figures geometrically the at balcony. We have Berthe Morisot as the vertex of a triangle. "Lost in his thoughts", Godard, "having *Manet's* book from Georges Bataille", notices on Chapter 3A, that Manet's female figures seem to say "I know what you are thinking of" (*Je sais*

a quoi tu penses).⁵⁶ And that, this is a good way to understand the historical transition of romanticism, in which the figures seemed to say “I”, and modernism, with the occurrence meaningless figures, as Bataille states. “Manet’s *Execution of Maximiliano* is Goya’s *Three of May*, less what the picture means. *Olympia* is the *Maja* naked [...]. As *The Balcony* is *Majas at the Balcony*, less what the two Goya’s mean.”⁵⁷

What Godard does here, with his enframing, is to give a face to that historical understanding, showing the nature of this thought in a place where it is meaningless. In this sense, it was already Malraux who said that “the face of a very beautiful star belongs at the same time to the real world of feminine beauty and to an unreal world that exists only through photography [...] perhaps the world of the first imaginary museum meets that of silent cinema.”⁵⁸ These zero degrees of alterity, which in this context, both impressionism and cinema brought on their modern project effort, gain through Godard’s montage in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* a melancholic tone, because of what came next. “It will suffice one or two world wars to pervert this state of infancy.”⁵⁹

NANA (1877)



Figure 9: Manet, *Nana* (Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg).

Nana incarnates the female figure of money and power perversion, because “XIXth century, which invented all techniques, invented crap too.”⁶⁰ Godard uses Flaubert’s *Bovary* to tell this story. And we can say it’s the same thing with Zola’s *Nana*. It’s the destiny of men, which’s effects on its health and capacity to create is made visible through

women, maybe because their sensibility is made as a privileged target to social tragedies, as hysteria's history can tell. Nana's exaggerated usage of makeup was very well analyzed, as it pathologizes the character, conferring to her face an unveiled naturalist feature. Marni Kessler says that "her dusts and perfumes and rouges and creams render her simultaneously irresistible and the epitome of vice for Muffat, who, at one point, describes Nana as the devil. Her makeup becomes the outward sign of her carnality, her mark of vulgarity, the very thing that makes her so enticing."⁶¹ It is remarkable that Godard chooses to show Nana's make-up artifacts, in order to show only her face. This has a similar effect to that of Morisot's pendant at *The Balcony*, that is, it just reinforces the piercing eyes. If the whole painting with its elements and geometric compositions are nutrients for a naturalist regard, in order to decline meaning through hierographic details, when the emphasis is on the face though the presence of one or two elements have the other function of reinforcing its hollow expression. Besides, as chapter 3A's theme is fatal beauty, Godard states that "deep down, cinema isn't part of communication industry, neither of spectacle, but of cosmetic industry, mask industry."⁶² It is remarkable the fact that in early romantic paintings, female figures like Nana would have been painted from the back, and here Nana is turning as symbolizing the arrival of modernity. And in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, enframed by Godard, Nana expresses modernity's new possibilities, as well as its tragedies.

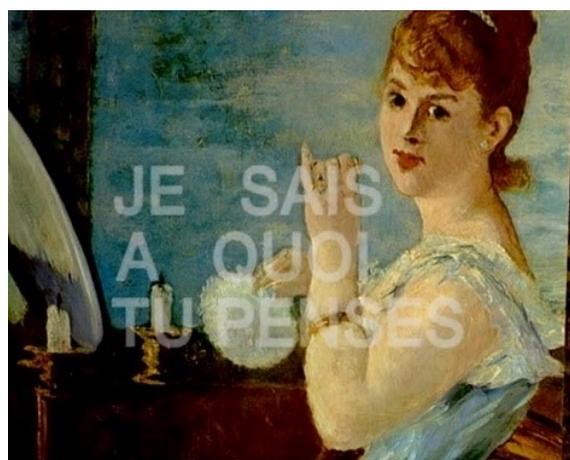


Figure 10: *Nana* manipulated by Godard.

In order to understand that, we need to observe Godard's dialectical paradoxes, as well as when he says that "in expression there is an impression movement which do not

come from us.”⁶³ Godard also states a paradox between fiction and documentary. For him, fiction is a moment of the look. The one in which we recognize crime proofs. As we see both Nana from the painting and Nana from Renoir’s film, each of them functioning as the expression of the other. And they have the same history. Godard makes us recognize in fiction a document of the history, of history’s crimes. Catherine Hessling, the actress who made Nana’s part in Renoir’s 1926 film, went to Berlin at the same time spoken film and Nazism were stroking. And “Zola finished his book with the words ‘to Berlin, to Berlin.’”⁶⁴ In this case we can apply what Malraux said about the photography of statues, the enframing work has the function to add fiction values to a document, by changing its original scale.⁶⁵ A new way of understanding historical fatality is born, as in Jean Cocteau’s *The Imposter*: “He fell, he became deaf, blind. ‘A ball,’ he said to himself, ‘I’m lost if I do not pretend to be dead.’ But in him fiction and reality were one. William Thomas was dead.”⁶⁶

“In expression movement there is a great impression movement which do not come from us”.⁶⁷ What Godard is saying, in the first place, in a very Bergsonian way, is that history comes first. That is, it is not a mental addition to the elements that can be determined as documents. History is the whole, from which we extract, subtracts, the stories we tell. That is the sense of the statement “history alone”, because it is alone from human thought. Therefore, the works of art as documents are not something to be enlightened by our thoughts, as they already have their own life, and they appear to us, as Deleuze would say, forcing us to think. That’s why Godard says “I was alone, lost, as it is said, in my thoughts, and arrives Zola, having finished Nana with the words ‘to Berlin, to Berlin’, and arrive Catherin Hessling, forty years later, as by chance, she takes a train to Berlin...”⁶⁸ Historic documents demand regards and associations, and not the contrary. And if it’s a one and only history, it’s the destiny of the painting figures to be crossed by what happened after and before them.

OLYMPIA (1863)

An important thing is that Godard’s “darkness answer”⁶⁹ is a kind of a judgment, as we saw, made in a time that testimony, history, and documents were being discussed, mos-

tly after *Shoah* (1985) film, and the debates that surrounded it. And then it is important to see how Godard made use of Manet's artworks as documents to extract histories from them. His enframing works have this function, and with them there is a lot to tell, as well to see. In this sense *Olympia*, the "queen of spades after her bath", as Courbet joked,⁷⁰ as well as all the other alienating looking females of Manet, are absolutely helpful. Godard's fight is not only against certain interpretations on history. His project, and that's exactly where it is Bergsonian, rearranges the status of thought, through the status of images, and that is exactly what some critics do not seem to comprehend. The meaning of 'destroy' would have this sense, and that's why he not only utilizes Manet's paintings, but utilizes them as cinema, or, as cinema as a form that thinks, not that expresses a determined thought.

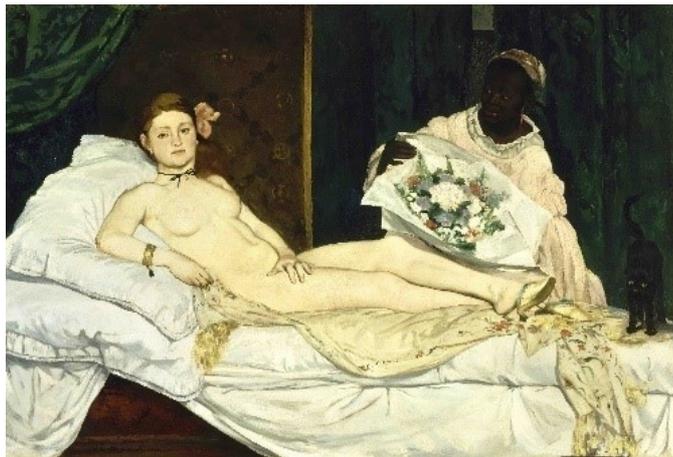


Figure 11: Manet, *Olympia* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris).

It is said that *Olympia*, as well as the other Manet's paintings, is, a great deal, about simplification, and that's what scandalized so much the audience at that time. They were probably too habituated to see nudity through certain schemes, forming concepts about it. Manet "forces the viewer to see Olympia not only as a naked girl, but also as patches of paint laid on the surface of the canvas."⁷¹ This annoyance, as if a magician colleague would show the forbidden tricks, as Schneider puts it, is commonly attributed to Godard. It is usually argued against him that he does not believe in cinema. And that is true if we think that cinema, as a stated form, is something that would stop its creative movement. How many scandals does it take to create a form?

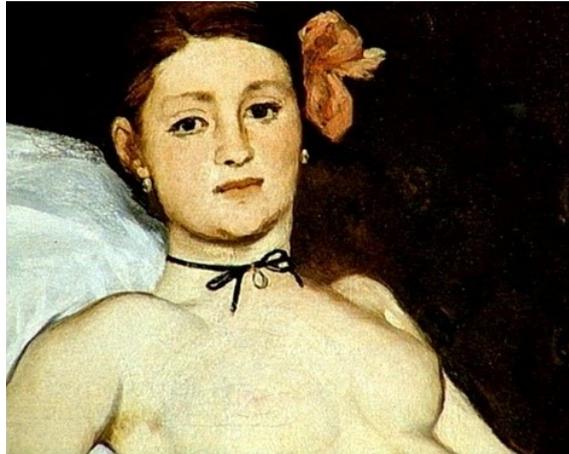


Figure 12: *Olympia* manipulated by Godard.

BERTHE MORISOT WITH A BOUQUET OF VIOLETES (1872)

“By the contradiction between frivolous detail now outmoded and the hint of timeless tragedy in the face, Manet creates a resonance, compounds the solidity of his art with mystery.”⁷² The *Berthe Morisot with a Bouquet of Violetes* is one of the paintings in which we can see that the face is not expressing a soluble determined thought. It is kind of hollow, and its beauty certainly rests on its capacity to block meaning. It is just a strange paint creature, which reminds us that that’s a work of art, and in doing so, it reminds us that we’re moved by this exteriority.



Figure 13: Manet, *Berthe Morisot au bouquet de violettes* (Musée d’Orsay, Paris).

Morisot's big eyes are saying "I know what you are thinking of",⁷³ that is, they are provoking us to think. The difference, Godard says, is that until Manet, and that is important because it is where his historical importance lays, painting female figures seemed to say I. "Even the woman with a pink Shawl from Corot, doesn't think what thinks Olympia, what thinks Berthe Morisot".⁷⁴ Godard says, remembering Malraux, that until Manet, that is, until modern painting, inner world seemed to be subtler than the cosmos, and that with Manet and modern painting (and cinema), the inner world got its deserved objectivity and "joined cosmos." It has a great consequence in what refers to alterity, because it is not more nor less big than the cosmos. Morisot's face is as external as the cosmos, and she looks at us with the eyes that can tell its history. But how is it to be observed? If we approach her face, as Godard's enframing helps us to do, it is almost like she becomes alive again, not that the picture lost its liveliness. But with the reframing work, all the virtualities are concentrated and seem to be ready for us to think about, that is, to feel, to see, to create, with our faculties, new forms that respond to this document of history. Because if history can tell something for us today, that is because it is still alive, and it is changing. Changing is its nature, and therefore it shouldn't be translated by determined forms, because they are the forms to be determined, and to continue its creational movement through life, that is, through history. What Godard does is to continue the creational movement that crosses Morisot, Manet, and will continue, through our eyes, becoming forms on every moment, and becoming celebrated forms in the hands of the artists. "With Edouard Manet, begins modern painting, that is, cinematograph, that is, forms that walks to words, very exactly, a form that thinks."⁷⁵



Figure 14: *Berthe Morisot au bouquet de violettes* manipulated by Godard.

This reminds us from what Renoir said in a conversation with one of Godard's masters, Henri Langlois. He said that cinema would change the history of the human thought's transmission. Berthe Morisot eyes here are telling the history of the XIXth and XXth centuries, as it refers to arts. It is difficult to say that without making reference to the functions of montage. In a certain way, we can say that all that impressionist movement that comes from exteriority, and which is implicated on every expression movement, as Godard said, are merely an example, a specimen, so to speak, of what is between document and fiction. And by utilizing the painting condition in these two different ways, as historical documents, and fictional material, we can determine that the female figures are all characters on Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, we cannot help to add another dimension to it. The third way, as well as the third images—born from the conflict of the two other ones, at montage—is the pure quality that reflects through all that historical information. Berthe Morisot is not a Godard's character, not even a Manet's character, nor is she just a character at all. Because she is, too, pure quality, acquiring different functions depending on the kinds of elements that are put in relation to her. Here, the very history which included her, history itself, the lonely and the only one. If we think on a modern project, it is very important to remember that Morisot was one of the enthusiastic of manners changing, and that is very Godardian in the sense that Godard states that the change in forms are the most difficult to appear, because they appear through the things that are determined to be normal and has patterns. Clothing would be an example, and Godard states himself as a man that doesn't use proper clothes for society.

A BAR AT THE FOLIES BERGÈRE (1882)

Throughout *Histoire(s) du cinéma's* image manipulation, we can nominate both flicker and the velocity modifications as main features. They both have a function of extracting the images from their original contexts and finding virtualities that are positively utilized on meaning creation (not on meaning determination). It happens as if Godard tried his best to let us see something on images, something that keeps being interpreted by our minds, and then he has to change and manipulate them again, for the new meaning to appear. As painting image are just one, neither flicker nor velocity manipulation are utilized by Godard. As if he respected the nature of paintings, the main features utilized on them are different. Re-



Figure 15: Manet, *Un bar aux Folies Bergères* (Courtauld Gallery, London).

framing, as we say, and repetition, which is largely utilized in *A Bar at the Folies Bergère*. As Godard says in his text about Bataille's *Manet*, and what was born with him, and why parting from that fact he can compare impressionism with the first cinema, we can see the barmaid's face appearing and disappearing. "What thinks Olympia, what thinks Berthe Morisot, what thinks barmaid on the Folies-Bergère".⁷⁶ Because the barmaid's face has such a unique expression, each time the image is repeated (three times), it assumes a different quality, we could say. Barmaid's repetition enters in resonance with Godard's voice-over because he repeats the same idea in different ways, or, what would be the same, different faces of the idea that defines Manet's work in comparison to cinema: "modern painting, that is, cinematograph, that is, forms that walk to words, very exactly, a form that thinks (...)." ⁷⁷ We can say that the barmaid's face, and its possible multiple senses, meets Bresson's demands in what regards to the necessary absence of meaning in itself that a figure must have in order to be applied in cinema. It cannot have, under any circumstances, a meaning on its own. If it did, it wouldn't be transformed when put in contact with others.

Michel Foucault,⁷⁸ analyzing *A Bar at the Folies Bergère*, says that it negates depth twice, firstly because one does not see what is behind the barmaid, because she is immediately in front of a mirror, and secondly because what is reflected in the mirror, that should create a depth by showing what is in front of the barmaid, is painted in a way that one cannot see it properly. This trick, and the fact that what the mirror reflects is deformed, makes both the viewer and the painter's place impossible. This fact is not without purpose, and it reinforces the ability of the final image to function as a kind of prism, through

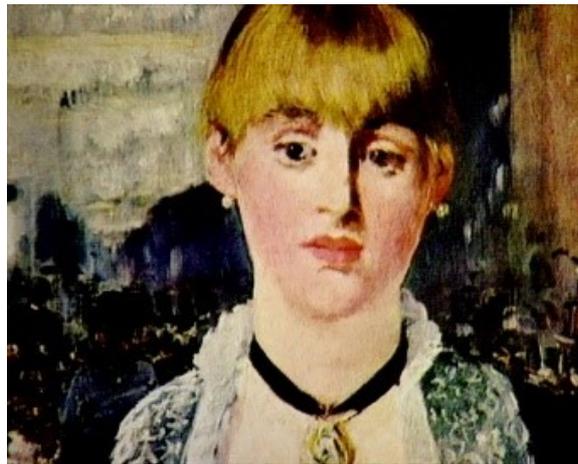


Figure 16: *Un bar aux Folies Bergères* manipulated by Godard.

which multiple meanings would pass through, and never rest. In addition, just like *The Plum*, the barmaid is blocked inside impossibilities, as the bottles are closed and there are no glasses.⁷⁹

THE FIFER (1866)

Daniel Fairfax underlines the kind of veracity brought about by Godard, in the sense that *Histoire(s) du cinéma* is made of sounds and images. In order to define the methodology implied in its montage work, and therefore its kind of thinking, Fairfax proposes a differentiation in relation to Deleuze's celebrated statements. For Deleuze, Godard proceeds to an interstitial montage, that is, a non-dialectical montage which privileges the relations between images, independently of notions such as equality, similitude, opposition, or contradiction. Fairfax calls attention to the fact that Deleuze's interpretation is strictly addressed to *Sonimage* period, which is earlier than that of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. His thesis is that *Histoire(s) du cinéma's* montage isn't non-dialectical because it doesn't exclude continuity. It is not a linear continuity, as we saw. Multiplicity is its prior element. It does not exclude what Eisenstein invented through Griffith, but it opens up (in a great stand through videographic montage) and inserts it into the multiple net of directions. Therefore, Fairfax uses Artavazd Pelechian's contrapuntal montage method to explain what Godard does. "Pelechian offers the following graphs to demonstrate his relationship with his Soviet montage forebears. To the schema [A→← B] of Eisensteinian or Vertovian dialectical mon-

tage, Pelechian counterposes the schema $[A \rightarrow \leftarrow B] \rightarrow \leftarrow [A \rightarrow \leftarrow B]$. The dialectic is itself dialecticized.”⁸⁰ That is what Fairfax calls syndialectical montage, a synthesis of dialectical and antidialectical montage. The procedure of reframing on the face of the Fifer responds well to the definition of syndialectics, because of a blocking of meaning, treated as a historical document, it becomes a fictionalization that cuts off its historical domain.



Figure 17: Manet, *Le Joueur de fifre* (Musée d’Orsay, Paris).

The Fifer, the last Manet’s to appear in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, has a little different relation with meaninglessness. It is not as much a prism as the female characters. As noticed by Albert Boime, Manet’s paintings of children have a *double entendre* (double sense), as they are “typically placed in adult roles and are forced to behave self-consciously and handle their accessories in as awkward fashion.”⁸¹ Its possible meanings are not so apparent. *The Fifer* “set the young person in a potentially risky situation by identifying the child incongruously with the military.”⁸² Godard doesn’t hesitate here to utilize Manet’s *The Fifer* along with his historical thesis. “That the cinema had been made to think, we would forget rapidly, but that’s another history. The flame would go out in Auschwitz. And this thought it’s worth a trifle.”⁸³ There is a wordplay here between the name of the instrument, fife (*fifre* in French), and trifle (*fifrelin* in French). This effect, when enframing the face of the figure, it seems to reflect what the voice over is saying, in this case, the tragic history of the XXth century, considering the way it marked cinema and was marked by cinema, were seen through other Manet’s paintings as *A Bar at the Folies Bergère* and *Berthe Morisot with a Bouquet of Violets*.

Therefore, as François Cachin points out, there were rumors saying that the model for *The Fifer* was a boy trooper in the Imperial Guard at the Pépinière barracks who had been introduced to Manet by his friend Commandant Lejosne. But “the identification matters little; the true model for *The Fifer* is to be found in the work of Velázquez.”⁸⁴ But here it gains a different tension, as the figure is a boy, who belongs to the military. An undoubted dimension makes it slightly different, with a bit more dramatic tension, and adds to this history a sad and horrible note. In this sense, as Godard states on *Old Place*, art is not about whether human will last, but if it has the right to.



Figure 18: *Le Joueur de fifre* manipulated by Godard.

It doesn't seem to be forced to say that these extreme questions posed by Godard, through sounds and images in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, responds perfectly to Fairfax claims. As an opened question, history seems to encounter a fair medium in Godardian montage, as it makes possible that the “power of connection” and the “power of disconnection” are both “preserved *and* abolished, rather than the “swallowing” or “overcoming” of one by the other.”⁸⁵ This complex dynamics between memory and forgetfulness, in which history is shown without being reduced to a linear, unique interpretation (which Benjamin denounced as being necessarily the winners version), encounters new kinds of veracity, rebuilding the barriers between document and fiction. As Malraux would say, “Great expressions of man appear, free from faithful imagination.”⁸⁶ Ágnes Pethö remembers that “for Freud ‘the appearance and disappearance of the writing’ on the popular children’s toy that can immediately erase the visible traces by lifting the thin sheet of plastic, is similar to ‘the flickering-up and passing-away of consciousness in the process of perception.’”⁸⁷

CONCLUSION

Through enframing work, the works of art, treated as historical documents, help us telling the stories of history. History, then, stops being an addition to historical elements and becomes a process of subtraction and assembly of the elements. A procedure which interrupts progress or generality, with consequences in historiography, that now responds to Benjamin's projects. The technical procedure, through which images are placed in the position of interrupting progress, accords with the Bergsonist agenda which describes the nature of human perception as being below the habit standards fabricated by the social mode of production.

In this sense cinema takes on the task of rediscovering the freedom of perception, which painting has fulfilled in its own time through impressionism. There is always a threat against artistic movements, because the history of the culture is the history of attacks and struggles. Then, it is far from guaranteed that cinema will prolong its creative freedom functions. As far as it concerns *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, modernist procedures, such as repetition are effusively used. To reframe is to repeat differently. In this case, it is a historical procedure which actualizes historical information in a Benjaminian fashion. Godard realizes his own exigency towards cinema. Therefore, Lumière was the last impressionist, but the first bearer of the ethical obligation, of the figurative contact with the historical real.

Paintings, as they appear in cinema, are not on their medium, what indicates a core difference in it. Besides, painting, as it is immersed on cinema medium, is vulnerable to the manipulations as reframing and color modifications. But maybe, this is the less important difference. When painting is brought onto a cinema medium, it becomes an all-new dimension, with which it will be able to exist into the virtual dimension of elements which surround it. Voice over, writings, other paintings. This way, painting is crossed on cinema medium by the film, as a whole. It makes part of it, not like a spy on a strange medium, but as the new form, baptized by the new medium.

1. Chapitre 1A: *Toutes les histoires* (1989), 51'. Chapitre 1B: *Une histoire seule* (1989), 42'. Chapitre 2A: *Seul le cinéma* (1994), 26'. Chapitre 2B: *Fatale beauté* (1994), 28'. Chapitre 3A: *La monnaie de l'absolu* (1996), 27'. Chapitre 3B: *Une vague nouvelle* (1996), 27'. Chapitre 4A: *Le contrôle de l'univers* (1998), 27'. Chapitre 4B: *Les signes parmi nous* (1998), 38'.

2. This claim appears through Jean Pierre Léaud, in Godard's *La Chinoise* (1967), when his character is giving a lesson about information problems, and he quotes Henri Langlois, who, in Rohmer's film *Louis Lumière* (1968) talks about the interconnections between cinema and impressionism, defining them both because everything that was happening at that time was registered by the cinema, and because Lumière's goal was the same as that of impressionist painters, that is, register the (visually) imponderable in life.

3. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1 : l'image-mouvement* (Paris : Les Editions de Minuit, 1983).

4. Jacques Aumont, *L'œil interminable* (Paris: Editions de La Différence, 2007).

5. James S. Williams, "European Culture and Artistic Resistance in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* Chapter 3A, La monnaie de l'absolu", in *The Cinema Alone: essays on the work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985-2000*, ed. Michael Temple and Williams (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), 121.

6. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B.

7. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 29'21".

8. Williams, "European Culture."

9. André Bazin, *What is Cinema?, Vol. 1* (California: University of California Press, 2005).

10. *Ibid.*, 167.

11. *Ibid.*, *Cinema*, 168.

12. Bazin, "Um Filme Bergsoniano: *Le mystère Picasso*." in *O Cinema* (Sao Paulo: Brasiliense, 1991), 182.

13. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Chapitre 1A, 5'38".

14. Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, 84.

15. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (New York : Zone Books, 1991 [1896]), 64.

16. Marni Reva Kessler, *Sheer Presence: the veil in Manet's Paris* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 74.

17. T.J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 136-137.

18. Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 81-149.

19. Michel Foucault, *Manet and the Object of Painting* (London: Tate Publishing, 2011), 73-80.

20. Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 93.

21. André Malraux, *Le Musée Imaginaire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 75.

22. *Ibid.*, 67.

23. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 69.

24. Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, 93.

25. This is the way Benjamin refers to historical elements presented in the complete judgment of the present. Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings vol. 4* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2006), 390.

26. Williams, "European Culture", 125.

27. Ágnes Pethö, *Cinema and Intermediality: The Passion for the In-Between* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011).

28. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1A, 0'17".

29. Robert Bresson, *Notes on the Cinematographer* (Los Angeles: Green Integer, 1997), 31.

30. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 0'19".

31. Alain Bergala, org., *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard (tome 2)* (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 1998), 402.

32. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 17'31".

33. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 28'03".

34. Pierre Schneider, *The World of Manet 1832-1883* (New York: Time-Life, 1968), 141.

35. Françoise Cachin, *Manet* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 407.

36. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 08'18".

37. *Louis Lumière*, 04'08".

38. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 36'27".

39. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 17'31".

40. Bradford R. Collins, *12 Views of Manet's Bar* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 256.

41. Georges Bataille, *Manet* (Cleveland: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1955), 94.

42. Cachin, *Manet*, 359.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Emile Zola, *Nana* (Paris: Mozambook, 2001).

45. See Godard, "Le bon plaisir de Jean-Luc Godard", in Bergala, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 305-22 (318).

46. Cachin, *Manet*, 195.

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47. Bataille, *Manet*, 8.
 48. *Ibid.*, 55.
 49. *Ibid.*
 50. Bataille, *Manet*, 84.
 51. Bresson, *Notes*, 21.
 52. Jeremy Spencer, "Making Films Negatively: Godard's Political Aesthetics", *Cinema: Journal of Philosophy and Cinema* 8 (2016): 69-87.
 53. Paul Valéry, *Degas, Manet, Morisot* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960).
 54. Williams, "European Culture", 120.
 55. Miriam Heywood, "Holocaust and Image: Debates Surrounding Jean-Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1988-98)", *Studies in French Cinema* 9, no. 3 (2009): 273-283.
 56. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 11'15".
 57. Malraux, *Musée Imaginaire*, 42.
 58. *Ibid.*, 110.
 59. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 35'49".
 60. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 28'03".
 61. Kessler, *Sheer Presence*, 41.
 62. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 1B, 07'05".
 63. Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction a une véritable histoire du cinéma* (Paris: Albatros, 1980), 63.
 64. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 12'52".
 65. Malraux, *Musée Imaginaire*, 82-84.
 66. Jean Cocteau, *Thomas l'imposteur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 150.
 67. Godard, *Introduction*, 63.
 68. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 12'52".
 69. *La réponse des ténèbres* (answer of darkness) was a possible name for one of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*'s chapters. It ended up that Godard didn't make the choice. Nevertheless, this title appears through the work as graphic titling.
 70. Schneider, *World of Manet*, 58.
 71. *Ibid.*, 59.
 72. Paul Valéry, quoted in Cachin, *Manet*, 336.
 73. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 11'22".
 74. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 11'59".
 75. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 12'20".
 76. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 11'59".
 77. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 12'20".
 78. Foucault, *Manet*, 73.
 79. Bradford, *12 Views*, 110.
 80. Daniel Fairfax, *The Dialectics of Montage in the Work of Jean-Luc Godard from 1965 to 1998* (MPhil thesis, University of Sydney, 2010), 44.
 81. Cachin, *Manet*, 76.
 82. *Ibid.*
 83. *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Chapitre 3A, 12'39".
 84. Cachin, *Manet*, 243-244.
 85. Fairfax, *Dialectics*, 7.
 86. Malraux, *Musée Imaginaire*, 70.
 87. Pethö, *Cinema and Intermediality*, 322.