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Hitchcock's sketches for *The Birds* (courtesy *Cahiers du Cinéma*)

Enunciation and Sexual Difference (Part I)
Janet Bergstrom

I. Introduction

There is a great deal of confusion at the moment about the aims, methods, scope and general importance of a particular kind of film analysis known as textual analysis. Within the rather broad range of critical approaches which might, given current usage, be called textual analysis, this article is being written as an introduction to the work of Raymond Bellour, Thierry Kuntzel and Stephen Heath, whose close analyses of films or parts of films have been of fundamental importance for *Camera Obscura*. These studies have been important both insofar as they investigate and demonstrate how meaning is produced in the classical film, and as they have helped to clarify and specify the systematic mapping of sexual difference – and therefore of the woman's function – onto the logic of narrative events, symbolization and figuration, and as they have attempted to understand the symbolic weight of the production of those figures, given as natural and therefore as necessary to a particular order of fiction film.

Textual analysis is a general term, but it is borrowed for film studies from a specific context – French literary critical theory which, from structuralism through two subsequent phases of semiology, reoriented the aims and methods of interpretation according to a series of theories of the *text* (therefore *textual* analysis) and *reading* as a critical activity. At the beginning of the interview which follows this article, Raymond Bellour outlines his view of the changes operated on the structural model (Saussure/Lévi-Strauss) in favor of psychoanalytic theory as a model to account for the production of meaning in terms of the subject. The insistence in this second phase on *structuring* (the *production* of meaning) rather than on virtual *structures* or patterns in a text is seen by Bellour as a shift in emphasis rather than, as has sometimes been implied, a rejection of what structuralism had brought to critical theory.

The shifts in emphasis and terminology can be seen very clearly in the progression of Roland Barthes's work, which has come around again and again to the concepts of the text, reading and the relationship between the object and the activity of analysis. Stephen Heath's reading of Barthes sees this progression as a constant movement of displace-

ment – *Vertige du déplacement* is the title of his book – of the levels and object of analysis through the notions of pleasure and morality, "an ethics of style." Heath's study doesn't speak directly to the intersection of Barthes's work with film analysis. It remains to be shown how this work has been *rethought* – not applied in some mechanical way – for and through film analysis. Here the analyses of Bellour, Kuntzel and Heath are instructive in that they demonstrate a fundamental *reconceptualization* of Barthes's strategies of interpretation to account for the specificity of film. At this point, it may be useful to recall a few terms developed in Barthes's work which will be encountered again in the context of these filmic analyses.

Barthes's distinction between the *work* and the *text* distinguished the physical object (the work, e.g. the book) from the text, which is described as a "methodological field," "a process of demonstration," that which is "held in language," which "only exists in the movement of a discourse," and "experienced only in an activity of production" ("From Work to Text," p. 157).[1] The theory of the text is practically indistinguishable from literary theory in Barthes's work and beyond that, "the theory of the Text cannot but coincide with a practice of writing *(écriture)*" p. 164). This means modern writing, modern in Barthes's sense, as opposed to classical, readable writing, as explained in *The Pleasure of the Text* and *S/Z* and as exemplified, perhaps, in the different modes of their writing.

With the publication of *S/Z* in 1970, a book whose importance for film analysis cannot be overestimated, Barthes shifted his earlier emphasis on the structural study of narrative to a demonstration of the step by step structuring of the classical narrative's meanings according to five broad codes or systems of meaning: (a) the deployment of the narrative's actions; (b) its posing, complicating and resolution of enigmas (the hermeneutic code); (c) the tracing of its symbolic structures; (d) the cultural knowledge it assumes its reader to share; and (e) the connotations it reiterates.[2]

> To study this text down to the last detail is to take up the structural analysis of narrative where it has been left till now: at the major structures; it is to assume the power (the time, the elbow room) of working back along the threads of meaning, of abandoning no site of the signifier without endeavoring to ascertain the code or codes of which this site is perhaps the starting point (or the goal); it is (at least we may hope as much, and work to that end) to substitute for the simple representative model another model, whose very gradualness would guarantee what may be productive in the classic text (*S/Z*, p. 12).

The gradualness of the critical itinerary through Balzac's *Sarrasine,* the

way the quotation of the text is broken into with what is almost simultaneously commentary, theory and interpretation, the illuminating, clarifying, yet almost teasing way the analysis proceeds, mimicking the text's unfolding, little by little revealing a comprehensible logic which is already determined for the writer, the use of a "case study" *(Sarrasine)* to stand for a class of phenomena (the classic text)—these features of *S/Z* bear a striking resemblance to Freud's case studies and dream analyses.

Similarly the concept of reading in Barthes recalls the psychoanalytic model. In the section "How Many Readings?" Barthes replies: "We must further accept one last freedom: that of reading the text as if it has already been read." And in section "Reading, Forgetting":

> I [the reader] am not hidden within the text, I am simply irrecoverable from it: my task is to move, to shift systems whose perspective ends neither at the text nor at the "I"; in operational terms, the meanings I find are established not by "me" or by others, but by their *systematic* mark: there is no proof of a reading other than the quality and endurance of its systematics; in other words, than its functioning (p. 10).[3]

For Christian Metz the distinction that corresponds in many ways to Barthes's work vs. text is that between the *text* (e.g. the film, what Barthes would call the work) which is the physical object and the *textual system*. The text might be larger than a film (e.g. a genre) or smaller (e.g. a relatively autonomous segment). The textual system, on the other hand, "has no physical existence; it is nothing more than a logic, a principle of coherence. It is the intelligibility of the text, that which must be presupposed if the text is to be comprehensible" (*Language and Cinema*, p. 75). To be perfectly clear, Metz says, "What the cineaste constructs is the text, while the analyst constructs the system" (p. 74). The study of textual systems is called by Metz the study of filmic writing (*écriture*).

The central distinction Metz makes in *Language and Cinema* (1970) is not between text and textual system, but between the analysis of *codes* and the analysis of *textual systems,* the complementary areas into which the semiotics of the cinema is divided. To study the cinematographic language system is to study the specific codes, those the cinema doesn't share, for the most part, with the other arts, as they occur in numerous film-texts. To study a textual system, on the other hand, is to analyze a film in the organization of, ideally, all its codes, specific and non-specific.[4] The notion of a textual system is posed by Metz more or less in the abstract in *Language and Cinema*. The examples he gives are schematic and condensed;[5] the three chapters devoted

36   to this area are primarily designed to set it apart as an object of study
from the codes, the book's main theoretical object. Subsequently it has
been convenient to adopt this distinction, as modified slightly in "The
Imaginary Signifier," as does the recent bibliography by Roger Odin,
Dix années d'analyses textuelles de films, or Michel Marie's article
"L'analyse textuelle" in the semiological handbook *Lectures du film*
(1976).

It might be said that ever since the publication of Bellour's seminal
shot by shot analysis of a sequence from *The Birds* in 1969, the
motivating question for textual analysis has been: what is a textual
system? In this article, even before Metz had placed the study of textual
systems within a methodological framework, Bellour demonstrated the
systematic deployment of three specific codes within a delimited nar-
rative action whose advance was shown to depend on condensations
and displacements on different levels across the three codes. Subse-
quently the textual analyses of Bellour, Kuntzel and Heath (*Touch of
Evil*) have been directed toward the logic of the movement and produc-
tion of meaning in classical film, and thus its tendency toward systems,
symmetry and the effect of homogeneity. The notion of system with
respect to a film has broadened throughout and because of the develop-
ment of this work on particular films, which are taken as examples of
the classical American cinema. Bellour, for example, now prefers to
speak of a textual volume in order to avoid misunderstandings about
the possibility of reducing a film's systems to a structural schema and to
suggest the myriad effects of mirroring across all levels that constitute
the classical film.[6] A chart may be very useful as a summary, but the
emphasis is on the itinerary through a film's systems.

The emphasis is also on the activity of film analysis: how to
proceed. This is the explicit aim of Heath's "Film and System: Terms of
Analysis," with its example of *Touch of Evil*. Heath's analysis adopts
Metz's perspective on textual systems and the distinction between the
specific and non-specific codes in order to question them, measure them
against their object: "What is given is, as it were, an analysis in progress,
in the process of the construction – in response to its object – of
method and concept" (p. 7). In the development of Kuntzel's work, in
particular, one can see an attention to a correlative question: how can a
film's tendency to construct systems, its systematicity, best be presen-
ted? What position should the analyst adopt toward the film-text, on
the one hand, and the reader (the "spectator"), on the other? Questions
of presentation are by no means merely decorative. The mode of presen-
tation has an important relationship to the method of analysis and the
theoretical perspectives and priorities of the film analyst. The problem
is how to demonstrate the functioning of abstract systems by means of

concrete details.

The fundamental interdependence between film theory and textual analysis must be understood. There has been a constant and vitalizing exchange of ideas according to differences in perspective between textual analysis and film theory as it is being written outside of specific analyses. The importance of this exchange is acknowledged as clearly in these articles as it is in Metz's work; one need only glance at the continual cross-referencing as a kind of index.[7]

Another reciprocal relationship, perhaps less obvious, can be seen between theories of the apparatus as proposed by Metz and Baudry and the increasing understanding of the fiction-effect through analyses of enunciation and the spectator position in particular classical films. The question here is: where does the classical film's *fascination* come from? The imaginary project of classical cinema is seen to coincide with its economic objectives, the production of desire amounting to a "massive investment in the subject" in Heath's words (p. 10).

> It is precisely the figure of the subject as turning point (circulation) between image and industry (poles of the cinematic institution) which demands study in the analysis of films. The hypothesis, in short, is that ideology depends crucially on the establishment of a range of "machines" (of institutions) which move – transference of desire – the subject ("sender" and "receiver") in a ceaseless appropriation of the symbolic into the imaginary, production into fiction (p. 8).

Bellour's most recent work on the relationship between hypnosis and the cinematic institution, which has come out of specific textual studies of classical literature and film (Alexandre Dumas and Fritz Lang), is proposed as a continuation of the metapsychological work of Metz and Baudry on the apparatus.[8] His most recent film analyses – on *Marnie* and *Psycho* – show that the functioning of the classical fiction film depends on structures of perversion: voyeurism and fetishism. Kuntzel's textual analyses have extended the investigation of the comparison between film and dreams by Metz and Baudry to the demonstration of a productive analogy between the dreamwork (condensation and displacement), secondary elaboration, the work of figuration and the production of meaning in specific film-texts. He has suggested, through specific examples, the relationship of disavowal to the apparatus and, by analogy with the phantasy of the primal scene, the relationship between knowledge, power and vision in the classical cinema, a relationship predicated on an idealist conception of vision.

This is not to suggest that there are not important differences in the work of Bellour, Kuntzel and Heath. These differences will be addressed in part II.[9] There are also other directions within textual

analysis that are important to *Camera Obscura*. Among them: articles published in *Cahiers du Cinéma*, from the collective analysis of *Young Mr.Lincoln* (1970) to the recent essays on the relationship between history and fiction by Jean-Louis Comolli and François Géré (*Hangmen Also Die, To Be or Not To Be, La Marseillaise*); the shot by shot analysis of a sequence from *The General Line* by Jacques Aumont; the analyses of style and ideology in *Muriel* by Claude Bailble, Michel Marie and Marie-Claire Ropars and in *October* by Pierre Sorlin and Marie-Claire Ropars, designated by the analysts as avant-garde texts.[10] This important work, almost none of which is available in translation, will be discussed in future issues of *Camera Obscura*. All of these articles are concerned with the relationship between form and meaning as systematized to constitute a film. They may be differentiated in this broad way from studies which are restricted to the descriptions of stylistic features. "Formalist" studies (in this sense) can be valuable sources of information which can serve as the basis for further analyses so long as the stylistic elements are shown to function systematically in the given film or group of films. Examples of such articles would be the analyses of Japanese film by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson and by Edward Brannigan, or the description of *Ballet mécanique* in Standish Lawder's *The Cubist Cinema*.[11]

There are numerous reasons for the confusion about textual analysis and the consequent resistances to such studies. Much of the influential work so far has been published outside the United States. The translation lag makes important French articles unavailable to many. Moreover, translations appear outside of their original context, out of chronological order, and are scattered among numerous publications. Bellour's seminal analysis of *The Birds* is still only available in English, in mimeographed form from the British Film Institute.[12] The analyses themselves are difficult, however, partly because Bellour and Kuntzel tend to leave their methodological objectives implicit; while Heath is explicit, he makes few concessions to someone in need of an introduction. And – although there is much here of importance to film theory, specifically to questions of women and representation, it is impossible to reduce these studies to schematic arguments or information. What they have to teach us about the classical film, and about cinema as an institution, is learned in the process of working through them. It is not possible to read them like discursive essays. They demand another kind of attention, a constant referencing of the details of the already-seen film to the lines of the analysis, with the aid of frame enlargements and other approximations to quotation. It is hoped that this article will help to encourage people to work through this important material. It is proposed as a reading.

> ...Mitch is the mediator, Hitchcock's main double, in the inves-
> tigation he is conducting into the desire which speaks in Melanie's
> look.
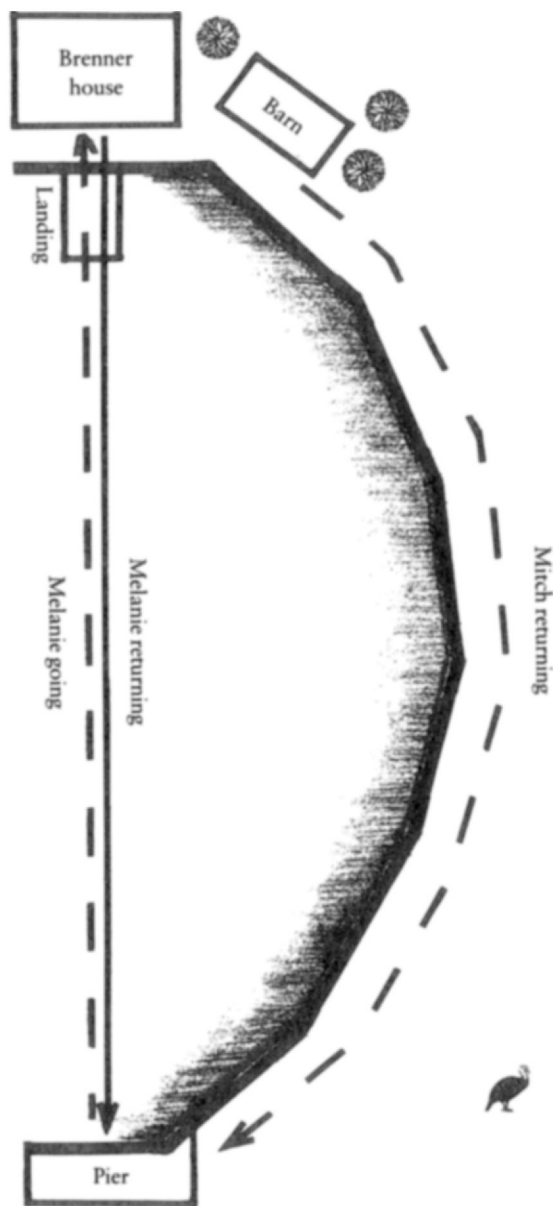>   "*The Birds:* Analysis of a Sequence"

All of Bellour's work in film analysis can be seen as an attempt to come
to terms with a fascination, a fascination with the logic of the movement
of narrative in classical film, especially the American classical cinema.[1]
His analyses attempt to demonstrate, on different levels, the function-
ing of an abstract system – the textual system – by means of concrete
details, instances of the codes actualized, what Bellour calls the
"material abstraction" of film.[2] The pattern and the direction of the
interaction of the codes, shot by shot, produces the narrative, *forms* it;
the textual system is the logic of this trajectory, a system of systems.
This fascination centers, for Bellour, on a number of doubling (or
mirroring or rhyming) operations.[3] In "The Obvious and the Code,"
Bellour quotes Metz's observation that classical cinema is constructed
primarily by sequences rather than built up shot by shot. "It is the
sequence (and not the shot) which is its preoccupation, its constant
problem."[4] While this is true, Bellour says, "the organic material of this
preoccupation is the prior set of formal, hierarchically-ordered rela-
tions between the shots" (p. 8). "Take as the example," his article
begins, "twelve shots from *The Big Sleep.*"

Both his analyses of *The Birds* (1969) and *The Big Sleep* (1973) are
offered as examples of how meaning in the classical film is "materi-
alized" shot by shot within the segment, which is taken as the basic
narrative unit.[5] In the article on *The Birds,* three systems are followed,
formulated as binary oppositions, through the 81 shots that make up
the segment: framing (close/distant), camera movement (still/moving),
and point of view (seeing/seen). Bellour calls them "the series of the
most marked pertinences, . . .deliberately restricted in number" (p.3).
They will later, after *Language and Cinema,* be referred to as specific
codes.

The segment advances through the orchestration of these opposi-
tions, an advance which is characterized by a constant effort toward
balance and symmetry on the one hand (repetition) and dissymmetry on
the other (difference), without which there would be no narrative
development. The segment is first broken into two parts, each of which
is organized in mirror fashion, i.e. symmetrically around a center. Series
A forms Melanie's trip by motor boat across Bodega Bay to Mitch's

Brenner
house

Barn

Landing

Melanie going

Melanie returning

Mitch returning

Pier

Bodega Bay

Group A3
Shots 32-36

house where she leaves the love-birds, an invitation to Mitch in the guise
of a birthday present for his sister, Cathy, (the center of the series) back
to her boat, where she waits, watching and half-hiding. Series B is
organized around Mitch. Its beginning overlaps with the last part of
series A: from her boat Melanie watches Mitch go from the barn into
the house and run back out looking for her. Its center is marked by
Mitch looking into the camera with his binoculars, followed by his view
of Melanie as she tries to start the motor of her boat, and reciprocal
shots of each of them smiling. The second half of the series alternates
shots of Mitch and Melanie as they return separately to the pier on the
other side of the bay, Mitch by truck around the shore-line, Melanie by
boat. As she is about to meet Mitch at the pier, Melanie is hit by a gull on
the forehead. Mitch takes charge of her, ending the segment.

The mid-sections of series A and B are also the centers of extremely
complicated formal systems as Bellour's analysis shows in convincing
detail.[6] Formal balance is achieved by alternating series of codic
choices, e.g. seeing/seen/seeing/seen/seeing. A break in the pattern of
alternation on one level, e.g. point of view (seeing/seeing), is smoothed
over by a continued alternation on another, e.g. camera movement. The
alternation is *displaced,* Bellour says, to another level. For example, the
center of series A (Melanie inside Mitch's house) is marked by a break in
alternation on two levels: framing and the look (point of view). But a
stable alternation on the level of camera movement not only carries the
rhythm of the segment across these breaks, which are therefore not very
noticeable because of the *displacement* of alternation from framing and
point of view onto camera movement, it also *condenses* the prior and
subsequent series of shots on its own level.

> Series A3 is in fact governed by the alternating opposition static/
> movement. This opposition is distributed through the five shots in
> the following way: movement/static/movement/static/movement.
> The first effect of this alternation is to condense in the central series
> the double alternation static/static and movement/movement
> which opposes the series A1 and A2 on the one hand and the series
> A4 and A5 on the other. It supplements the break introduced into
> the alternation seeing/seen on the one hand, and, its half-corollary,
> the framing on the other, thus making it possible to maintain the
> continuity of the relation of alternating opposition by displacing it
> to another level (p. 18).

This is the formal basis for the sense of natural continuity, of *obvious-
ness* which Bellour will show in the series of close analyses begun here to
be characteristic of the classical American film.

A similar example is given in Bellour's elegant analysis of a twelve-
shot segment from *The Big Sleep:* during a short car-ride, a transitional

The Birds: shot list of the Bodega Bay segment (Melanie Daniels' trip to the Brenner's house)

Group 1: Departure

3. MELANIE drives from background right, around a street corner to foreground.
4. MELANIE driving down a slope, out foreground right.
5. MELANIE parks her car, gets out of the car holding cage. Camera pans to jetty.
6. MELANIE enters the field, foreground left to face the fisherman.
7. THE FISHERMAN staring at Melanie; he moves offscreen down. She hands him cage.
8. THE FISHERMAN helps her down. She disappears offscreen down.
9. THE FISHERMAN bending over straightens up, shakes his head, goes down ladder.
10. MELANIE seated in the boat. The fisherman comes down the ladder, starts motor.
11. THE FISHERMAN standing on the ladder looking after Melanie. Loud engine sound.
12. MELANIE piloting the boat (up camera) 1st of three shots.
13. MELANIE piloting the boat, moving left to right (engine noise lower).
14. MELANIE piloting the boat (moving towards the camera).

Group A1: the journey to the Brenners' house:

15. MELANIE still piloting the boat looking off foreground right (engine louder).
16. THE BRENNERS'HOUSE. Mitch, Lydia, Cathy walking towards the truck.
17. MELANIE piloting the boat, watching offscreen right; she cuts off the motor.
18. THE BRENNERS' HOUSE. All get in the truck except Mitch.
19. MELANIE watching the group. Silence, sound of water against the boat.
20. THE BRENNERS' HOUSE. The truck drives off, left to right. Mitch runs to barn.
21. MELANIE looking to the right (Mitch). She begins to paddle towards platform.
22. THE BARN. Mitch opens the door and goes inside.
23. MELANIE paddling, towards camera, looks to the right.
24. THE PLATFORM seen from Melanie's POV. Forward movement.

Group A2: Melanie moves towards the house:

25. MELANIE paddling. She steps out of the boat, picks up the cage.
26. THE BRENNERS' HOUSE. The barn door wide open. Water noises. *Birds.*
27. MELANIE smiling. The camera tracks backwards.
28. THE BARN. Large tree in foreground and retaining wall.
29. MELANIE smiling.
30. THE BARN behind the trees. Camera tracks.
31. MELANIE climbing up the steps.

Group A3: Melanie inside the house: (Center A)

32. THE BRENNERS' HOUSE.
33. [INSERT], Melanie's hand putting the note in front of the cage.
34. MELANIE moving inside the house.
35. THE BARN, seen by Melanie from inside the house.
36. MELANIE in the hallway.

Group A4: Melanie returning to the landing platform:

37. MELANIE leaving the house.
38. THE BARN, tree in the foreground (30).
39. MELANIE moves along the house, away from it.
40. THE BARN (27).

41. MELANIE walking rapidly towards the boat, looks back.
42. THE BARN.
43. MELANIE steps down from deck to platform into the boat, looks to the left; she paddles away.

Group A5/B1: (Departure)

45. MELANIE puts down the oar and hides behind the boat engine.
46. MITCH enter the house.
47. MELANIE watching the house.
48. THE BRENNERS' HOUSE.
49. MELANIE watching intently.
50. MITCH comes out of the house and goes near the garage and stops to look.
51. MELANIE watching.
52. MITCH turns around, walks back to the house, stops and sees something.
53. MELANIE reacts by hiding a little more.
54. MITCH runs to the house (slight pan left).
55. MELANIE stands up and tries to start the motor.
56. MITCH comes out of the house with binoculars, sound of engine, BIRDS in foreground.
57. MITCH with binoculars. Sound of engine.

Group B2: Mitch observing Melanie: (Center B)

58. MELANIE seen through binoculars. She finally gets the motor to run.
59. MITCH lowers his binoculars and smiles, runs out (loud bird cries).
60. MELANIE smiles and pilots the boat, moving to the left.

Group B3: Melanie and Mitch. She returns to the dock. He drives around.

61. MITCH runs to the truck on the side of the house.
62. MELANIE piloting the boat, still moving to the left.
63. MITCH driving away (rapid left right pan; engine same noise level).
64. MELANIE in the boat watching him. Camera in different position in the boat.
65. MITCH drives to the right in the background.
66. MELANIE reacting. Loud engine noise.
67. MITCH drives from left to right.
68. MELANIE watching him.
69. MITCH driving. 2 sail boats in the foreground.
70. MELANIE watching.
71. MITCH driving to the right. Following pan.

Group B3: Arrival:

72. MELANIE smiling.
73. MELANIE approaching the dock. Large fishing boat docked.
74. MELANIE smiling. Slows down the motor.
75. MITCH on the jetty.
76. MELANIE smiles. She tips her head slightly to the side (waiting for gull).
77. SEA GULL IN FLIGHT.
78. MELANIE, the bird flies from right to the foreground. Loud sound, not cry.
79. THE BIRD flies from the right.
80. MITCH strolling on the jetty.
81. MELANIE removes her hand.
82. MELANIE'S GLOVED HAND.
83. MITCH arrives and jumps into the boat.
84. MITCH helps Melanie climb out of the boat. They run across a man.

lull between two dramatically charged scenes, Vivian and Marlowe admit their love for each other.

> The interest in this segment lies in its apparent poverty. Even an attentive viewer will not be sure to retain anything but the impression of a certain amount of vague unity. Questioned, he will very likely hazard the view that the segment consists of a long take supported by dialogue, or at best, of two or three shots (p. 7).

Why were twelve shots necessary? What is the effect of the variation in form? As deceptive in its simplicity as the segment is in its obviousness, "The Obvious and the Code" shows how the "naturalness" of the narrative progression is made possible, as in *The Birds,* only by a systematic balancing of symmetries and dissymmetries shot by shot across six principle codes, three specific and three non-specific, in connection with significant elements of the narrative (called here, loosely, another code). It continues the previous article's investigation of the classical fiction-effect:

> But Hawks needed twelve shots to secure the economy of this segment. Undoubtedly that economy was designed in order not to be perceived, which is in fact one of the determining features of the American cinema. But it exists, and from it, the classic mode of narration draws a part of its power (p. 7).

Bellour draws a number of general conclusions from this analysis: (a) the high number of shots given the minimal action allows for discontinuity, variation; (b) this variation is limited, however, by a tendency toward repetition – shots repeated exactly or shots with certain elements repeated; (c) repetition ensures an effect of naturalness or smoothness despite the differences introduced in the codes, differences which advance the narrative; (d) thus a balance is sustained by the movement of the shots in the segment between repetition and variation, symmetry and dissymmetry across the codes (p. 16).

As in the segment from *The Birds,* here too the formal movement is symmetrical around a center. This movement, which was analyzed in both examples *within* the segment, is seen in the article's conclusion from the perspective of the larger work of segmentation in building up the film as a whole. Each of a film's segments seems to introduce and resolve its elements (stabilize itself formally) anew "by means of a suspension and folding effect, as if to allow the segment to close back on itself more effectively and leave the new fold the problem of unrolling its new elements" (p. 16). This folding-effect is "profoundly characteristic of the American cinema," though not restricted to it.

In his article on *Gigi* two years later ("To Analyze, To Segment"), where segmentation per se is addressed before its effects are shown

through a multi-level description/analysis of *Gigi,* Bellour describes his
series of textual analyses as having shown the repetition-resolution
effect – the "effects of differential repetition which structure the devel-
opment of the narrative" in rhyming or mirroring fashion – on dif-
ferent levels: the fragment (*The Birds*), the segment (*The Big Sleep*), the
whole film *(North by Northwest)* and in *Gigi* a crisscrossing of these
levels including narrative units larger and smaller than the segment.

> Segmentation, as we shall see, is a *mise en abîme,* a process which
> theoretically is infinite – which is not to say that it lacks meaning.
> By the shifted play which operates between its different levels,
> segmentation permits us to sense the increased plurality of textual
> effects (p. 336).

But this plurality is not without direction. Redundancy across different
levels in the classical film serves to reinforce over and over again an
effect of homogeneity and of symbolic closure. (See, for example, the
accompanying interview on the repetition-resolution effect.)

The formal movement of symmetry and dissymmetry toward and
away from a center is one mirroring operation of a series. More fun-
damental, because it includes the work of the codes as one of its terms, is
the reciprocity Bellour emphasizes between mise en scène (as organ-)
ized by the codes) and narrative.

44   45   46

> The arrangement shown by the work of the codes is the same one
> that shapes the meaning of the fiction.
>   "The Obvious and the Code" (p. 14)

> The systematic stockpiling of symmetries and dissymmetries
> throughout the filmic chain decomposed by generalized segmenta-
> tion faithfully copies (because they, in fact, produce one another)
> the schema of familial relations which constitute the space of the
> narrative. [This is] a fundamental effect common to most American
> film.
>   "To Analyze, To Segment" (p. 344)

> Between shot 44 and shot 56, Mitch Brenner discovers Melanie
> Daniels's presence. The plot, hitherto organized by the vision of
> one character, redoubles onto itself to respond to the dual vision.
> The center is then displaced, and after the moment in which Mitch

sees Melanie, becomes *also* the four shots 56-60 (B2) in which the two see that they have been seen. The sequence conforms to the equation: one character, one center only, two characters, two centers. It would be more accurate to say: one single mobile center, which slips beneath the scene and sustains the development of the script with an architectural slide.

"*The Birds:* Analysis of a Sequence" (p. 19)

56   57   58

This relationship of complementarity has already been implied by the fact that the formal series are organized around narrative events. It should not be thought that the codes are somehow, on their own, forming symmetrical patterns which happen to correspond to repetitions and variations in the plot. Rather, the codes are to an extent narrativized from the outset in these analyses. And the way that the narrative bears on them is shown, throughout Bellour's work, to be fundamentally tied to sexual difference as it is represented in the classical film. The movement of Bellour's work can most clearly be seen as an effort to understand how this relationship is determining, and what this has to do with the captivation of the spectator by the classical fiction-effect.

If the segment from *The Birds* is organized on the narrative/structural level around a repetition (the trip out, the trip back) with a difference (the trip made by one, the trip made by two), with the resolution of the segment marked by the meeting of the two terms, it is more than relevant, yet so obvious as to be taken for granted, that the terms are female and male, that the trips are organized for the purpose of initiating a courtship (the formation of a couple), and that the eventual meeting – delayed by the time of the return trips, suspense before climax – is marked by an aggression staged literally against the body of the woman: as she is about to reach Mitch, Melanie is struck on the forehead by a gull. Again, repetition and difference: whereas it was first a question of love-birds, Melanie's gift through his sister to Mitch, it is secondly, after Mitch has seen the love-birds and their obvious significance, a question of the gulls which act out in their initial attack a response to Melanie's gift and the invitation her physical presence holds out to Mitch (p. 25).

Although point of view is introduced into the analysis as one system among others, by the end of the analysis it has been clearly shown to be more important than the others. As Melanie has been first subject, then object of "the birds" (she brings the love-birds, she is attacked by the gull), this same "reversibility" applies to the look. Melanie's look effectively controls the fiction through the alternation between "Melanie seeing/what Melanie sees" until the point at which she is caught in the double-iris of Mitch's binoculars, unable to return his look because she is trying to start the motor of her boat. These "rhymes" are linked according to Bellour's interpretation: series A was marked by Melanie's initiative, her gift; series B is centered on the reversal of the look which leads to the exchange of looks, and then smiles, between Mitch and Melanie. This exchange introduces the "wild birds" – in the image (shot 56), wheeling overhead, and in the sound (shot 59), their "murderous shrieks" presaging, at the moment Mitch lowers his binoculars and smiles, the attack on Melanie in shot 78, after which, her smile erased, she becomes the object of Mitch's
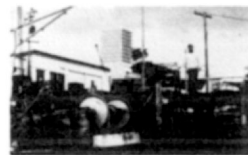

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look. A complementary pair of detail shots illustrate once again repetition and difference, in this case formal repetition marked by symbolic difference. The first, inside the house (shot 53) shows Melanie's gloved hands tearing up a gift card addressed to Mitch and replacing it with one addressed to Cathy. Its formal counterpart (shot 82) details Melanie's gloved hand, her index finger stained with blood after the gull's attack. The first shows the nature of the gift, Bellour says, the second its effect (p. 29).

Why this should be the effect of Melanie's gift is given only a veiled explanation. Bellour describes the effect as "symbolic punishment" for her look.

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53   82

> ...the symbolic punishment which strikes [Melanie] in Mitch's
> look in the metaphorical form of the killer birds has from the
> beginning spoken in her own look, in the first metaphor which her
> indiscretion proposed to Mitch with the symbolic gift of the love-
> birds. If Mitch's look reverses and precipitates the sequence,
> Melanie's look guides it and organizes it until the moment of the
> meeting (p. 29).

> Her look has been wounded, for it is only metaphorically, and for
> the sake of the rest of the plot, that the gull does not strike her eyes
> (p. 30).

> The object of the scene is to show Melanie subjecting by her look
> and subjected to a look. It could be given a reversible title: *the
> vision of Melanie Daniels* (p. 33).

> The two shots 33 and 57 are united in the symbolic violence of this
> last close-up [shot 82, the blood on Melanie's glove], in which a
> common look [i.e. it is seen by Mitch and Melanie together] marks
> the effect of the gift, the fact that it is impossible for Mitch and
> Melanie to see each other as seen without opening up a dual and
> murderous relationship (p. 32).

Melanie is punished for her look because it is through the alternation
"Melanie seeing"/"what Melanie sees" that her sexual invitation is
narrativized. But Melanie's look is itself controlled – by the organizer
of these formal and narrative systems, the *metteur en scène,* and it is the
fascination expressed by his look that will engage Bellour's critical
attention increasingly.

It is Hitchcock, by means of the camera-eye, who sees through the
eyes of now one, now the other of his characters. He identifies with both
Mitch and Melanie, but not in the same way.

> There is no doubt that Hitchcock identifies with Mitch, who
> interrogates Melanie's look and allows himself to be bewitched by
> it, but there is even less doubt that Hitchcock identifies with
> Melanie, whose eyes bear the phantasy whose effects Hitchcock
> narrates and analyzes in that purely narcissistic art which mise en
> scène is for him (p. 38).

Bellour calls Hitchcock's direction narcissistic. He will call it perverse in
subsequent articles: perverse not only on account of Hitchcock's
voyeurism – his trademark is an excessive use of point of view shots –

but more significantly because of the way he gains access to the scene
that stimulates his voyeuristic pleasure. It is through the woman's eyes,
both structurally and symbolically – here as will be shown in the anal-
yses of *Marnie* and *Psycho* – that the man's desire is aroused, not only
through her literal viewpoint, but perhaps even more through the sight
of the woman absorbed by an imagined desire, looking. Only on this
condition, Bellour says, are "perversion and morality linked" in the
typical Hitchcockian scenario of guilt and false guilt, mistaken identity
and true identity, thereby making it possible for the *director's* phantasy
to be acted out through fictional delegates.[7]

For Hitchcock is introduced at the end of the analysis as "another
character" and his phantasy as another kind of oblique explanation for
the violence directed against the body of Melanie Daniels. In "Le
blocage symbolique," Bellour suggests that Hitchcock's fictional
moments in *North by Northwest* and *The Birds* provide a quasi-mate-
rial link between the principle of the mise-en-scène, which he per-
sonifies, and the symbolic chain of events the narrative will play out,
through a direct identification with his fictional counterparts. Thorn-
hill, like Mitch, *acts out* the scenario *for* Hitchcock: "Thornhill accom-
plishes what Hitchcock can't except through a symbolic transfer which
the film as imaginary discourse makes possible" (p. 343). Likewise,
" . . . Mitch is the mediator, Hitchcock's main double, in the investiga-
tion he is conducting into the desire which speaks in Melanie's look" (p.
35). The desire in her look is necessary to the fiction, but only so that
it can be subjected to a masculine look speaking for a parasitical desire.
The fisherman who held Melanie in a sustained look as her boat
departed for Mitch's house is another double, a relay for both Mitch
and Hitchcock. By extension, in a corresponding way, these fictional
doubles, as well as Hitchcock himself taken as the principle for his
textual organization, act *in the place of* the spectator – and his perhaps
more interested double, the film analyst.[8]

Phantasy, not fantasy: it is a specific Freudian construct that is
meant, and Bellour characterizes it in "Le blocage symbolique" as
central to the fiction-effect of the classical American cinema. The
beauty of *North by Northwest* as a model for analysis, in a purer and
more abstract way than *The Birds*, is that the series of enigmas which
carry the suspense-spy-detective story forward (the hermeneutic code)
– e.g. who is Kaplan? who is agent no. 2? who is Eve? – is seen to
coincide exactly with the symbolic code, under the pressure of *the*
detective story whose locus classicus, according to Freud, Lévi-Strauss
and Lacan, is the *Oedipus Rex*. It is not a question of psychoanalyzing
Thornhill in "Le blocage symbolique," but of showing how the textual
organization of the film corresponds in all its details – on the level of

actions, engimas, and mise en scène – to a scenarization of the Oedipus complex and the castration complex.[9]

> "Come on, Mrs. Thornhill." These words show clearly how the transgression of the adventure ends with the sanction of bourgeois marriage, but that the limit where desire is fixed can't be recognized except in the transgression of the adventure as test and place of truth: the loss of identity, the guilt which determines, from the initial mistake, the adventure as crossroads of the enigma, thus leading the hero from ignorance to knowledge, from lack to possession, from misrecognition to recognition of a (socialized) desire (pp. 238-9).

The analysis falls mainly into two parts.[10] The first traces Thornhill's symbolic itinerary through its narrative instances: the symbolic murder of the ideal father (Kaplan-Townsend), the change in object-choice from the infantilizing, phallic mother to the "duplicitous" Eve, who in the same scene saves Thornhill from the law by hiding him in her sleeping compartment on the train and sends him to his death – her note to Vandamm leads directly to the cornfield sequence. Thus the first kiss between Eve and Thornhill is "murderous," linking sexuality and death literally. Eve is the pivotal figure for Thornhill. The tests which he successfully passes – threats to his life, mysteries solved – serve to re-establish his true identity, thus absolving him from guilt in the eyes of the law, and simultaneously to transform Eve, the embodiment of transgressive, threatening sexuality as Vandamm's agent into the image of bourgeois domesticity. Thornhill comes to achieve a positive identification with the law (he helps the CIA materially by restoring the stolen microfilm) and to constrain his desire for Eve within socially-defined limits. The direction of *North by Northwest* is thus from negativity to positivity, from lack to possession, i.e. toward the happy ending, the successful resolution of the Oedipus complex for the masculine subject, and accession into the symbolic.

This drama of love, death and identity is played out most spectacularly in the cornfield sequence where Thornhill expects the resolution of his unstable identity in the person of Kaplan, but thanks to Eve is subjected to the threat of death. The formal analysis of this sequence, which is very detailed and equal in length to the preceding section, gives priority again to point of view as an organizing system. The moments of attack coincide with Thornhill's loss of vision (an interruption of the alternation seeing/seen), indicating his loss of mastery of the object, his loss of identity.[11] Between the segment and the whole film there is a homology of systems dominated by the paradigm of "means of locomotion," which both carry the narrative forward (materialize it) and symbolize it. Cars, trucks, buses and an airplane signal to the fore-

warned spectator Eve's duplicity and the threat of death (symbolic castration) for Thornhill. The famous last images of the film (in the nick of time, Thornhill pulls Eve up from the precipice of Mt. Rushmore into his sleeping compartment with the words, "Come on, Mrs. Thornhill," as their train is entering a tunnel) underscore emphatically the positive resolution of sexuality as a *problem.*

Eve is first duplicitous. As a double-agent she combines sexuality and the threat of death. She shows that she has two sides: first phallic, she becomes domestic, Thornhill's double, his mirror-image. He saves her – for marriage. Eve, therefore, has a role to play for every stage of Thornhill's Oedipal itinerary.

> And what strikes me as absolutely fundamental in this perspective is that the American cinema is entirely dependent, as is psycho-analysis, on a system of representations in which the woman oc-cupies a central place only to the extent that it's a place assigned to her by the logic of masculine desire.
> "Alternation, Enunciation, Hypnosis," (p. 93).

The central place accorded the woman by the logic of masculine desire is the starting place for the analyses of *Marnie* and *Psycho,* where the relationship of this logic both to the organization of the mise-en-scène and the narrative is formulated in terms of enunciation, Hitch-cock's role becoming that of the enunciator. The operational value of Hitchcock within the analysis becomes clearer here. First, it is obvious that even in the article on *The Birds,* it was a question of considering Hitchcock's films as a group, a system, a text. The segment analyzed was an example of a kind of textual organization particular to Hitch-cock; as such, its analysis led to generalizations which applied beyond his films to the classical American cinema as a larger system, Hitch-cock's films being taken as an extreme (perverse) example of highly conventionalized formal and thematic preoccupations. Second, if Hitchcock's obsessions are of interest, it is clearly because they have interested very large audiences. Textual analysis tries to account for this shared fascination, first in the specific terms of a filmic system, then in terms of the general fictional apparatus of the classical cinema. Third, Hitchcock's particular use of point of view shots marks the conven-tionally vacant place of enunciation in the classical cinema. Bellour shows how in *Psycho* he emphasizes almost by way of visual diagrams the voyeuristic and sadistic relationship of the camera and the impli-cated spectator to the body and the look of the woman (e.g. Norman's "bulging eye" directed at Marion through a peep-hole before the shower scene). In his analysis of *Marnie,* Bellour examines the fetishistic aspect of the apparatus through Hitchcock's relationship, as enunciator ("pure image power"), to the image. Both articles are concerned with

52 the *conditions of possibility* of enunciation in terms of the scopic drive (the relationship of the look to desire and lack) and identification. The enunciator-character-spectator oscillates between being and having the women-image: "the two processes of identification which transfix the spectator: identification with the camera, identification with the object (the perpetual dialectic between being and having: identification and object choice)" (p. 79).[12]

In the article on *Marnie*, this is immediately expressed by Bellour as violence, aggression against the woman: the credits initiate a "symbolic possession" – "Alfred Hitchcock's *Marnie*." Marnie is constituted and possessed as image, *reduced to image* by the very principle of the enunciation. Her enigmatic first appearance follows these credits. We see a woman only from behind, walking away from the camera on a train platform. We guess and will soon know that this is Marnie. The second time we see her comes in response to scene II, in narrative terms, as a partial realization of the imaginary picture Strutt has created for the police of his former secretary, helped by Mark Rutland's appreciative memories of her. *Formally* it is a direct reply to Mark's pensive look into the camera which ends the scene.

> Mark is daydreaming about this woman whose virtual image he has helped to create. The *real* image that follows repeats exactly the beginning of shot 1 and occurs as if to materialize his thoughtful look, taking the place of the traditional subjective shot (p. 71).[13]

24b   25a

As in the first scene, but now as if the object of Mark's look, Marnie walks away from the camera, this time down a hotel corridor. A moment later Hitchcock steps out of one of the rooms, looks first after her and then toward the camera, making both a *formal* and *logical* bridge similar to Mark's look, which bridged scenes II and III, between scenes III and IV where, as if in response to Hitchcock's look, we see Marnie in her hotel room, changing her identity (the social security cards) and her "looks" (she washes the dye out of her hair). Only now do we see Marnie's face. She looks almost into the camera and, according to Bellour's description, "admires the triumphant image of a split identity" in the mirror. "Following the segmentation of the name, the

25d   26a

segmentation of the body completes Marnie's change of identity" (p. 80). This time it is Marnie's own look that bridges the scenes (IV to V), as if she looks to her own fragmented body.

31c   32a

Segmentation is the word we are used to seeing in Bellour's work refer to the cutting up of the filmic chain into narrative units, the very work of fictional construction. Here it describes the systematic fragmentation of the woman's image, the woman reduced to image, submitted to the control of the image-maker. The analysis shows how the fetishization of Marnie is equally central to Mark's fascination with her and to the logic of the enunciation – here in terms of the organization of "images" (real and imaginary), seen as already determined by the apparatus through the "fetishistic position" of the cinematic signifier.

> Mark's single-minded desire for Marnie is aroused by this relationship between himself and the image . . . . The fetishistic operation, thus amplified, is transferred from the director to the character who takes his place, to the extent that thus is accomplished a return to the narrative's initial condition of possibility; the essentially fetishistic position of the cinematic signifier (pp. 71-2).[14]

The woman is central – Marnie, Marion, Melanie – insofar as the woman's desire is the central *problem* or challenge for the male protagonist (and the director, etc.). Her desire, as evidenced by her look, narrativizes the possibility and therefore the problem of sexual difference. The narrative then moves to reduce the image of the woman's sexuality as a threat, thus the work of fetishization: the pleasure of seeing the woman's body in pieces, a guarantee of the safety (coherence, totality) of the man's. Fetishism is thus directly linked to the logic of the enunciation by Bellour. For the male protagonist, the challenge of the

54   woman's desire is to make it mirror his. The related enigmas which make Marnie at the same time fascinating to Mark and the central character of the film – her compulsion to steal and her frigidity – will be resolved by a cathartic experience staged by Mark in order to reconstruct her image as his wife. Sexual desire, first displaced to desire for Marnie's neurotic symptoms, can be rechannelled toward marriage because an image of domesticity is available that reduces the woman to the man's complement, his double. Sexual difference is thus eliminated, disavowed.

In *Psycho* the reconstruction of the woman's image is taken to an extreme: Norman has literally "fetishized his mother to death." Marion is only the center of the fiction (a subject of desire) in order to carry the fiction to a "masculine" subject who will be substituted for her as the character the fiction is centered around: Marion's theft and her get-away move the fiction until the psychotic subject of desire, by murdering her, becomes the protagonist. "In *Psycho* woman, the subject of neurosis, becomes the object of the psychosis of which man is the subject." (p. 112) Bellour takes pains to emphasize that woman as subject of desire is strictly subjected to and *used by* a desire which envelops hers.

Similarly to the way in which Marnie's body and her own look had been used to create a formal bridge between scenes in the examples given above, as the object of quasi-subjective shots attributable to Mark, then Hitchcock, then herself, Marion functions as a formal bridge between the first and second parts of *Psycho* (as Bellour defines them). Point of view, again, is the crucial agent, and it is implicated by Bellour's use of words as an explicitly sexual agent.

> However in order to go from one man to another [Sam to Norman] and from one position to another [neurosis to psychosis], the camera must also embody *(faire corps avec)* the woman and adopt *(se marier)* her look, conserving a strong identification – diegetic, of course, but more specifically specular, determined by the organization of the point of view – with the subject it has taken as its object . . . . In conformity with its basic path, that of perverse structuration, the transformation from neurosis to psychosis is brought about by woman, who is both its foundation and its indispensable form (p. 118).

Although the woman's vision has structured the fiction's movement toward the Bates Motel, the series of shot-reverse shot exchanges between Norman and Marion as she attempts to rent a room for the night are already weighted in terms of power in favor of the masculine subject. In response to Jacqueline Rose's argument in "Paranoia and the Film System" that there is a component of aggression inherent in the

shot-reverse shot structure because of its restaging of aspects of the   55
mirror phase, and that this aggressive component is potentially active
for both parties of the exchange, Bellour emphasizes that the classical
cinema is:

> a system in which the aggressive element can never be separated
> from the inflection it receives from sexual difference, and the
> attribution of this difference to the signifier that governs it. In other
> words, it is directed from the man towards the woman, and that
> difference which appears due to woman is nothing but the mirror-
> effect of the narcissistic doubling that makes possible the constitu-
> tion of the male subject through the woman's body . . . (p.118-119).

Within the confines of this logic, the woman's aggression against the
man comes only as a reaction to his prior violence toward her.[15]
    Within this massive, imaginary reduction of sexual difference to a
narcissistic doubling of the masculine subject, there would seem to
remain the woman's potential for sexual pleasure apart from the male
protagonist: her pleasure for herself. However for Bellour, those scenes
in Hitchcock's films which are there precisely to show the woman's
pleasure alone function in a more perverse way than the use of the
woman's body as object or vehicle to fuel the enunciative machine.

> Within this configuration, one thing seems to me to be essential,
> namely that it is through woman's pleasure *(jouissance)* that the
> perverse projection and psychotic inscription are carried out (just
> as it is through her actions, her body, her look, that the film moves
> from one scene to the next.)
>   "Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion," (p. 121).

For Bellour the "high point" of the enunciation of *Marnie* (of the initial
setting into place of the fiction's elements) is the moment when Marnie
half-smiles at herself in the mirror (and into the camera) "absorbed in
her desire for her own image" (p. 81); i.e. her desire is for her image,
which is also the reduced and fetishized object of desire of Strutt and
Mark. In *Psycho* the corresponding scene is the first part of Marion's
shower. The quality of Bellour's description testifies, perhaps, to the
fascination the scene holds from the point of view of the enunciation of
masculine desire.

> The emphasis on Marion's pleasure in the shower goes well beyond
> all diegetic motivation: close-up shots of her naked body alternate
> with shots of gushing water; she leans into the stream, opens her
> mouth, smiles, and closes her eyes in a rapture that is made all the
> more intense because it contrasts with the horror that is to come,
> but also because the two are linked together. By a subtle reversal,
> the pleasure that Marion did not show in the opening love scene at
> last appears. However the pleasure is for herself (even if it can only
> be so for the camera, because of the image-nature assigned to her by

the camera); it takes the form of narcissistic intimacy which poses, for men, the question of sexual pleasure itself, with woman's body instituted as its mythical site (p. 121).

Given the nature of this system of representations, Bellour says, which Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis account for so accurately, the woman's narcissistic pleasure is shown not only *for the pleasure of* the man (in this case it is figured in the film: Norman is watching Marion through a peep-hole) but is also shown as that which *will be assimilated to* masculine desire by the end of the film – one way or another. Bellour's statement continues:

> The masculine subject can accept the image of woman's pleasure only on condition that, having constructed it, he may inscribe himself and recognize himself within it, and thus reappropriate it even at the cost of its (or her) destruction (p. 121).[16]

Once again sexual difference, in this case through the question of feminine pleasure, is implicated within structures of identification and vision which serve to efface difference in favor of the masculine subject. With respect to the steady movement of Bellour's work toward demonstrating the overdetermination of this principle, two points are important to bring out, and will lead to a kind of conclusion.

(1) The system of identifications Bellour is outlining, which depends heavily on the negotiation of vision in the classical film, is historically determined and culturally circumscribed. Thus qualified, it is this system that Bellour contends necessitates the Oedipal wish-fulfillment of the American classical cinema.[17] (He has begun to amplify these views in the interview following this article.)[18]

(2) Bellour is attempting to suggest different kinds of identification for the male and female spectator, i.e. to begin to include sexual difference as a factor in the analysis. For example, he suggests that Marnie's look into the mirror:

> extends to the male spectator (the camera held by Hitchcock, Mark, Strutt) the deferred orgasm (*jouissance*) of desire for an object; for any woman spectator who, for all practical purposes is alienated by this structure, she stimulates an identificatory desire (p. 81).

At this present stage of Bellour's work, he has brought together identification, vision and pleasure (fascination) in a way that suggests direct connections with the most important work being done in the area of film and psychoanalytic theory by feminists. On the one hand, his

analysis of structures of fascination in the classical film is more compli-
cated than in Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"
in that pleasure in looking in Bellour's work is taken within mechanisms
which depend only in part on visual perception. It is, once again, the
"*desire* which speaks in Melanie's look" which is the object of Mitch's
and Hitchcock's investigation, not primarily her body as scopic object
or fetish. The woman's desire is crucial to the logic of the enunciation of
Hitchcock's films, Bellour contends (this is possibly his most insidious
point) and he extends this description to the classical American cinema
generally. Secondly, as the quotation above indicates, Bellour attempts
to take the woman spectator into account differently than the male
spectator when analyzing these structures of fascination, unlike in
Mulvey's article where the spectator within phallocentrism is implicitly
equated with the male spectator.

But if Bellour's work has progressively elaborated ideas which
Mulvey, who was writing from a different perspective, placed at the
center of her argument, and if Bellour has extended them in the process
of demonstrating how these structures of fascination work within
specific films, the resulting picture of the classical cinema is even more
totalistic and deterministic than Mulvey's. Bellour sees it as a logically
consistent, complete and closed system. (See, for example, the final
sections of the interview.)

It is with respect to identification that Bellour's discussion is less
complicated than his work itself would lead one to expect. In fact, the
movement of his work seems to be exactly *toward* a more complex
consideration of identification and sexual difference in terms of specific
fictional situations. However at this point masculine and feminine are
still conceived of as fixed poles ("the male spectator," "any woman
spectator"; or see the interview, p. 97), despite the fact that he talks
about a constant oscillation of the spectator between object choice and
identification (the active and passive scopophilia Mulvey describes),
which must depend on an implicit theory of bisexual response, and
despite the fact that the films themselves suggest a confusion of sexual
boundaries. Wouldn't Norman's scenario have to read something like
this? When he meets Marion, it is as the son to an available woman.
When he watches her in the shower, Norman is the son watching his
mother (Marion) imagining himself as the mother's lover ("the imagi-
nary and ungraspable relation (*entre-deux*) of the primal scene"[19]);
when Norman, impersonating his mother, kills Marion, it is as the
mother killing a rival for her son's affection, the inverse manifestation
of the incestuous desire which precedes the psychotic embodiment. In
Norman's case it is at the price of psychosis that he can want to have the
woman and be the woman at the same time. Each shift necessitates

58   corresponding changes in the imaginary identifications of the other
characters in the scenario. However this exchange and/or doubling of
roles is not restricted to psychosis; it is *characteristic of* the structure of
the phantasy.[20] Bellour begins to approach the question of partial or
changing identifications, but only in terms of Norman's psychosis[21] (or,
even more sketchily, Marnie's "split personality.")

    Freud devoted a chapter to identification in *Group Psychology and
the Analysis of the Ego* (1922), preceded by this description: "there do
exist other mechanisms for emotional ties, the so-called *identifications,*
insufficiently-known processes and hard to describe . . ." After all the
close work in film analysis that has led up to this point, it is now possible
and absolutely necessary to complicate the question of identification as
it functions in the classical film, first of all in terms of the realization that
spectators are able to take up multiple identificatory positions, whether
successively or simultaneously. Freud's case studies of the Wolfman or
of Dora, among others, demonstrate this point at length. Jacqueline
Rose's reexamination of the case of Dora ("Dora – Fragment of an
Analysis") brings out some of the implications of the shifting of sexual
identifications within a woman's history for attempting to say what
"the woman's desire" is. A greater attention to the movement of identi-
fications – whether according to theories of bisexuality, power rela-
tionships (as in *S/Z*) or in some other terms – seems to be the next
logical step in attempting more accurately to account for the quality of
our involvement as spectators. Whether arguing for a "counter" cinema
or in terms of understanding the mechanisms of the fiction film, it is
necessary to avoid a strictly biological male/female dichotomy while
acknowledging the lived experience of women and men *generally* in our
culture to be different.

    In conclusion: Bellour's work has given us not only a flexible
methodological model for performing detailed and specific analyses of
narrative film, but a theoretical model of the classical cinema according
to numerous axes. Not only has he shown us a great deal about the
production of meaning in general in the classical film, with particular
attention to cinematic specificity, but in so doing he has accorded the
structural and symbolic role of the woman increasing importance. If
Bellour's analysis of symbolic structures in the American cinema reveals
a particular interest ("If I've wanted to go to the furthest possible point
in understanding the power and subtlety of this textual pressure, it's
quite simply because I myself am caught in it."),[22] there remains the
question of the woman spectator's pleasure in the classical film, the
woman now, which raises all the problems of identification just out-
lined. Understanding the determinants of the pleasure a woman can
take in specific fictional situations is important both in itself and insofar

as many filmmakers working as feminists are experimenting with the
possibilities of narrative form. The direction of Bellour's analyses,
although leading to a deterministic view of the function of women in
classical film (which has not yet been acknowledged adequately within
film theory) is also a beginning. The very preciseness of his work on
identification, vision and pleasure might be the basis for continued
work on the classical film from the point of view of its undeniable
potential for arousing pleasure in women spectators – perhaps includ-
ing, or perhaps aside from, the woman's masochism and/or sadism
which Bellour quickly introduces into the discussion in the interview to
explain the woman's pleasure (p. 97). It seems probable that this
research will begin by attempting to find a more complex view of
identification through analyses of specific films. It is not a question of
positivizing the American cinema, but of understanding its mechanisms
by coming to terms with our relationship as spectators and film analysts
to it and to the seductiveness of the image in general.

(Note: The second part of this article, on the textual analyses of Thierry
Kuntzel and Stephen Heath, will be published in *Camera Obscura/6*.)

NOTES

I. Introduction

1. Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," *Image, Music, Text* (New
York: Hill and Wang, 1977), p. 157.

2. Barthes also refers to these codes as (a) the code of actions, the voice
of empirics, the proairetic code; (b) the hermeneutic code, the voice of
truth; (c) the symbolic field; (d) cultural or referential code, voice of
science, the gnomic code; (e) semes or connotative signifieds, voice of
the person. (From the "Summary of Contents" of *S/Z*, pp. 261-263.)

3. To make this comparison about methods of interpretation is not to
suggest that the aims of Freud and Barthes are the same. The sys-
tematics of Freud's interpretations help to substantiate his description
of mental processes; at the same time, his theories of mental processes
serve an explanatory function within the interpretations. Freud's
theories are among several systems of explanation used by Barthes,

60   whose emphasis is on the multiple systems of meaning potentially operating in a text, rather than in the text as a symptom of mental processes.

4. Without going into an extensive explanation, suffice it to say that what Barthes means by code in *S/Z* would correspond to something like a bundle of codes in Metz's sense. It is also important to notice that the *grande syntagmatique* is distinct from the other codes Metz discusses in that it is a system with all its component parts known. Any actual syntagm will correspond to one of the types of the *grande syntagmatique*. This is *not* true of the codes of lighting, camera movement, or point of view shots, for example.

5. Metz can summarize the textual system of *Intolerance* as follows:

> No matter what its (conscious or unconscious) motivations, the system of *Intolerance* is defined by the close association, which it makes itself, between a certain use of parallel montage and a certain manner of understanding fanaticism. . . .What is distinctive in the system of *Intolerance* is neither the parallel montage nor the human-itarian ideology, both of which appear elsewhere, nor even a unique use of parallel montage or a unique version of the humanitarian ideology, for nowhere (and above all not in *Intolerance*) can one find one without the other. The system of the film is the interaction of one with the other, the active fashioning of one by the other, the exact point – the only point – where these two structures succeed, in every sense of the word, in "working" together. (*Language and Cinema*, pp. 110 and 112.)

A series of shorter examples of textual systems follow, for example:

> – Reflections on memory, on forgetfulness *and* circular construction with the omnipresence of the "chronological" in montage, in the varieties of photographic exposition and luminosity: *Hiroshima mon amour* by Alain Resnais (p. 113).

6. See the interview with Bellour, in particular the section, "Segmenta-tion and *La Grande Syntagmatique*."

7. See, for example, Metz's revision of his notion of textual system in "The Imaginary Signifier," where he writes of the close relationship of his work with the textual analyses of Bellour and Kuntzel, with whom he edited *Communications* 23 *(Psychanalyse et Cinéma)*, where the article was published along with Bellour's "Le blocage symbolique" and Kuntzel's "Le travail du film, II." See also the introductory chapter to Bellour's *L'Analyse du film* (forthcoming) which is a history of the development of the textual analysis of films in France, again stressing

the interrelationship between his work and that of Metz and Kuntzel, to whom the book is dedicated.

8. See the last section of the interview with Bellour.

9. The article is being published in two parts; the sections on Kuntzel and Heath will appear in *Camera Obscura/6*.

10. *Cahiers du Cinéma* collective text, "John Ford's *Young Mr. Lincoln*," *Screen* (autumn, 1972), pp. 5-44; originally published in August-September 1970, *Cahiers du Cinéma* 223; "*Morocco* de Josef von Sternberg," *Cahiers du Cinéma* 225 (novembre-decembre 1970), pp. 5-13.

Jean-Louis Comolli and François Géré, "Deux fictions de la haine: 1) *Les bourreaux meurent aussi (Hangmen Also Die)*," *Cahiers du Cinéma* 286 (mars, 1978); 2) "*To Be or Not To Be* (part 1)," *Cahiers du Cinéma* 288 (mai, 1978); 3) "*To Be or Not To Be* (part 2)," *Cahiers du Cinéma* 290-291 (juillet-août, 1978). Comolli and Géré, a historian, are collaborating on a book on Renoir's *La Marseillaise* and the Popular Front. They presented some of this work at the Centre univérsitaire américain du cinéma in Paris in the spring of 1978.

Jacques Aumont, "Un rêve soviétique," *Cahiers du Cinéma* 271 (novembre, 1976), pp. 26-44. Aumont, Eisenstein's principle French translator, has also just published an important study of Eisenstein's films, *Montage Eisenstein* (Paris: Editions Albatros, 1979).

Claude Bailble, Michel Marie and Marie-Claire Ropars, *Muriel* (Paris: Ed. Galilée, 1974).

Pierre Sorlin and Marie-Claire Ropars, *Ecriture et Idéologie I: Analyse filmique d'Octobre d'Eisenstein* (Paris: Editions Albatros, 1976).

Many more articles are listed in Roger Odin's *Dix années d'analyses textuelles de films: Bibliographie analytique* (1977).

11. Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, "Space and Narrative in the Films of Ozu," *Screen* (summer, 1976), pp. 41-73.

Edward Brannigan, "The Space of Equinox Flower," *Screen* (summer, 1976), pp. 74-105.

Standish Lawder, *The Cubist Cinema* (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

12. The mimeographed translation is available for the price of postage from the British Film Institute, 127 Charing Cross Road, London WC 2, England. It lacks the frame enlargements and diagram of the set which were published with the article in *Cahiers du Cinéma* and which are reprinted here.

1. The classical American cinema is, generally speaking, the Hollywood cinema of the 30's, 40's and 50's. The codes or conventions which are characteristic of this cinema are the object of the textual analyses of Bellour, Kuntzel and Heath, among others, and of Metz's semiology. See the interview with Bellour for the relationship between the classical cinema and the 19th century novel.

2. Raymond Bellour, "*The Birds:* Analysis of a Sequence," BFI mimeographed translation, p. 1. (See note 12 above.)

3. "Hence the rather imprecise word 'rhyme' which I have used exclusively to denote very powerful formal homologies," Ibid., p. 1.

4. Christian Metz, "Ponctuations et démarcations dans le film de diégèse," *Essais sur la signification au cinéma, II* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1973), especially pp. 126-129.

5. Scene, sequence and segment are used interchangeably at various points of Bellour's work. That is to say that unless the term is specified further, it is not meant to refer to a specific unit of Metz's *grande syntagmatique.* However as basic units of narration, as are Metz's various types of syntagmas, they are distinguished by Bellour from the "fragment" which does not have any analytical status but designates an arbitrarily broken-off "piece." Although he called the article on *The Birds* "Analysis of a Sequence" when he published it, Bellour now calls it the analysis of a fragment in keeping with the above distinction. The basic units of narration are determined in accordance with the criteria Metz outlined in "Ponctuations et demarcations dans le film de diégèse." See, for example, Bellour's "To Analyze, To Segment," pp. 336-337.

6. The translation provided by the BFI does not include the frame enlargements which were published with the article in *Cahiers du Cinéma.* The article is unreadable without them and for that reason they are reproduced here, pp. 66-69.

7. Raymond Bellour, "Le blocage symbolique," *Communications* 23 (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 235; "Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion," *Camera Obscura/3-4,* p. 106.

8. For a more extended analysis of Hitchcock's appearances, see "Hitchcock, The Enunciator," *Camera Obscura/2* (fall, 1977), pp. 72-78.

9. For explanations of the Oedipus complex and the castration com-

plex, see the entries in J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, eds., *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973). See also the sections on *The Westerner* in the interview with Bellour.

10. Kari Hanet's summary of the article in the *Edinburgh '76 Magazine* ("Bellour on *North by Northwest*," pp. 43-49) doesn't give an adequate sense that the formal analysis of the cornfield sequence balances and is a necessary complement to Bellour's description of Thornhill's Oedipal trajectory on the level of the plot (the signifieds). Unfortunately, it also gives the impression of dogmatism, whereas the French version (which is 100 pages long as opposed to the six page summary) is always carefully nuanced and more suggestive than insistent on the ultimate significance of the narrative details taken individually. For a partial account of the analysis of the cornfield sequence, see Jacqueline Rose, "Paranoia and the Film System," *Screen* (winter, 1976/77), pp. 85-104.

11. It is this point which interests Jacqueline Rose in "Paranoia and the Film System," see especially pp. 90-92.

12. Compare these processes of identification to the two forms of scopophilia (active and passive) which Laura Mulvey describes after Freud in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* (autumn, 1975), pp. 8-10.

13. Please refer to the frame enlargements in *Camera Obscura/2*, pp. 88-91.

14. See Christian Metz, "The Imaginary Signifier," *Screen* (summer, 1975), especially pp. 67-75.

15. E.g. the murder of the rapist in *Blackmail* or in *Shadow of a Doubt*, the niece Charlie pushing her uncle Charlie off the train as he is trying to kill her by pushing her off the train, a tour de force of narrative doubling. In *Marnie* "the theft displays itself as the other side of sex: the woman's reply to the aggression, perpetuated through the image, which she experiences as object" (p. 70). See also "Hitchcock, The Enunciator," p. 79 and "Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion," p. 112.

16. Bellour's footnote following this passage reads: "*Marnie* in this respect deals with the reappropriation of the image, whereas *Psycho* deals with its destruction." "Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion," p. 128.

17. Proposing the Oedipal phantasies of the American classical cinema in terms of wish-fulfillment may be something of a response to the beginning of Jacqueline Rose's "Paranoia and the Film System": "This paper emerges from the need to query a semiotic practice which assim-

64 ilates its own systematicity to an institutionalized psychoanalytic exigency – integration into the Symbolic through a successful Oedipal trajectory" (p. 85).

18. See also his article on Dumas, "Un jour, la castration," *L'Arc* 71 (1978), pp. 9-23.

19. "Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion," p. 121.

20. This is one of the main points Elisabeth Lyon takes up in her study of Marguerite Duras's *India Song*, to be published in *Camera Obscura/5*.

For the definition of phantasy in this technical sense, see *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, pp. 314-319.

> Phantasy: Imaginary scene in which the subject is a protagonist, representing the fulfillment of a wish (in the last analysis, an unconscious wish) in a manner that is distorted to a greater or lesser extent by defensive processes. . . .
>
> (a) Even where they can be summed up in a single sentence, phantasies are still scripts *(scénarios)* of organized scenes which are capable of dramatization – usually in visual form;
> (b) The subject is invariably present in these scenes . . .;
> (c) It is not an *object* that the subject imagines and aims at, so to speak, but rather a *sequence* in which the subject has his own part to play and in which permutations of roles and attributions are possible . . . .
> (d) In so far as desire is articulated in this way through phantasy, phantasy is also the locus of defensive operations: it facilitates the most primitive of defense processes, such as turning round upon the subject's own self, reversal into the opposite, negation and projection.
> (e) Such defenses are themselves inseparably bound up with the primary function of phantasy, namely the mise en scène of desire – a mise en scène in which what is prohibited *(l'interdit)* is always present in the actual formation of the wish (pp. 314 and 318).

See also Catherine Clément, "De la méconnaissance: fantasme, texte, scène," *Langages 31* (septembre, 1973).

21. "Such (to complete the psychiatrist's speech) might be the motivations behind the genealogy of the case: the reiterative passage from the former murder (that of the mother) to the murder of Marion of which Norman-the mother is the agent, emphasizing in both cases, given an original identificatory fantasy, the literally impossible desire for possession and fusion that is at stake (pp. 119-120).

22. See the interview, p. 95.

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