The Intensity of Recollection-Images in *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*

BY

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Abstract

There is a long tradition of film scholarship dealing with the representation of time in cinema, generally focusing on the techniques that signify more or less explicitly temporal shifts in the unfolding of the narrative. Some of these critical approaches to the representation of time are useful in untangling the sometimes extremely complex imbrications of past, present, and future displayed in contemporary films where causality and chronology can prove ostentatiously deconstructed. However, few film scholars have paid attention to films that conceal temporal layering behind the guise of mundane realism. Seemingly simple films such as Lynne Stopkewich's *Suspicious River* (2000) and John Greyson's *Law of Enclosures* (2000) appear on the surface to be concerned only with the day-to-day existence of ordinary people living in "ordinary times". However, upon closer inspection, these Canadian productions construct an experience of time that is far more ambivalent than initially assumed. This dissertation intends to develop an analytical model for such films based on some aspects of Henri Bergson's philosophy of time. Using this Bergsonian lens, I intend to show how virtually imperceptible juxtapositions of temporal frames are used in these films to evoke the simultaneous experience of past and present.

Focusing primarily on *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*, this dissertation examines how representations of memory and the act of remembrance evoke Bergson's theory that events run into each other without specific points of transition. Consequently, recollection is not treated as a means by which to understand the present, but as a fluid layering of time that resists symbolic, linear, and quantitative progression. The past is not treated as a means to determine the destiny of the lead character; the past is not reduced to a representation of what is logically antecedent to the present; rather, it has been actualized horizontally in present-time. In short, the multilayered experience of time in films such as *Suspicious River* and *Law of Enclosures* reflects how the subject submerges her experience of the present into a virtual past, wherein her memories coexist with and extend into the present. Ultimately, this might have something to do with what Peter Harcourt once identified as a quintessential feature of Canadian cinema: "suspended judgment." It is an attitude whereby Canadian film characters remain thoughtfully detached and disengaged from the urgency of timely reactions and consequently resist falling prey to the controlled temporal structure of instrumentalist consumerism.

Introduction

Part One: Why *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*

The experience of time in cinema can take on a wide variety of forms ranging from the linear chronology of classical Hollywood motion pictures and the conventional flashback structure of film noir to the reversed narratives of some contemporary films such as *Memento* (2000, Christopher Nolan) and the utter deconstruction of time found in the more convoluted examples of experimental cinema such as *Decasia* (2002, Bill Morrison). This dissertation focuses on certain types of films that neither ostentatiously call attention to temporal manipulation nor treat time as a stable signifier of causality. Rather, the films that interest me subtly deploy time as a multiplicity of layers which are shown to coexist within a single, realist space. The seamless juxtaposition of present and past in these films coincides with the nearly imperceptible intersection of the objective and subjective fields within the context of everyday experience. This suggests that temporal confusion is not the stuff of conspicuously complicated spectacles, but rather unfolds as part of “ordinary” engagement with the continuous occurrence of life. These films represent a unique corpus that does not easily yield itself to conventional approaches to the analysis of time in film and, therefore, require a new approach to the examination of cinematic temporality.

There is a long tradition of film scholarship dealing with the representation of time in cinema, generally focusing on the techniques that signify more or less explicitly temporal shifts in the unfolding of the narrative. Some of these critical approaches to the representation of time can prove useful in untangling the sometimes complex imbrications of past, present, and future displayed in contemporary films such as *Memento*, *Irreversible* (2002, Gaspar No), *Run Lola Run* (1998, Tom Tykwer), and *Cach* (2005, Michael Haneke), where causality and chronology are continuously distorted. But few film scholars have paid attention to the films I am interested in, which conceal temporal layering behind the guise of mundane realism. Seemingly simple films such as Lynne Stopkewich’s *Suspicious River* (2000) and John Greyson’s *Law of Enclosures* (2000) appear on the surface to be concerned only with the day-to-day existence of ordinary people living in “ordinary times.”¹ However, upon closer inspection, these and other similar films construct an experience of time that is far more ambivalent than initially apparent. I would argue that temporality in such films is never subordinated to the chain of events. This dissertation intends to develop an analytical model for such films based on some aspects of Henri Bergson’s philosophy of time. I propose to label this corpus “Bergsonian Cinema.” As will be shown throughout this study, certain aspects of Henri Bergson’s conception of temporality can

¹ In accordance with what the titles of my two chapters on *The Law of Enclosures* suggests, John Greyson himself claims that it is one of his most realist films about a straight couple while it actually becomes one of his most queer films. Bergson’s definition (or perhaps problematization of) realism would be interesting to bring to bear on the seemingly “straight” style of Greyson’s film. Regarding realism, Bergson writes, “the invariable order of the phenomena of nature lies in a cause distinct from our perception, whether this cause must remain unknowable, or whether we can reach it by an effort (always more or less arbitrary) of metaphysical construction.” He goes on to say that, “for realism as for idealism, perceptions are ‘veridical hallucinations’ state of the subject, projected outside himself.” (In *Matter and Memory*, 68). In short, for Bergson, we do not perceive things as they really are. Reality is an undivided continuous flux. But we always internalize the world *virtually*.

be used productively to analyze films whose complex temporal structure might initially go unnoticed.

This dissertation primarily addresses the peculiar role that memory and the act of remembrance play in the two little-known Canadian films, *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*. My intension is not to claim that these works present a *uniquely Canadian* perspective on the past's interaction with the present (such an argument would probably be impossible to make convincingly). But the fact that these are Canadian productions is relevant to the way time is narratively constructed. I will further explore the "Canadianess" of these works in the last chapter of this study. For now, suffice it to say that, for both ideological and economic reasons, Canadian cinema has tended to develop representational practices that emphasize their "distinctiveness" from the classical Hollywood model through the use of realist or even naturalist techniques that resist straightforward narrative unfolding.² In particular, the construction of narrative time in Canadian cinema often avoids obvious causality, linear correlations between past and present, and dramatic teleology. Using Don Shebib's iconic *Goin' Down the Road* as an example within the naturalist paradigm favoured by many Canadian films, R. Bruce Elder argues:

[C]learly articulated dramatic forms are eschewed, because they are structured to conform to the classical ideals of unity and economy of means, because they involve a clear subordination of parts under the control of a leading idea, and because they obviously rely on the steady, progressive development of themes, and these features make them redolent of artifice. The dramatic form is too

² Such arguments, for example, have been formulated by André Loiselle, "Fragments or Persistence of Visions: Continuity in Canadian Film History," in K. G. Pryke and W. C. Soderlund, *Profiles of Canada*. (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2003) 426.

focused, too determined by its drive towards its central focusing event to be acceptable as naturalism.³

Thus it could be argued that the two films on which I focus in this dissertation are “typically Canadian” in their rejection of Hollywood conventions of causal temporality. For example, in *Suspicious River*, rather than conventional flashbacks or straightforward attempts at dividing up time into the past, the present, and the future, Stopkewich unconventionally employs “recollection images” (i.e., the screened remembrance of the characters)⁴ that are incorporated into present time. By focusing mainly on *Suspicious River*, this dissertation will go beyond the typical reading of Stopkewich’s films⁵ as mere representations of various forms of deviant sexuality. Rather, I will argue that this film is primarily about multilayered time. Rather than relying on conventional flashbacks or perplexing rearrangements of the past, the present, and the future, Stopkewich employs elusive recollection images that are incorporated into present time. What makes *Suspicious River* a good subject of study for the purposes of this thesis is that, in this film, the past never engenders a conventional conception of time as linear and measurable.

³ R. Bruce Elder, *Image and Identity: Reflections on Canadian Film and Culture* (Waterloo [On]: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1989) 145.

⁴ For Deleuze, recollection is not a symbolical and chronological remembrance of the past. It is the integration of the past layers into the present-time perception. It is the extension of the past into our present being. For example, in *Hiroshima mon amour*, the flashbacks are engendered as psychological moments in present time. See Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) 114-116.

⁵ For example, Lee Parpart suggests that her films are exploration of feminist ambiguity. Similarly Peter Lehman associates the cinema of Stopkewich with the tradition of non-normative female sexuality including such topics as melodramatic representation of penis, and guilt-free experience of female (hetero) sexual transgression. In short, her films are linked to the representations of extreme female sexual transgression in the tradition of slow narrative development of Canadian cinema. Read Lee Parpart. “Feminist Ambiguity in the Film Adaptations of Lynne Stopkewich” in Brenda Austin-Smith and George Melnyk. (Editors), *The Gendered Screen: Canadian Women Filmmakers*. (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, c2010) 25. And Peter Lehman, ““They look so uncomplicated when they’re dissected’: The Act of Seeing the Dead Penis with One’s own Eyes” in Phil Powrie, Ann Davies, Bruce Babington, *The Trouble With Men: Masculinities in European and Hollywood Cinema*, (London: Wallflower Press, 2004) Chapter 17.

On the contrary, the film's fluid recollection of the past is so indirect and inconspicuous that it prompts the audience to give up the attempt to construct linearity and, as a consequence, abandon the illusion of having an objective relationship with time.

Suspicious River became interesting for me as a case study because it is a film that, on the surface, deals with a minor subject and, in addition, has a straightforward narrative. However, if we examine it from a deeper philosophical standpoint, this seemingly realistic surface dissolves and gives way to unexpected narrative complexities with respect to the experience of time. Indeed, *Suspicious River* is an excellent example of how an apparently realistic film, one that starts off portraying the day-to-day life of a motel receptionist, ultimately demands a philosophical reading of time. *Suspicious River* is a simple low-budget film about the everyday life that actually opens up a peculiar uncontrollable crack in the narrative that demands further analysis with respect to the concept of the irrationality of time. But these so-called flashbacks are never identified as such. Rather, the film evokes the past through several scenes where certain peculiar temporal twists disrupt conventional, linear, realist perceptions of the present.

Following my analysis of *Suspicious River*, I will also demonstrate in two chapters how my conception of Bergsonian Cinema applies to another low budget Canadian production made in the same year. *The Law of Enclosures* is a good case study for this thesis because time once again is the most important element. The theme of countdown, malfunctioning clocks, a never-ending Gulf War in the Middle-East, and finally, a multilayered experience of time— all these invite a consideration of Bergson's analysis of paradoxically dual nature of the "temporal

present.” The unusual indication of time in *The Law of Enclosures*, together with the analogy between the representation of the clock and the historical background of the film, depicts a situation where history does not move forward in any conclusive way. The experience of temporality in this film becomes completely illogical and multilayered.

These two movies certainly invite other kinds of readings beyond what is offered in the thesis; primarily feminist readings for *Suspicious River* and historical/cultural readings for *The Law of Enclosures*. Bergson’s claim for fundamental fluidity and non-linear history would support a feminist⁶ and historical analysis of these films. Although feminist attention to how Bergson conceives the relationship between different temporalities may be seen in the background of this study, I maintained the main focus of my thesis on the experience of time in philosophical terms. The critical engagement of the feminist theories with becoming and multiplicity may prevent oversimplification of the history of violence against women as linear and narrative-like approach. In fact, what differentiates duration from scientific/calculable time is its capacity for synergy and, therefore, results in the rejection of a binary oppositions and duality. While little-known Canadian films have already been discussed by certain scholars in relation to how they deal with gender and sexuality, rarely have they been discussed in relation to the philosophy of time. The approach that I have adopted meant to fill in the gap in a literature surrounding Canadian Cinema. Hence I continue to develop my arguments based on the focus of my thesis that follows Bergson’s concept of duration in general.

I will argue that *The Law of Enclosures* is a perfect illustration of the Bergsonian claim that perception and memory always interpenetrate. I will also bring in Bergson’s concept of

⁶ Despite frequent uses of reactionary sexist remarks in Bergson’s writings, the abandonment of spatiality and categorization at the core of his philosophy facilitates better understanding of gender synergy.

integrating the present with the past without having any privileged layer for recollections. According to Bergson, “[t]he qualitative heterogeneity of our successive perceptions of the universe results from the fact that each, in itself, extends over a certain depth of duration, and that memory condenses in each an enormous multiplicity of vibrations which appear to us all at once, although they are successive.”⁷ For example, although, the female lead (as an elderly woman) in *The Law of Enclosures* apparently suffers from Alzheimer, the memory of the past has been clearly preserved in the way she perceives the events. Moreover, the past is never represented as past, but always appears in conjunction with present events. In fact, in *The Law of Enclosures* there is no privileged temporal layer that is aligned with the leading character’s point-of-view in present-time. The agency of each temporal layer is never subordinated to an act of present-time recollection. In other words, the past memory has its own point-of-view without a causal relationship with the narrative agent in the so-called present layer.

It is also instructive to read *The Law of Enclosures* with reference to Bergson’s distinction between the notions of “actual” and “virtual”. Conventionally, history as a factual record of the past events is linked to the notion of the actual.⁸ However, historical events in *The Law of Enclosures* are not fixated upon specific points in time. Strangely, there is no experience

⁷ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 77. On page 68 of the same book, Bergson as well discusses the subjectivity of perceiving external world by saying that “Perception, in its pure state, is then, in very truth, a part of things. And as for affective sensation, it does not spring spontaneously from the depths of consciousness to extend itself, as it grows weaker, in space; it is one with the necessary modifications to which, in the midst of the surrounding images that influence it, the particular image that each one of us terms his body is subject.” Charlotte De Mille in the same book argues that as Bergson, according to Deleuze, was unable to see duration in a cinematographic image, there is also creativity beyond chronological approach to history. She quotes the following line from Deleuze: “History is a memory that fixes time in discrete points; becoming unfixes those points and generates free floating lines.” (See 42-43).

⁸ Craig Lundy, “Bergson, History and Ontology” in John Mullarkey and Charlotte De Mille, *Bergson and the Art of Immanence*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013) 20. Lundy offers a useful introduction of how the concept of becoming maybe used for understanding of virtual history. (See page 21).

of duration before or after the Gulf war as a specific event that happened in the past. Instead it is the war that continues to coexist with the living present and, therefore, falls into the realm of the virtual. In my analysis of *The Law of Enclosures*, I will bring in how Bergson, unlike the public opinion that thinks of war as temporary, views war as the norm and peace as the exception.⁹ In *The Law of Enclosures*, we experience the presence of an ongoing war that is sometimes interrupted by the announcements of peace.

For cognitive film theorists, the flashback has always been linked to causality. According to this view, a flashback provides reasons or motivations, which are often repressed, for a character's actions.¹⁰ In *Suspicious River*, however, flashbacks are neither bracketed by different visual effects nor do they support the linearity of the narrative. Rather than revealing the cause of present events, they serve to intensify the present. Indeed, in this film, the past is not the cause of the present. Rather, the past becomes fully integrated into the present as a coexisting layer that deepens and magnifies contemporary actions. As represented in *Suspicious River*, the past only exists as the present's constitutive other. Hence, the present is not put in place by the past, but rather the present invents the past as a more or less unsuccessful attempt to give itself meaning. In short, in *Suspicious River*, we experience the avoidance of the typical objectification of time. For these reasons, I feel that *Suspicious River* may be read in terms of the Bergsonian concept of being alienated from an inner sense of duration in our daily lives. This alienation is engendered by a disconnect between one's personal, elusive experience of time, and the external, societal construction of temporal existence, which is chronological, mathematical, and symbolic.

⁹ See Laurent de Sutter and Kyle McGee, *Deleuze and Law*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012) 58-60.

¹⁰ For example see David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Minding Movies: Observations on the Art, Craft, and Business of Filmmaking*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011) 130-139.

As the movie proceeds, however, the leading character's alienation from her own inner sense of duration, caused by the external compartmentalization of time into minutes and hours that dictate the progression of her daily routine, gradually gives way to its contrary, that is, an unintelligible experience of time which moves indistinguishably between internal impressions and surrounding expressions of temporality.

In this dissertation, I intend to analyze how the experience of time is rendered ambiguous and confusing in *Suspicious River* as the result of a multitude of temporal layers from the past being recollected by the female lead (Leila). These past layers overtake her perceptual field, thereby liberating her from living in accordance with a linear and symbolic progression of time. The situation is somewhat different in *The Law of Enclosures*. The female protagonist, Beatrice, is, to a great degree, alienated from a linear approach to time by being trapped in a fixed moment that superimposes an ever-changing past on an immutable present. Her subjective understanding of time is in sharp contrast to the town's people obsession with counting-down to a specific climactic instant (i.e., the kissing marathon). However, the effect on the spectators of *The Law of Enclosures* is similar to that of *Suspicious River* insofar as they experience confusion and ambivalence regarding the temporal "logic" of the narrative.

To explain the experience of time as a multi-layered perception, I rely on some elements of Henri Bergson's works. Bergson notes that "[our] perception, however instantaneous, consists in an incalculable multitude of remembered elements; in truth, every perception is already

memory.”¹¹ He goes on to say that, conventionally we think of the pure present, as “being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future.”¹² In fact, “[t]he memories supplant our perception.”¹³ However brief a perception may be, it contains plenty of details from our past experiences.¹⁴ Memory then can never be detachable from perception. In Chapter Four to Six, I will discuss certain recollection scenes from *Suspicious River* which, unlike conventional recollection images, do not have a narrative purpose. They rather function as extensions of the images of the present that intensify the disarray in the leading character’s life. Recollection-images in this film introduce an intensity of temporal experience that results from a continuous multilayering of time.

In Chapter One and Two, I will elaborate on Henri Bergson’s philosophy of time and describe in detail how some aspects of his work can provide a useful framework to analyze these films. At this point, however, I will limit my discussion to a general account of the relevance of Bergsonian philosophy to the cinematic experience in order to pave the way for my own take on “Bergsonian Cinema.”

Part Two: Bergson/ Time and Cinema

Henri Bergson’s conception of time is useful in the analysis of films such as *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* primarily because he envisions time in relation to an interior state of consciousness and detaches it from causality. For Bergson, the experience of duration requires a consciousness of a present that stretches into the past and

¹¹Ibid., 150.

¹²Ibid., 150. (Bergson’s emphasis in italics)

¹³Ibid., 96. He goes on to insist that “there is no perception that is not full of memory.”

¹⁴Ibid.

looks forward to the future precisely so that it can be perceived as *duration*. For an experience to be conceived of as continuing or lasting, the present layer of such experience needs to be immersed in the past from which it is *lasting* and ironically extends itself into the future towards which it is *lasting*. Transposing this onto the filmic experience, a Bergsonian recognition of cinematic duration as a fluid continuum where past, present, and future are seamlessly superimposed, undermines the view of narrative progression as a series of discrete sequences, some of which being strictly in the present layer of the storyline and not as being bracketed flashbacks or flash-forwards. This recognition unsettles the dichotomy between objective time (the time of clocks ticking away in the real world that the neutral camera can record impartially) and subjective time (the character's personal recollections and inner thoughts), which cinema can divulge temporally through unambiguous flashbacks.

For Bergson, duration (*durée*) combines the past and present into one organic whole where there is a mutual penetration, a succession without distinction.¹⁵ Bergson himself describes it as “interconnexion and the organization of elements, each one of which represents the whole, and cannot be distinguished and isolated from it except by abstract thought.”¹⁶ Accordingly, duration implies that the past must be present in consciousness from the *present* perception of that which *lasts*. Memory and perception must thus overlap in the experience of duration. Taking this view to filmic experience, the subversion of subject/object dualism in the filmic experience (i.e., the psychological remembrance of

¹⁵ Mary Ann Gillies, *Henri Bergson and British Modernism*, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1996) 11.

¹⁶ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 101.

characters as opposed to the more objective and causal representation of the past) has repercussions on how we have a cinematic experience. For Bergson, pure duration is far removed from spatial externality; it functions rather in terms of overlapping subjectivities, challenging the rational, dialectic opposition between the present subject and the distant object.¹⁷ Accordingly, rather than being always antecedent to the present, the past, “will act by inserting itself into a present sensation.”¹⁸ In other words, memory acts on the present, or has an effect on the present, only by becoming an existing perception or a perceived image.¹⁹ Therefore, as it exists in memory, the past survives in the present and thus becomes real perception. Bergson notes that memory is “[c]o-extensive with consciousness, it retains and ranges alongside of each other all our states in the order in which they occur.”²⁰ The

¹⁷ For example, Eric Mathew in his article “Bergson’s concept of a person” asks the following questions with regard to how we arrive at Cartesian dualism by the tendency for dividing matter and mind into distinctive, independent from each other, and definable elements. “If the relationship between what we perceive and our perception of it is taken, as seems natural on a simple realist view, to be a causal one, then realism, on Cartesian assumptions, makes the possibility of perception inexplicable. For if matter and consciousness are ontologically distinct kinds of entity, how can matter causally determine consciousness?” in John Mullarkey. *The New Bergson*. (p124). Bergson himself notes that “perception has a wholly speculative interest; it is pure knowledge. The whole discussion turns upon the importance to be attributed to this knowledge as compared with *scientific* knowledge. The one doctrine starts from the order required by science, and sees in perception only a confused and provisional science. The other puts perception in the first place, erects it into an absolute, and then holds science to be a symbolic expression of the real. But, for both parties, to perceive means above all to know.” See Chapter One of Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 17.

¹⁸ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 71. Bergson goes on to argue that memory never “*represents* our past to us, it *acts* it; and if it still deserves the name of memory, it is not because it conserves bygone images, but because it prolongs their useful effect into the present moment.” (Ibid., 82).

¹⁹ Deleuze argues that the dual nature of becoming may be founded in Bergson’s theory of memory. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, he notes: “Becoming is always double, that which one becomes becomes no less than the one that becomes.” In other words, there are no sense of priority and there is no fixed and immobile unit in “an immanent system of becoming”. See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, (trans. Brian Massumi) (London Continuum Press: 2004) 336.

²⁰ *Matter and Memory*. 318. In sharp contrast to the majority of the philosophical and psychological attempts in understanding memory in his era, Bergson never characterizes memory as a passive phenomenon. Instead of relying on its recalling capacity, he, believes has an important and productive role in our general perception of the events.

past, as Bergson suggests, progressively becomes part of our perception as an image in the present time. This Bergsonian notion of the past as “present image,” provides a useful heuristic tool to interpret films like *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*. These films break down the boundary between memory and the conscious perception of the present, ultimately constructing narratives that combine multiple temporal layers.

The remainder of this thesis is divided into two parts. The first four chapters establish a general background to my later analysis which is focused entirely on *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*. The subsequent seven chapters are dedicated to the concept of a multilayered experience of time which is based on the peculiar structural arrangements of *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*. An additional appendix extends my analytical model to other films which function, at least in part, like *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* in their deployment of superimposed layers of time.

In Chapter One, **Literature Review**, I will look at some of the scholarly debates surrounding the general literature on time and memory in narrative together with discussing Bergson’s epistemology and its relation with specificity of the medium. Moreover, I will briefly discuss Bergson in relation with other philosophers who discuss the concept of temporality.

In Chapter Two, **Bergsonian Time**, I will discuss the philosophical arguments of Henri Bergson concerning the intense coexistence between past and present. I will examine how the essential discontinuity between the objective versus subjective simultaneity affects our memory and, moreover, how it may be demonstrated in a cinematic experience. Moreover, after discussing Bergson's theoretical arguments in Chapter one, I think it is useful to bring in a general introduction to the historical era in which Bergson lived. This introduction may help us to compare and contrast the concept of time, which in Bergson's era was undergoing a sort of modern day crisis, comparable to our own present-day era of post-digitalization.

Chapter Three, **More on Conventional Films and Theories of Temporal Confusion**, first focuses on an analysis of *Irreversible*, *Memento*, *Run Lola Run*, and *Caché* as examples of certain films that are frequently discussed in relation with the concept of the non-linearity and narrative incongruity. I will argue, however, that certain well-established conventions in these films, in fact, prepare the audience for moments of confusion that generally arrive at an experience of time that is totally divisible and as such does not evoke the overlap of past and present central to Bergsonian time. Following that I will add some literature review, devoted to discussing certain books and articles on the subject of non-linear and seemingly non-causal temporality in cinema. In this Chapter, I will briefly summarize how cinematic experiences, such as narrative incongruity, the power of the false, and the multiplicity of temporal layers, that are all related to creating a sense of uncertainty, have been conceptualized in film studies.

Chapter Four, **Multilayered Experience of Time in *Suspicious River***, introduces a background discussion of the notion of multiple temporalities in *Suspicious River*. In this Chapter, I will analyze how the experience of time generates a sense of confusion as a result of the lead character's recollecting a multitude of temporal layers from the past.

Chapter Five, **Digital/Analogue Indications of Time in *Suspicious River***, compares and contrasts digital/analogue indications of time in *Suspicious River*. In this Chapter, I will discuss how the symbolic time in *Suspicious River* is represented as being in tension with interior time. Mainly, I will analyze scenes that indicate the passage of time (e.g., a close shot of a clock, calendar, and etc.).

Chapter Six, **Paramnesia or Déjà vu in *Suspicious River***, discusses the notion of paramnesia or Déjà vu as a particular form of memory that for Bergson proves the crucial distinction between our mind and matter. In *Suspicious River*, Stopkewich relocates the heroine's childhood story within the diegetic world of the film. I will argue that her past is not treated as a means by which to understand the present, or as something that simply determines her destiny. In other words, her past is not reduced to representation; rather, it has been actualized horizontally in present-time. This can lead us to the notion of paramnesia (i.e., déjà vu or the illusion of already having been in a particular situation) wherein the coexistence between the past and the present becomes perceptible.

Chapter Seven, **Affection-Image and Eradication of Space/Time in the Cinema of Lynne Stopkewich**, is focusing on the Deleuzian notion of Affection-Image and how the experience of time in films may become devoid of spatial and narrational relations. I will, mainly, examine the uses of close-ups in *Kissed* and *Suspicious River*. Following that, I will argue how Stopkewich, in contrast to the evolutionary view of history in Eurocentric discourses, resists the process of locking up the act of violence in the past. Violence in *Suspicious River*, I will argue, does not leave any momentary trace and is linked to eternity. Stopkewich uses close-ups that, as the movie goes on, become lengthier and increasingly more liberated from spatio-temporal situations. In this way, unlike more calendrical intervals in the beginning (quantitative), the close-ups near the end become purely qualitative.

Chapter Eight, **Queered Clocks, Queered Time in *The Law of Enclosures*** focuses on the experience of illogical and confusing approach to time in *The Law of Enclosures* in order to show how the method used in this thesis may be applied to other critically neglected films of the same time that deal with gradual confusion over multilayered experience of time. I will argue in this chapter that Greyson's portrayal of malfunctioning clock, multilayered time frames within the narrative, recurring theme of countdown, and the depiction of a highly mechanized war are all interrelated.

Chapter Nine, **Performance of Time in *The Law of Enclosures***, examines mainly how Greyson's use of journalistic imagery enables a direct conversation between two timelines of the film. Moreover, Chapter Nine will discuss how the geographical ambiguity evident in *The Law*

of Enclosures may be linked to the experience of the temporal confusion motivated by the memories of the leading character.

Chapter Ten, **Canadian Endism: Canadian Cinema's (Dis)engagement with Time over the Turn of the Century**, discusses the concept of countdown and the culture of awaiting at the end of the millennium specifically with regards to the fact that both films that I discuss in this thesis were made in the year 2000.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

In what follows, I will first discuss the general literature on time and memory in narrative but only within the context of how various theories fall short of comprehending films such as *Suspicious River* or *The Law of Enclosures*. Second, I will briefly examine Bergson's epistemology with regard to the specificity of the medium. Finally, I will consider Bergson in relation with other philosophers who discuss the concept of temporality.

-Time and Narrative

As mentioned above, there is a long tradition of film scholarship dealing with the representation of time in narrative and film, generally focusing on film techniques that signify more or less complex narrative constructions. (Later in this dissertation, I will focus more specifically on scholarship that explicitly seeks to elucidate the puzzling narrative structures of films such as *Memento* and *Run, Lola, Run*. At this point, however, I will concentrate on general theories of temporality in cinema). To begin with, I shall examine

how theorists who do not have an overt philosophical interest in cinema have mapped out the experience of cinematic time. Most typical of this “non-philosophical” perspective on time is to be found in *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, a book written by David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson. Here, certain strategies that are employed by classical narration to manipulate order and duration are discussed. Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson argue that classical narration employs typical strategies for manipulating the order and duration of the story which in general are based on the logic of causality.²¹ Since classical cinema in their view is based on character actions that are causally driven, the flashbacks of these films are objectively correlated to the character’s memory. Accordingly, “[t]ime in the classical film is a vehicle for causality, not a process to be investigated on its own.”²² In short, “a discreet narration oversees time, making it subordinate to causality, while the spectator follows the causal thread.”²³ Therefore, there is no room left for incorporating involuntary recollection in the narrative structure of classical films. In classical films, the character might recall something against her will (e.g., when Rick in *Casablanca* remembers his past love affair) but this recollection remains within the confines of the narrative’s line of action. In other words, the sudden awakening of the past into the present is not visualized and imagined in a confusing form.²⁴

²¹ David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson, *The classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985) 45.

²² Ibid., 47.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ In Deleuzian terms, in sensory motor cinema the narration presupposes the patterns of events in that there is a strong linkage between action, affection and perception. Narration, therefore, becomes a “system of judgment.” *Cinema II*, 129.

For Bordwell *et al* the flip side of the causal time-line of classical Hollywood film is the irrational temporal structure of the art film. The goal-oriented hero of the classical Hollywood movie moves in a linear, organized, logical world. This stands in drastic opposition to the shapeless surroundings of the melancholic, ambivalent anti-hero of European art cinema. This is a simplistic dichotomy which suggests that the spectator is only interested in the *meaning* of time on one hand as “causal,” “normal,” and “healthy” and on the other hand “irrational,” “amorphous,” and “pathological.” There is no room here for a different *experience* of time. In Chapters Three, I will go further into the limitations of this method, which only deals with the temporal coherence or vagueness of the film in relation to fabula and syuzhet.²⁵ Although Bordwell’s theory may be useful in reading certain films, it fails to address the experience of temporality in a film in which the durational flow does not respond to narrative developments.

In his Book, *Point of View in the Cinema: A Theory of Narration and Subjectivity in Classical Film*, Edward Branigan criticizes the over-simplification in much film theory of the “narrator’s vision” in classical films. He does not see the audience as a passive subject in the Althusserian way of waiting for moments of interpellation.²⁶ He sees narration as a dialectical communication between the narrator and the audience. He classifies subjectivity

²⁵ According to Bordwell’s definition. the audience constructs the story through fibula, (that is, a linearly organized narrative story that is arranged following a straightforward, chronological structure). Syuzhet , on the other hand, elaborates or complicates the narrative logic, and therefore, facilitates or blocks the typical formation of the fabula. Therefore, in terms of the temporality of the narrative film, (the fabula, in which the beginning, the middle and the end are always ordered in that specific succession in the spectator’s mind) and the presentation of those events for the viewer (the syuzhet, which might present the end before the beginning, as in, say *Sunset Boulevard*, but which will always be reordered by the spectator to form a linear fabula). See *Narration in Fiction Film*, 60-64.

²⁶ Edward Branigan, *Point of View in the Cinema: A Theory of Narration and Subjectivity in Classical Film*, (Berlin: Mouton Publishers, 1984) 150-160.

into different types; time, frame, object, and mind. He writes that “in the subjective flashback, the origin is specified [to be] a character introspection; time is the mental time of character; frame is what is placed before us by the character’s memory (i.e., ‘memory’ is the principle of exclusion/inclusion defining the representation); object is the display of memory; and mind is the character’s state of memory, which is the nominal logic, the coherence of the representation.”²⁷ Although I would argue that Branigan’s classificatory theory overly codifies subjectivity in an impractical way, acknowledging different levels of subjectivity and their interrelationships in a character’s act of vision may be very useful. Undefined time, according to Branigan, includes all undetermined temporal relations, that is, non-continuous and non-simultaneous time (Such as temporal **repetitions** in the case of the *Je t’aime, je t’aime* (1968) that makes different layers of temporality accessible, **reversals** in the case of *Irreversible* that deconstructs temporal reality, **contradictions** in the case of *Caché* that destabilizes the usual attempts in (re)inventing the past, **ambiguity** in case of *Marcel Proust’s Time Regained* (1999) that maintains the view of present as always incomplete, and contraction in case of *Run Lola Run* that keeps present differed from the future).²⁸

The author goes on to discuss different types of point-of-view shots. However, these seemingly technical classifications fail to explain certain types of temporal confusion that take place beyond the framing of the flashback. The theory does not have predictive power on how temporal subjectivity may be constructed outside the realm of the narrator as an

²⁷ Ibid., 76.

²⁸ Ibid., 77.

agent of recollection (i.e. involuntary memory). For example, I will later discuss a scene from *Suspicious River*, where the spectator is unable to ascribe the act of remembrance to a specific temporal layer. In other words, in certain scenes, the camera stays with the childhood persona when the adult character leaves the frame, and sometimes the temporal layer shifts from present to past without positioning the camera on the character's POV or what Branigan calls "framing the mental process of a character." In short, the POV shot is not directly related to the mental process of the character. Moreover, films such as *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* bring multiple temporal layers in not by introducing temporal discontinuity (as Branigan suggests) into the narrative, but through temporal continuity.

In contrast to Branigan's classification of different point-of-view shots, Temenuga Trifonova relies on Deleuzian theory to bring in the concept of non-subjective, non-existent point-of-view.²⁹ Although a point-of-view generally signifies the subject's interest, Deleuze prefers a sort of point-of-view image that is perceived in a disinterested manner.³⁰ As Trifonova explains, "[t]he Deleuzian time-image is perceived not with a view to action, not as a thing which we could act upon and manipulate; rather, the image is subtilized into a pure mental content, which is absolutely self-sufficient, neither acting nor acted upon."³¹ Flashback, therefore, in Deleuzian film theory, may be caused by a purely involuntary recollection whose value does not come from the subject or its interests and, therefore, does

²⁹ Trifonova, 234. She poses the following question: "Can the failure of a pure optical image to link up with other images be established not from a subject's point of view, but from a no-place or from an any-point-of-view-whatever?" (Ibid).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

not have a particular cause and effect logic. Such recollection, indeed, exists in itself outside the realm of the subject's interest. Trifonova's reliance on déjà vu as the most privileged experience and involuntary recollection beyond the perceptual field of the subjects works very well in the analysis of films such as *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* where the past in those films is always larger than the intentions of the *I* in becoming the present. Moreover, Trifonova makes a distinction between narrated subjectivity and embodied subjectivity.³² Thus there would be no need for one who analyzes the temporal multiplicity of a film to investigate an overlap between the two. As a result, the experience of déjà vu (which she focused on the most) as an embodied experience of unsolidified temporal subjectivity does not necessarily need any sort of narrative agency. (I will use Trifonova's approach later; as it is one of the more useful approaches to analyze two films discussed in this essay).

Maureen Turim, in her book, *Flashbacks in Film*, studies flashbacks over eighty years of cinematic expression in order to discover what role the flashback has played in the development of cinematic modernism. This is an important study of temporality in cinema, and, as such, is worthy of particular attention. Turim argues that flashbacks are noteworthy in terms of the theoretical conceptualization of the film's narrative. "The flashback is a privileged moment in unfolding that juxtaposes different moments of temporal reference. A juncture is wrought between present and past and two concepts are implied in this juncture:

³² Ibid., 36.

memory and history.”³³ *The Law of Enclosures*, I will argue, is a particularly interesting case of moulding history and memory into a coherent account in a very complex way. (Such arguments that mould history and memory will be found in my analysis of *The Law of Enclosures* later on). Memory, Turim argues, is usually inscribed in flashback from a philosophical or psychoanalytical dimension.³⁴ “To analyze this constant play of difference, the films need to be examined as fragments of discourse on the mind’s relationship to the past and on the subject’s relationship to telling his or her past.”³⁵

Turim pays attention to the etymology of the term *flashback* that was coined in the early twentieth century. Etymologically speaking, flashback is related to the modern notions of speed, movement, energy, and the vicissitudes of mental processes.³⁶ Accordingly, the word flash, in physical terms, is related to explosion, alteration of the engine, or generally brief intervals of light. However, in its cinematic forms and, especially in classical cinema, this vision is not always brief, nor is it necessary explosive. Moreover, it does not always refer to the mental process of character. In short, a flashback can maintain its formal function by being both mental (not objective) and instantaneous (not bracketed). For Russian formalists, temporal shifts in metaphorical and intellectual montage were not as important as spatial shifts.³⁷ “The literary equivalent to [these forms] of flashback is often less distinct and abrupt than the cinematic flashback in its temporal

³³ Mourin Turim, *Flashbacks in Film: Memory & History*, (New York: Routledge, 1989) 1.

³⁴ Ibid., 2.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 3

³⁷ Ibid., 7.

shifts.”³⁸ In this dissertation, I am particularly interested in certain types of flashback that are less recognizable but at the same time can be seen as driven from an involuntary memory. The limitation of Turim’s approach is that she places Bergson within a very broad historical and theoretical discourse. Moreover, she deals with history of flashback based on a genre or period in which they have been produced. Consequently, unlike Trifonova, she is not successful in distinguishing between the embodied subjectivity in flashbacks and narrated ones.

Turim goes on to discuss Bazin’s and Barthes’ approach to phenomenological realism with regard to the realist vocation of photographic image. That kind of documentary style of presentation indicates a definitive past impossible to retrieve. This approach is very different from the subjectivization of the political history in *The Law of Enclosures* or the unsealed past that erupts in *Suspicious River*. While both films appear on the surface to be realist in style, Stopkewich and Grayson actually subvert realist cinematic devices by purely formalist approaches to color and lighting, perspective, and set-designs that reflect mental images. Their approach in deconstructing realism results in an uncomfortable coexistence of past and present layers.

Turim begins her discussion of flashbacks in cinema by analyzing American silent films. In general, although flashbacks in early films were not easily recognizable, American silent films after 1913 were using common techniques of flashbacks in order to create suspense, explanations for characters motivation, or emotional signification. Hugo

³⁸ Ibid.

Münsterberg was the first film theorist who was concerned with flashback from psychological point of view. “In explaining the ability of cinematic expression to represent the function of the mind, Munsterberg is able to see that films are capable of complex patterns of subjectivity.”³⁹ Accordingly, Munsterberg was ahead of his time in studying how a film treats temporality and memory.⁴⁰ Decades before Deleuze’s conceptualization of these terms, Munsterberg distinguishes among flashbacks “those that depict a character’s memory of the past, and those that represent a character’s telling of the past, with the flashback images substituting for words.” Turim goes on to say that: “The latter he finds a poor instance of the use of the device, because Munsterberg values flashbacks as an analogue of memory, and not as an illustration of verbal discourse.”⁴¹ She cites Munsterberg’s doctrine: “We must recognize the mental act or remembrance in the filmic flashback ... It is as if reality has lost its own continuous connection and became shaped by the demands of our soul. It is as if the outer world itself became molded in accordance with

³⁹ Ibid., 30. Munsterberg’s central thesis is that movies stimulate our mental state rather than reproducing reality. (View his essay called *Photoplay* (1916)). Rudolph Arnheim, on the other hand, in his book *Film as Art* (1933) defends film as autonomous art that is grounded in its failure to be the exact reproduction of the real events. According to Temenuga Trifonova, in her book *Warped Minds*, for Munsterberg, the very possibility of false memory meant that time is not a characteristic of our existence and, therefore, even those perceptions and memories we believe to be ‘normal’ (not ‘false’) operate according to exactly the same laws of associations, that is, the same lawlessness: our experience of events as present, past, or future are inherently random and this false (‘false’ here signifies ‘random,’ ‘arbitrary’” (57-8).

⁴⁰ Ibid. Also Patricia Pisters in her book, *The Neuro-Image: A Deleuzian Filmphilosophy of Digital Screen Culture*, argues that the appearance of multiple personality films such as *The Prestige* (Christopher Nolan, 2006) and *The Illusionist* (Neil burger, 2006) is an indicative of the contemporary culture’s interest in cinema’s relation to perceptual illusions similar to what Munsterberg’s discussions of hallucinatory perceptions in a cinematic experience. (2-4).

⁴¹ Ibid.

our fleeting turns of attention or with our passing memory ideas.”⁴² In fact, Munsterberg maybe goes too far in connecting brain to screen in such a way that his theory becomes impractical. However, his original tendency in finding parallels between films and subjective memory may be seen as precursory to contemporary studies of temporality in cinema.

Chapter three of Turim’s book addresses the uses of flashbacks in silent film era of Europe and Japan. In this Chapter, she refers to Henri Bergson and claims that French philosophy’s inquiry into memory can be traced back to the impressionist films of the 1920s.

This flashback indicates the ways in which the French films of the twenties avant-garde differ from the melodramatic models from which they inherit so much. Though American and earlier European films established the structural centrality of flashback memory images, these French films will give cinematic moments of recall a new force by creating an image that is more indicative of a mental image, a character’s subjective state. Like other images and montage patterns in *El Dorado*, such as the constant intercutting and superimposition of the sick boy during the scenes depicting his mother dancing, this subjectivity rendered memory of seduction uses the coding of the image itself to suggest that what we are seeing has been interiorized. No longer a vision of an objective world, the flashback images of impressionist films distort spatio-temporal relations and transform visual codes or representation to indicate the thought patterns, the feelings, and even the functioning of the psyches of the characters.⁴³

Turim argues that these French films manipulate temporality in order to question the chronology of the narrative events. “Events in the past are available only through the filter

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 69.

of a troubled or ambiguous memory; events in the present are subject to the intrusive association of the past which determine their shape.”⁴⁴ In other words, she argues that the subjective memories in these films are not shown as a series of conflicts between the character’s perspective and the filmic reality that can ultimately be worked out. She argues that female subjectivity in French silent films is also noteworthy because it suggests that sexual difference may affect the nature of subjectivity.

These films concern inner subjectivity, often focalized as female subjectivity, and therefore a focalization from a position of oppression manifested as lack or as a fissure of the psyche. The flashbacks informed by this project are characterized by a montage of disparate elements that are restructured symbolically within their depiction as memories. These memory fragments have philosophical resonances, for they represent an acknowledgment of a complex human psyche whose constituent elements draw on a fragmented experience of the past, subjectivity retain a long line of force. The shadow of a Bergsonian view of memory and the example set by Proust’s transformation of the novel are evident in these films which seek image and montage equivalents for a subjective associative memory and intersperse multiple temporalities as co-present to human consciousness. Still, the transformation is relative and some of the factors that control the limits of this exploration are not limitations of creativity.⁴⁵

German expressionist films, Turim suggests, link their flashbacks to the psyche of a character in stronger ways.⁴⁶ “These films are often explicitly or metaphorically concerned with insanity; the narration of the past often mixes memory with fantasy, delusion and dreams.”⁴⁷ Because of the hallucinatory nature of memory in these films resulting from the

⁴⁴ Ibid., 74.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 79.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 84.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

insanity of the characters, flashbacks are always mingled with fantasy. Consequently, I think Turim's discussion of French impressionist films, rather than the discussion of German expressionist films will work better for the type of films that I will analyze in this dissertation. For example, the schizophrenic character of Dr Caligari in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1919) is shown through visual signifiers of splitting images when his ghost figure is shown to leave his body. As Turim suggests, these films in general become highly crafted dreams of psychoanalytical processes.⁴⁸

Turim, in Chapter four of her book, switches back to American silent films by suggesting that Hollywood films deal more with the subjectivity of history. She claims that films such as *Potemkin* (1925) and *October* (1928) are examples of films that avoid personalization of historical memory. Furthermore, they are in sharp contrast to films such as *Casablanca* (1942) and *Reds* (1981). Moreover, Hollywood movies such as *Singin' in the Rain* (1952), *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), or *Mildred Pierce* (1941) tend to use extended flashbacks infused with ironical narrative devices. "Subjectivizing history through narrative which concentrates on individuals can also be a means of posing the philosophical issues surrounding the interpretation of history as a subjective experience of the individual or social group."⁴⁹ However, these forms of personalization of historical memory prevalent in Hollywood still subjectivize the history via characters' past that needs to be recalled. By contrast, I would argue, in *The Law of Enclosures*, the historical memory is restored to the present-past of the main characters.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 92.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 104.

The last chapter of Turim's book is dedicated to flashback in modernist films. In general, the "critical eye of modernist flashback structure is at the very least mitigated and rendered uncertain."⁵⁰ Because of this weakening effect in conjunction with the absence of linearity in modernist films, the flashback treats past as arbitrary images or small part of a mosaic of footages (e.g., *Je t'aime, je t'aime*). Turim's ideas would be undermined if one undertook a detailed analysis of the numerous examples that she brings in. Each film is unique (specifically, the modernist films) to the point that it hardly can be grouped with other films of a historical era in terms of its relation to a past's psyche. I have decided to dedicate six core chapters of this thesis an analysis of two films in order to avoid certain generalization. Indeed, the two movies that I am mainly discussing in this thesis are unique that can only lightly be compared with other films. Trurim's reliance on generic films or art-films prevents us from the area that I want to focus on namely, realist films such *Suspicious River* or *The Law of Enclosures*. Although these films do not have strong character-motivated flashbacks backed up by narrational justifications, the experience of flashbacks in these films is not objective but embodied. An effective history of flashback may be very local and in depth rather than being broadly episodic and systematic. Embodied flashbacks are not generated solely based on the genre or historical era under which they have been produced maybe because there is not necessarily a linear relationship between the two. I have chosen two low budget Canadian films as my case studies to avoid such systematic and episodic historicism and bring in how an embodied flashback may be employed as an immediate experience.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 243.

In his book, *Cinema, Memory, Modernity: The Representations of Memory from the Art Film to Transnational Cinema*, Russell Kilbourn similarly talks about films that show the danger of Bergsonian temporality as being trapped in memory. *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962) and *2046* (Wong Kar-Wai, 2004) are example of films where one cannot escape from (perhaps false) memory. These films are based on the psychological consequences of the fear of absolute solipsism. The space in these films is designed in such a way that it complements how the characters are trapped in memory. For Chow, the main character of *2046*, “there is no escape from time, and so he fantasizes about staying forever in 2046.”⁵¹ However, I would argue that, in *The Law of Enclosures*, this perceptual entrapment by history is not just part of a fantasy zone as it is in *2046*.

Pam Cook, in her book *Screening the Past: Memory and Nostalgia in Cinema*, argues that sometimes films use memory to articulate anxiety. She notes:

Film texts do not necessarily simply use memory in a functional manner, they also embody memories—those of the film-makers themselves, for example. Sometimes this is a conscious process, as when directors such as Hitchcock or Scorsese include self-referential quotations to previous films. The audience is invited to engage in a game of recognition, which adds to the viewers’ pleasure, and gives them kudos: they are asked, ‘Do you remember this?’ And if they do, they gain a few brownie points. Sometimes, the game of recognition is used emotively to evoke a sense of loss: the audience is asked, ‘Do you remember what it was like then?’ And viewers are invited to mourn, or to celebrate the passing of an era, which the film-makers set out to reconstruct.

Here memory is still treated in a contextual manner, directly related to nostalgia from old films that engenders a sense of loss in the audience. Cook goes on to say that:

⁵¹ Russell Kilbourn, *Cinema, Memory, Modernity: The Representations of Memory from the Art Film to Transnational Cinema*, (New York city: Taylor and Frances, 2010) 120.

Sometimes the film-makers' memories can be used to cross boundaries of nation, gender and class, as I hope to show in my analysis of *I Know Where I'm Going!* (1945). What is important is that these are shared memories—they have an intimate, personal dimension, but they also enable connections to be made between film-makers and audiences—or not, if the game of recognition does not succeed. I shall look at this in more detail when I come to discuss *Brief Encounter* (1946). Whether such strategies are used consciously or unconsciously, the films themselves are not just instruments in the process of recollection, they actively participate in that process, and in many cases reflect or comment upon it. They can therefore be treated as intellectual discourse, as presenting and exploring sets of ideas and assumptions. There are films, such as Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962), that deliberately set out to be intellectual ruminations on the subject of memory and cinema, but I would argue that such rumination or discourse can be found not only in the modernist avantgarde, or in independent cinema, but also in more mainstream popular films.⁵²

Cook, however, is more interested in how films comment on issues such as nostalgia, memory and identity, and memory and history, rather than explaining techniques by which memory is imbedded in films. I do not suggest that our analysis of cinematic temporality should be only brought up by ahistorical methods that formulate temporal multiplicity into fixed meanings. However, an explicit attention to chronological and episodic historicism prevents us from analysing the experience of temporality in and of itself. Although the majority of the books that I have discussed so far are instructive in terms of how flashbacks may unconventionally work in cinema, because of certain generalization and categorization they cannot be directly applied in my focused analysis of two films.

⁵² Pam Cook, *Screening the Past: Memory and Nostalgia in Cinema*, (New York City: Routledge, 2005) 99.

Laura Marks book, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*, is another academic study of how memory is represented (or perhaps performed) in intercultural film and video works. She draws a line between memory and remembrance.

“Remembrance actually shields consciousness from experience. Remembrance is thus very much like the built up layers of virtual images that compose official history.” Memory, on the other hand, “deterritorializes remembrance.”⁵³ In Marks’s view, recollection-images do not represent the events, they rather trace the performance of the event and bring them into the present. She notes: “It takes a shock to unroot a memory, to revive a flow of experience.”⁵⁴ Marks is more interested in the repressed collective memory than the subjective experiences of a general audience.

Spectatorship is thus an act of sensory translation of cultural knowledge. For example, when a work is viewed in a cultural context different from that in which it was produced, viewers may miss some multisensory images: many viewers will miss the implications of references to cooking, dance, and hairstyle in Julie Dash’s *Daughters of the Dust* (1992) that are more likely to be clear to an African diasporan viewer . . . And then again, viewers in the intercultural encounter may discover sense information that was not obvious in the original context.⁵⁵

Laura Marks views memory as an extra-subjective concept. Accordingly, although recollections of the past are acted upon and perhaps performed by the individual subject, it is not restricted and determined by it. In other words, memory always acts beyond the intentions of the individual

⁵³ Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*, (Durham, NC: Durham University Press, 2000) 64.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 153.

subject. My detailed analysis of involuntary memory, that is memory that does not prioritize the present over the past in *Suspicious River*, will provide a number of examples for this open-endedness of memory. The direction that Marks takes goes toward a broader cultural study that covers political ideas of a specific historical era. This type of approach will be very useful for analyzing films such as *The Law of Enclosures* where global tension is shown in localized imagery.

Marks offers a theory of embodied visuality that is not solely based on an intellectual act. “This view of perception implies an attitude toward the object, in this case a film, not as something that must be analyzed and deciphered in order to deliver forth its meaning but as something that means in itself.”⁵⁶ Accordingly, our perception of image in Bergsonian philosophy is not purely cognitive; rather, in a complex form, our attentive memory bounds us up with the perceived image/object.⁵⁷ “Attentive recognition is a *participatory* notion of spectatorship, whose political potential shouldn’t be ignored.”⁵⁸ In my discussion of *The Law of Enclosures* in Chapter Eight, the presence of attentive memory is evident. For example, the mere existence of an oil museum in the area inhabited by the leading characters that belong to the film’s diegetic world reinforces some sort of proximity between the conflict/war zone and the film’s diegesis. (This unifying factor may be a blessing to citizens of one area and a curse to the other.) In opposition to Deleuze, Marks argues that “the element of communal experience that is implicit in Bergson’s theory of perception necessarily informs the process of cinematic

⁵⁶ Ibid., 145.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 48.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

spectatorship as well. Perception is never a purely individual act but also an engagement with the social and with the cultural memory.”⁵⁹

Moreover, Marks discusses Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology and its usefulness to understand perception. Although Deleuze found phenomenology inadequate to understanding of a cinematic experience, Marks try to reconcile Bergson and Merleau-Ponty. Unlike alienated self-hood in psychoanalytic film theories, both Bergson and Merleau-Ponty acknowledge the attentive presence of the individual body in the act of perception.⁶⁰ “In embodied spectatorship the senses and the intellect are not separate.”⁶¹ This leads to another term that Marks uses, haptic images. As subset of what Deleuze calls optical image, haptic images are those that “the viewer must bring his or her resources of memory and imagination to complete them.”⁶² The example I offered in the last paragraph about the presence of an oil museum in the diagnosis of *The Law of Enclosures* (together with superimpositions of protesters in a middle-eastern city and the heterosexual kiss marathoners) shows the ideas of proximity and distance at the same time between the conflict zone and the past of life in a small Canadian city. Such use of visual imagery, as Marks would suggests, is not directly related to the film’s narrative but it urges the viewers to actively engage with what is presented on screen through memory.

I have discussed in my examples limitations of both ahistorical (e.g., Branigan’s classificatory method) and explicitly historical methods (e.g., Pam Cook’s extensive reliance on cultural contexts surrounding the production of the films). Marks’ methodology, which

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 151.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 163.

emphasizes the importance of embodiment subjectivity, is a more useful approach for a study like this because it relies more on an immediate, sensual, and embodied experience of cultural memories. Specifically, in my two Chapters on *The Law of Enclosures*, my analysis is more focused around an immediate, local, and sensory history rather than the official one.

Narrating Time

Time and duration as a primary concern in developing narratives has a long history. The historical ground for the conflict between private and public time after the introduction of standard time will be explored in detail in Chapter Two. According to Stephen Kern, the concern with problems of time in literary works become particularly important in the period from the early 1880s to the end of the First World War.⁶³ In his book, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* he discusses novels such as *The Trial* (1925), *Remembrance of Things Past* (1913-1927), and *Ulysses* (1922) as examples of irregular pace in narration. Furthermore, Peter Osborne suggests that “Proust takes over Bergson’s placement of experience in memory, not in nature; but he introduces an important distinction within memory itself distinguishing between voluntary, and involuntary memory.” Osborne quotes Walter Benjamin who says that “the past [in Proust’s work] is somewhere beyond the reach of the intellect, and unmistakably present in some material object ... As for the object it

⁶³ Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983) 16.

depends entirely on chance whether we come upon it before we die or whether we never encounter it.”⁶⁴ Accordingly, Proust finds public time (i.e., the time that is shared and endured by human adults based on quantitative measurements) superficial. On the other hand, Kafka finds it terrifying and Joyce arbitrary: Joyce, according to Kern, “widens the temporal range with interior monologues and authorial comments.”⁶⁵

It was at this time (between the end of the 19th century and the 1920s) that Bergson theorized two distinct ways of understanding time: relative and absolute. By virtue of absolute time, which links subjectivity to duration, our personalities flow across time.⁶⁶ Kern writes: “Bergson thus asks us to imagine something which is unimaginable, conceive of an action of that unimaginable image which is inconceivable, and then effect a limitation of our attention to an aspect of that action which is impossible. The pressing in words that true nature of our existence in time, which he called ‘duration’”⁶⁷ He goes on to claim that “Bergson became incensed at the way contemporary thought, especially science, tended to distort the real experience of [duration] and represent it spatially, as on a clock.”⁶⁸ For example, when a quarter of an hour is represented by the arch of circle, the true nature of our existence in time becomes indescribable.⁶⁹

In addition to literary examples that Kern provides, I can see the influence of the Bergsonian critique of the standard conception of time in other novels of the era such as Evan Goncharov’s *Oblomov* (1859), which just precedes the period of time-intensification

⁶⁴ Peter Osborne, *Walter Benjamin: Modernity*, (New York City: Routledge, 2005) 220.

⁶⁵ Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 17.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 25.

⁶⁷ Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 25.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 26.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 26.

describe by Kern, and Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) which comes immediately after). For example, Gatsby, the lead character of the latter book, perceives time as a linear and thus reversible phenomenon. Moreover, he wants to purchase his past, but before he can do so, he must make it a measurable commodity. He believes that his past experience is fully measurable when he surprisingly responds to Nick (The Narrator) "Can't repeat the past? Why of course you can!"⁷⁰ The narrator goes on to say that "he looked around him widely, as if the past were lurking here in the shadow of his house, just out of reach of his hand."⁷¹ Here the past is treated as an object in his house and thus controllable. He wants to maintain the power of one moment and deny the constant loss of moments through succeeding moments. The past is "out of reach of his hand"⁷² but appears as something that could potentially be grabbed. His denial regarding the irreversibility of the past incapacitates him from moving on in his life. Gatsby's mind is fixated upon one moment, and therefore, he never perceives the endurable quality of time. As the narrator suggested Gatsby wanted to return to "a certain starting place and go over it slowly."⁷³ The past for Gatsby thus becomes a place that one can finally arrive at. Right after this talk, Fitzgerald very smoothly changes the temporal layer of the story by simply saying: "... One autumn night, five years ago, they had been walking down the street when the leaves were falling..."⁷⁴ This unconventional use of past recollection without any sort of announcement is against the usual separation of past and present events. This smooth transition from

⁷⁰ F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (London: Penguin, 1925), 110.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Nick's commentary to a nostalgic subjective memory of Gatsby creates a sense of temporal confusion. The present dissolves without any warning into the past and thus the present becomes an extension of the past.

In contrast to Gatsby, Oblomov rejects living in linear time and maintains his being in cyclical time. In her article "Time after Time: The Temporal Ideology of Oblomov," Christine Borowec explains how Olga (Oblomov's romantic partner) understands that, although Oblomov sometimes acts in the present, he cannot imagine the future as connected to the present. "Olga thus acknowledges Oblomov's inability to view time as linear progression, where the present leads to and causes events in the future. Olga points to Oblomov's future, logically, in his own terms, as a repetition of 'yesterdays'"⁷⁵ She goes on to say that "Olga recognizes that Oblomov's inability, or unwillingness, to conceive of time as linear movement causes him to see the future only as a potential return to the past."⁷⁶

Both *The Great Gatsby* and *Oblomov* deal with the concept of boredom in relation with bourgeois male characters. These characters have access to the means of controlling the destructive effects of their adventure. In a movie like *Suspicious River*, however, the self-destructive act of giving up on linear time is performed by a lower-class women working in a motel. The experience evidently becomes far more disturbing and unbearable.

The narrational structures of both novels (*The Great Gatsby* and *Oblomov*) refuse a typical predictable progression of the story time. However written works in general are limited in their descriptive elements of narration since they must denote the various layers

⁷⁵ 564. Christine Borowec, "Time after Time: The Temporal Ideology of Oblomov" *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Winter, 1994): 561-573

⁷⁶ Ibid.

of the past through written signifiers rather than presenting them through images. Writers, influenced by Bergson, had to challenge the narrative structure in order to bring in a greater psychological realism in relation with how we view time. Karl Pearson notes that “[Bergson] acknowledges that describing life in terms of an impetus is to offer little more than an image, an ‘image of thought’ as it were.”⁷⁷ In cinema, that is, an art-form based on representation, however, going beyond image to show the characters’ inner turmoil and confusion is a different challenge that is not limited to deconstructing the narrative structure. In other words, pure temporal multiplicity cannot be an immediate experience in written stories because, in one way or the other, this experience has to be reduced to an utterance. Likewise, Deleuze argues that “[n]arrative in cinema is like the imaginary: it’s a very indirect product of motion and time, rather than the other way around. Cinema always narrates what the image’s movements and time makes it narrate.”⁷⁸ Kern, indeed, argues that “[s]everal prominent novelists commented on the problems they faced in presenting the passage of time; some found solutions unmistakably parallel to, if not directly inspired by, the innovative temporal manipulations of the cinema.”⁷⁹ Moreover, the Bergsonian claim, in general, is that language obstructs intuitive reality.⁸⁰ Dorothea E. Olkowski notes that

⁷⁷ See the Introduction of *Henri Bergson: Key Writings*, 1.

⁷⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, (Columbia University Press, 1990) 59. Deleuze prefers Peirce’s semiotics to that of *Saussure* because of the more flexibility of sign system in Peirce’s theory.

⁷⁹ Kern, 28.

⁸⁰ For example in Chapter Three of *Time and Free Will*, Bergson says: “Thus each of us has his own way of loving and hating; and this love or this hatred reflects his whole personality. Language, however, denotes these states by the same words in every case: so that it has been able to fix only the objective and impersonal aspect of love, hate, and the thousand emotions which stir the soul. We estimate the talent of a novelist by the power with which he lifts out of the common domain, to which language had thus brought them down, feelings and ideas to which he strives to restore, by adding detail to detail, their original and living individuality. But just as we can go on inserting points

“[m]athematicization amounts to conceptualizing fluids as solids. Solids, in turn, are understood to consist of homogeneous and identical quantities which are divisible and measurable, and which can be clearly represented in language insofar as each one is unchanging, identical, and common to all who observe it. Thus isolated, the object can be named.”⁸¹ Therefore, the turmoil caused by the conflict between the external time (clock time) versus the internal time (psychic time) may go beyond the narrative fragmentation applied in literary works.

Contrary to literary works, cinema can bypass language to show temporal simultaneity. Gilles Deleuze’s cinematic approach to Bergsonian time shows us that the filmmaker can rely much more on how we perceive inattentive memory. Paul Douglass notes that “Deleuze believes that film images constitute a ‘pre-verbal intelligible content (pure semiotics) or ‘direct time-image,’ in short, a representation of *durée* itself.”⁸² More to the point, “as Deleuze claims, cinema has even proven capable of reflection and shown that it can ‘do violence to itself’ and ‘reverse the direction of the operation by which it habitually thinks’, as Bergson demanded.”⁸³ I am not suggesting that cinema is the only medium by which memory can be experienced in its pure form. But cinema can avoid some of literature’s limitations in separating the role of the intellect from memory. Intellectual rationality, for Bergson, itself is a spatilizing tool that puts a figure on existence in order to

between two positions of a moving body without ever filling up the space traversed, in the same way, by the mere fact that we associate states with states and that these states are set side by side instead of permeating one another, we fail to translate completely what our soul experiences: there is no common measure between mind and language.” 169-170. Therefore, the only way to know someone’s inner state is a non-linguistic effort. For Bergson, we need an art form that presents a kind of confusion immune to linguistic expressions.

⁸¹ Dorothea E. Olkowski, “The End of Phenomenology: Bergson’s Interval in Irigaray” in *Hypatia*, Volume 15, Number 3, Summer 2000, pp. 73-91. Published by Indiana University Press

⁸² In John Mullkarey. *The New Bergson*, 221.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 220.

control it. Cinema may be more in alignment with Bergson's notion of pure memory because of its ability to manifest visually the independence of memory from the intellect. Cinema does not necessarily seek reduction of reality into fixity of a moment (e.g., pausing to analyze a film). Before analyzing a scene in relation with the chain of events, one can see how that scene (including its spatial signification) is temporalized and not the other way around (e.g., how the time of the scene has been spatialized). Although Bergson himself sees the act of film-viewing as an exercise of intellect not as an effort of intuition by describing it as a representational model, a cinematic experience may be deviated from its mechanism of representation (i.e., reproduction of representation). In fact, cinema has a potential to express the immanent experience of reality that reduces the role of the intellect in favour of a more affective response.

For example, Charlotte de Mille discusses how the Bergsonian concept of immanence, (i.e., "existing or remaining within the sensuous world,") is related to visual art.⁸⁴ She states that since immanent existence tends to offer multiplicity and delaying of fixed meaning, there is a difficulty in immanent writing. "The difficulty in immanent writing is that the moment it is on the page – my cursor directing black across a white ('empty') surface – it is too late. I fix the content in black figures that cannot be erased or re-shuffled once they have gone to print."⁸⁵ A non-verbal form of art, indeed, has a potential to escape fixed meaning dominated by material. A cinematic immanence is

⁸⁴ John Mullarey and Charlotte de Mille, *Bergson and the Art of Immanence: Painting, Photography, Film*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 2013) See the Introduction 1-17.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 39.

possible, for example, through what Deleuze conceptualizes as impulse-image. While the affection-image is driven from idealism, and the action-image from realism, the impulse-image stands in between as a transitory stage and belongs to naturalism.⁸⁶ The absence of realism in impulse-image, according to Deleuze, makes it a very difficult sort of image to be created. Accordingly, impulse-image is a kind of action-image that does not go after realism. In other words, it is difficult because usually there is a tendency in classical film narrative to repress impulse-image through action-image.⁸⁷ For Deleuze, impulses fetishize fragments of objects extracted from ordinary world (because we can experience their affection without a causal link to the original action or perception.)

Trifonova notes that “[t]he attempt to redeem time from its subordination to space by traditional metaphysics is not the end of metaphysics but the beginning of a new kind of metaphysics: the metaphysics of immanence.”⁸⁸ She goes on to say that “[t]ime seems to be always already beyond the limits of comprehension and imagination: it is not even limited by the very category of ‘limit.’”⁸⁹ Moreover, Trifonova brings in the notions of déjà vu in her discussion of pre-reflective memory. Déjà vu is a privileged experience because it

⁸⁶ See *Cinema I*, 120.124. Patricia Pisters also in commenting on Deleuze’s notion of impulse-image suggests that “[w]ith naturalism, states Deleuze, time makes a prominent appearance in the cinematographic image. Just as Bunuel plays havoc with the order of periodizations of time, the impulse- image destroys Chronos. Consequently, the impulse-image only grasps the negative effects of time: attrition, degradation, wastage, destruction, loss, or simply oblivion by implosion (Von Stroheim) and or cyclic repetition (Bunuel). In *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory*, 81.

⁸⁷ See *Cinema I*, 130-134.

⁸⁸ Trifonova, 259.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 262.

reveals to constant expansion of our mental life in multiple layers of time. In déjà vu we remember something without having a causal personal/subjective tendency to recollect such past. “Preoccupied with meeting the demands of the present, we suppress those memories that are not immediately relevant to our past.”⁹⁰ On the other hand, the experience of déjà vu defeats the separation of the present from the past in normal life. In other words, without such tendency of matching ourselves with present, we would constantly experience the world as déjà vu, in infinity.⁹¹ A cinematic experience at some points may get close to such impersonal non-subjective experience of relocations of the past in infinity and beyond signification. For example, Trifonova discusses Raoul Ruiz’s *Time Regained* (1999) as a film that does not have a stable point-of-view in present, rather; different recollections are bound with each other without a starting point.⁹² The diegetic presence of young and adult Marcel in the same frame, while the young one is seeing a film about the war that has not happened is similar to my interpretation of *The Law of Enclosures* in that, the never-ending war is always present in the background of the film within different temporal layers. In both films, there is no single presupposed point-of-view that from which the recollection takes place. In other world, no temporal layers, is causally subordinated to the other one. The lack of privileged present-time point-of-view is similar to Bergson’s idea of infinite number of temporal experiences independent from the subject’s tendencies.

⁹⁰ Trifonova, 266.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid., 289.

Matilda Mroz notes that Bergson's discussion of durational subjectivity was not alien to film critics in the first half of the twentieth century.⁹³ Bela Balazs, for example, compared the physiognomy of facial expressions to Bergson's analysis of melody.⁹⁴ Mroz says: "The particular moments of a facial close-up can be extracted but the significance of facial expressions in the close-up can emerge only in duration."⁹⁵ The early writings on *photogénie* and cinephilia were concerned with discovering the mysterious and affective power of cinema.⁹⁶ After the structuralist turn in the 1960s, "there seems to be a conscious attempt to control and fix cinema's ungraspability by instituting a 'scientific' and rigorous mode of film analysis."⁹⁷ Deleuze has argued that the semiotic analysis of cinema, such as that of Metz, distributes cinematographic images into a closed system of units. Deleuze says: "At the very point that the image is replaced by an utterance, the image is given a false appearance, and its most authentically visible characteristic, movement, is taken away from it."⁹⁸ Deleuze's argument against Metz is not only about disregarding movement as the medium specificity. Movement in the above quote does not only refer to the movement in moving-images but to a broader concept of movement; a concept that stands against the static and unchanging mapping of a film's narrative events. In short, perception, in Deleuze's modern cinema, is not determined by action and reaction, but by a mental process that ultimately dislodges the unity of time and space.

⁹³ Matilda Mroz, *Temporality and Film Analysis*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012) 20.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Gille Deleuze, *Cinema II*, 27.

In his book, *Bergsonism*, Gilles Deleuze argues that the philosophical methods of Bergson are based on strict rules rather than simply being a reaction to the limitations of science as well as those of common sense. In this, Deleuze goes so far as to articulate three aspects of Bergson's methodology. First of all, Bergson, according to Deleuze, is concerned with problematizing the common assumption that the human body is like a pure mathematical point in space.⁹⁹ Secondly, Bergson argues that there are genuine differences between perception and memory. According to this aspect of his methodology, the subject opens up to the affectivity of the memory in relation with the image. In other words, what he calls *affectivity*, *recollection-memory*, and *contraction-memory* work interactively in the present's past.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, duration, detached from the impure combination of homogeneous time, then becomes a virtual and fluid multiplicity.¹⁰¹ In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze notes that duration is a type of becoming, immanent to itself, by saying that duration is "a becoming that endures, a change that is substance itself."¹⁰² There are no

⁹⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, (New York City: Zone Books, 1988) See chapter 1. Moreover, I think Cinema itself learns the idea of multiple temporality from other artistic movements of time such as cubism. More to the point, architects such as Le Corbusier developed their idea of urban planning based on Henri Bergson's philosophical principles.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid. 37. Deleuze's use of the term, "a becoming" shows the influence of Bergson's theory of duration, as a fluid virtual multiplicity, on how Deleuze developed the concept of becoming. In *Time and Free Will*, Bergson explains that, "[t]he trick of our perception, like that of our intelligence, like that of our language, consists in extracting from these profoundly different becomings the single representation of becoming *in general*, undefined becoming, a mere abstraction which by itself says nothing and of which, indeed, it is very rarely that we think. To this idea, always the same, and always obscure or unconscious, we then join, in each particular case, one or several clear images that represent *states* and which serve to distinguish all becomings from each other. An infinite multiplicity of becomings variously colored, so to speak, passes before our eyes: we manage so that we see only differences in color, that is to say, differences of state, beneath which there is supposed to flow, hidden from our view, a becoming always and everywhere the same, invariably colorless." 304. Becoming then, for Bergson and Deleuze, is not the consequent of

unchanging external factors that affect *the I*, thereby the common view of *the I* as a static, invisible, and fixed being is subverted. The main problem when it comes to applying the Bergsonian point-of-view to film theory is this idea of constant changing. Because *The I* is continually changing, our mental image of the whole is also constantly in flux, disregarding any sort of precondition. Bergsonian film theory has to consider the constant changes in our mental engagement with film and thus can never ascribe a specific condition for any filmic situation. In Chapter Eight, I will argue that the malfunctioning clock in *The Law of the Enclosures* is at the point of zero duration which registers the pure instantaneity. *The Law of Enclosures* rejects *spatial* time, and consequently, does not depend on a narrative agent that would produce time. In order to introduce a background to my methodology of analyzing these two Canadian art-films, I will briefly summarize Bergsonian metaphysics, specifically in relations with the concept of duration in the next section.

- Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Intuition

According to Henri Bergson, we understand different phenomena in two very distinct ways. The first way is to produce knowledge of things from outside which tends to picture the world in static forms. The second way is to understand different phenomena

abstraction of fixed, static beings. Hence, rather than static beings, the intensity is fundamental to the concept of becoming.

from within in order to avoid the masking of the process of our perceptions of them.

Bergson writes:

Intuition and intellect represent two opposite directions of the work of consciousness: intuition goes in the very direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction, and thus finds itself naturally in accordance with the movement of matter. A complete and perfect humanity would be that in which these two forms of conscious activity should attain their full development. And, between this humanity and ours, we may conceive any number of possible stages, corresponding to all the degrees imaginable of intelligence and of intuition. In this lies the part of contingency in the mental structure of our species.¹⁰³

The superior way of understanding different phenomena for Bergson is the one of gaining knowledge of the world without dealing with its external appearance. According to Bergson, this way is known as *intuition*. As Bergson puts it in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, the first way is “to detach the events from the whole” and the second way is to comprehend them by going through them. He writes: “It seems then that, parallel to this physics, a second kind of knowledge ought to have grown up, which could have retained what physics allowed to escape. This second kind of knowledge would have set the cinematographical method aside. It would have called upon the mind to renounce its most cherished habits.”¹⁰⁴ So, the first depends on the point-of-view that we take up with respect

¹⁰³ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 267.

¹⁰⁴ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*., 341-342. Moreover, in *Time And Free Will*, Bergson notes: “Because each of Achilles’ steps and each of the tortoise’s steps are indivisible acts in so far as they are movements, and are different magnitudes in so far as they are space so that addition will soon give a greater length for the space traversed by Achilles than is obtained by adding together the space traversed by the tortoise and the handicap with which it started. This is what Zeno leaves out of account when he reconstructs the movement of Achilles according to the same law as the movement of the tortoise, forgetting that space alone can be divided and put together again in any

to the object and on the symbols with which we express ourselves. The second depends neither on a particular point-of-view nor does it rely on any symbol.¹⁰⁵ Tasmine Lorraine notes that “it is intuition that is able to access the durational whole of time, thus allowing creative responses to life that exceed the reach of representational schemes.”¹⁰⁶ She suggests that Bergson’s notion of intuition resonates with feminists’ idea of possible ways of knowing beyond cognitive or rational explanations.¹⁰⁷

Whitehead thinks of Bergson intuition as an “impure operation” and goes on to say that “it is an integral feeling derived from the synthesis of the conceptual prehension with the physical prehension from which it has been derived according to the ‘category of conceptual reproduction.’”¹⁰⁸ Bergson himself in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* discusses how the concept of duration should be understood with regards to his basic mode of knowing (i.e., intuition):

To be sure, we shall find no logical reason for positing multiple and diverse durations. Strictly speaking, there might exist no other duration than our own, as there might be no other color in the world than orange, for example. But just as a consciousness of color, which would harmonize inwardly with orange instead of perceiving it outwardly, would feel itself caught between red and yellow, would perhaps even have, beneath the latter color, a presentiment of a whole spectrum in which is naturally prolonged the continuity which goes from red to yellow, so the intuition of our duration, far from leaving us suspended in the void as pure analysis

way we like, and thus The common confusion between motion and the space traversed gives rise to the paradoxes of the Eleatics confusing space with motion.” 114.

¹⁰⁵ Henri Bergson, *An introduction to Metaphysics*, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1955) 62.

¹⁰⁶ Tasmine Lorraine, *Deleuze and Guattari’s Immanent Ethics: Theory Subjectivity and Duration*. (State University of New York. Albany, 2011) 11.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, (New York city: Tudor Publishing 1929 Corrected version, 1954) 73.

would do, puts us in contact with a whole continuity of durations which we should try to follow either downwardly or upwardly: in both cases we can dilate ourselves indefinitely by a more and more vigorous effort, in both cases transcend ourselves. In the first case, we advance toward a duration more and more scattered, whose palpitations, more rapid than ours, dividing our simple sensation, dilute its quality into quantity: at the limit would be the pure homogeneous, the pure repetition by which we shall define materiality. In advancing in the other direction, we go toward a duration which stretches, tightens, and becomes more and more intensified: at the limit would be eternity. This time not only conceptual eternity, which is an eternity of death, but an eternity of life. It would be a living and consequently still moving eternity where our own duration would find itself like the vibrations in light, and which would be the concretion of all duration as materiality is its dispersion. Between these two extreme limits moves intuition, and this movement is metaphysics itself.¹⁰⁹

The intuition of duration here is something that is abstractly grounded between the extreme poles of life experiences that is overly subjective and materiality. Although Bergson himself sides cinema with rationality and not intuition, I will argue that cinema's capability to bring in involuntary memory highlight the need to examine the relation between the cinematic medium and memory.

The famous Zeno paradox about the race between Achilles and the tortoise along with the development of this paradox by Bergson will become important in my analysis of the representation of digital versus analogue clocks in *Suspicious River* in Chapter Five and the malfunctioned clock in *The Law of Enclosures* in Chapter Eight and Nine. To begin with, Zeno describes a race between Achilles and a tortoise in which Achilles allows the tortoise to have a head start. Zeno then contends that it is impossible for Achilles to pass

¹⁰⁹ Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*. 75.

the tortoise on the basis that any distance is composed of an infinite number of points. Before Achilles can reach the point to which the tortoise has already arrived, he is faced with having to reach each point between the tortoise and him. And because there are an infinite number of such points, Achilles can never overtake the tortoise. This space-based way of thinking of movement thereby is nothing but an illusion that space is composed of distinct individual points.¹¹⁰ According to Bergson, the origin of the illusion that is created by the Zeno paradox is conceiving both time and movement on a linear plane. Bergson then suggests that “[n]othing would be easier, now, than to extend Zeno’s argument to qualitative becoming and to evolutionary becoming.”¹¹¹ The main problem that should be considered is that the time of action and the time of a mental process of an event are incommensurable. With respect to the cinematic apparatus, Donato Totaro asks the following: “Does Bergson purposively neglect film’s representational power because it “spatializes” reality?” He goes on to say that “[t]his point has important consequences for film theory. It appears that Bergson believed that film, because of its mechanical nature, cannot be human enough, in the tradition of the great painters, to give its audience a privileged view of reality.”¹¹² In other words, for Bergson, cinema may never escape the rhythmic and intervallic nature of its source material. The roots of this dilemma, as we mentioned above, lie in the common practice of equating the mathematical concept with the phenomenal realm.

¹¹⁰ Jon May and Nigel Thrift, *Timespace: The Geography of Temporality*, (New York City: Routledge, 2003) 195.

¹¹¹ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 402.

¹¹² Donato Totaro. “Time, Bergson, and the Cinematographical Mechanism: Henri Bergson and the philosophical properties of cinema.” in *offscreen*. Volume 5. Issue 1, January 2001. Viewed online in July 2014: <http://offscreen.com/view/bergson1>

Indeed for Bergson this paradox shows the contradictions inherent in western philosophical thoughts. In *Time and Free Will*, Bergson notes:

Metaphysics dates from the day when Zeno of Elea pointed out the inherent contradictions of movement and change, as our intellect represents them. To surmount these difficulties raised by the intellectual representation of movement and change, to get around them by an increasingly subtle intellectual labour, required the principal effort of ancient and modern philosophers. It is thus that metaphysics was led to seek the reality of things above time, beyond what moves and what changes, and consequently outside what our senses and consciousness perceive. As a result it could be nothing but a more or less artificial arrangement of concepts, a hypothetical construction. It claimed to go beyond experience; what it did in reality was merely to take a full and mobile experience, lending itself to a probing ever-deepening and as a result pregnant with revelations—and to substitute for it a fixed extract, desiccated and empty, a system of abstract general ideas, drawn from that very experience or rather from its superficial strata.¹¹³

There is another Zeno paradox regarding this issue which is called the flying arrow paradox. It is believed that, for the movement, in order to occur, the position of a moving object should change from point to point. But if we conceive of an arrow in flight and if we think in terms of points in space, it can be argued that it is impossible for the arrow to move since it will be motionless at every point. Bergson concludes: “The truth is that if the arrow leaves the point A to fall down at the point B, its movement AB is as simple, as indecomposable, in so far as it is movement, as the tension of the bow that shoots it. As the

¹¹³ Henri Bergson. *Time and Free Will*. 6. G. William Barnard in his reading of Bergson’s view of movements notes: “What *is* real is motion, what is real is movement itself. According to Bergson, the only way to come to know what movement is, in-and-of-itself, is to place ourselves within it. It is only in the immediacy of our own perceptions that we can come to know that movement cannot be divided into parts; that is, the reality of movement only truly reveals itself when we plunge into *duree*.” In *Living Consciousness: The Metaphysical Vision of Henri Bergson*. (New York City: State University of New York Press, 2011) 75.

shrapnel, bursting before it falls to the ground, covers the explosive zone with an indivisible danger, so the arrow which goes from A to B displays with a single stroke, although over a certain extent of duration, its indivisible mobility.”¹¹⁴ Marie Carriou claims that “[t]he essence of [Bergson’s] argument is that Zeno is being cinematographic ... He in effect applied a spontaneously cinematic *analytic* method to an object which requires an *intuitive* method able to liberate itself from the ‘natural inclination’ of an intelligence which manipulates, and is manipulated by, space.”¹¹⁵ Therefore, cinematographic, for Bergson, is not fundamentally qualitative because its technological basis consists of homogenous quantitative elements.

Mary Ann Doane, who defines cinema as a time-based medium, attempts to look at what philosophers of time have said about specialization of time in cinema. Consequently, she tries to find out the reason behind Bergson’s dislike of cinema. She believes that Bergson’s contempt for cinema results from the fact that cinema refutes Zeno’s paradox. In other words, it shows that “movement can indeed be born from immobility.”¹¹⁶ Cinema is built on twenty-four motionless frames coming by us every second that creates the illusion of movement. Cinema defeats Zeno’s paradox and shows that an examination of movement into a set of static pieces is possible. Cinema, indeed, “works by obliterating the

¹¹⁴ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 274.

¹¹⁵ In John Mullarkey, *The New Bergson*, 110.

¹¹⁶ Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, The Archive*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002) 176.

photogram, annihilating that which is static.”¹¹⁷ The arbitrary number of twenty-four frames ultimately creates a heterogeneous experience of movement.

This is opposed to Bergson’s line of thought that each frame is a privileged moment staged as a series of celluloid form snapshots.¹¹⁸ Doane in contrast, insists on the banality of the selected images since there is no human agency in selecting any of these frames. Moreover, according to Louis-Georges Schwartz, Bergson insists on the practical understanding of the medium and does not invest on the subjective experience of movie-going.¹¹⁹ “Bergson’s reluctance to pose for a movie studio project contrasts with Hugo Miinsterberg’s roughly contemporaneous enthusiasm for appearing in a Paramount movie magazine.”¹²⁰ Bergson thinks of frame and not shots as smallest cinematic units. However, with regards to our subjective experience of movies, the audience (and in Bergson’s language, *the intellect*¹²¹) is able to perceive shot duration but not frames. For example,

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Louis-Georges Schwartz, “Henri Bergson Talks to Us About Cinema, by Michel Georges-Michel from ‘Le Journal’, February 20, 1914.” In *Cinema Journal*. Vol 15. N3. Spring 2011. 79-82. Schwartz notes that “[i]n the interview, Bergson reiterates this comparison between the cinematograph and practical understanding. The cinematograph presents reality as a series of snapshots that have been recomposed into movement, just as geometry, the key expression of understanding, shows a circumference as a series of points that compose a circle.” 80.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 81.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 81. Schwarz indicates that “[a]n even clearer indication of Bergson’s lack of interest in the cinema, as opposed to the cinematograph as an apparatus, can be read in his claim not to have seen a fiction film (‘scenes at the cinematograph’) by 1914. Bergson neither appears in movies nor goes to them.”

¹²¹ Donato Totaro explains that intellect, for Bergson, “is by nature a spatializing mechanism, which means that to acquire knowledge it employs concepts, symbols, abstraction, analysis, and fragmentation. Hence the intellect can only express movement in static terms... the intellect is best suited to the study of inert objects, immobility and being, and intuition to the study of movement, change, and becoming (duration). Intuition is the process used to understand the flux of reality, while the intellect gives us a necessary, pragmatic grasp of reality.” In Totaro, Donato. “Time, Bergson, and the Cinematographical Mechanism: Henri Bergson and the philosophical properties of cinema.” in *offscreen*. Volume 5. Issue 1, January 2001. Viewed online in July 2014: <http://offscreen.com/view/bergson1>.

editing may impose ambiguity in terms of the linear representation of the events. Simply, by applying editing, one event can be shown through multiple viewpoints (similar to the cubist art forms)¹²², and thus our typical patterns of perception may be challenged.

This discussion is rooted in the opposition of cinema and photographic medium. Roland Barthes and Bergson assert that the specific nature of cinema is directly dependent on photogram, or the fixed image.¹²³ Andre Bazin and Gilles Deleuze, however, considered film as superior to photography since it is based on the impression of movement.¹²⁴ “The result is that Bergson’s model of the cinematograph imposes a certain definition of the photogram which, as a synonym of the instant, becomes the ultimate element that cannot be broken down, the place where both duration and movement are impossible.”¹²⁵ For Bergson, cinema is a version of chronophotography that Marey was practicing in late nineteenth century. In fact, as Bernd Herzogenrath suggests, Marey wanted to prove that motion exists as a result of the relation between time and space.¹²⁶ And this “puts Marey in direct opposition to Henri Bergson’s philosophy of time — Bergson explicitly understood time not in its reduction to movement in space.”¹²⁷ Accordingly, the latter reduction becomes the

¹²² According to Guillaume Apollinaire, Peter F. Rea in their Book, *The Cubist Painters*. Some of the Cubist artists were aware of Bergson’s theories on psychological time and the flow of experience. See page 135.

¹²³ Maria Tortajda, “The ‘Cinematographic Snapshot’” in *Media Epistemology in the Modern Age*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010) 79.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 81.

¹²⁶ Rene Thoreau Bruckner, “The Art of Disappearance: Duration, Instantaneity, and the Conception of Cinema” (PhD thesis, University of California, 2007) 15-16.

¹²⁷ Bernd Herzogenrath, “Double Deleuze: ‘Intelligent Materialism’ Goes to the Movies” in *Cinema Journal*. 6. 2014. 54.

fundamental difference between seeing passage of time as a becoming or mechanical succession.¹²⁸

Rene Thoreau Bruckner in his dissertation on Bergson and moving-images entitled, *The Art of Disappearance: Duration, Instantaneity, and the Conception of Cinema*, says that “[i]f the film image appears at all— singular, continuous, in movement— it does so only in and through its own disappearance. What is made visible for the cinematic spectator never properly appears; rather, it disappears.” Accordingly, “an image that appears by disappearing derives its presence only by having already slipped into the past, into absence.”¹²⁹ So despite Bergson’s conceptualization of the *Cinematograph*¹³⁰ as fundamentally dividable, the empty intervals between the snapshots can only be seen as a whole. In short, “[i]nstead of banishing each present moment into a radically distinct past, film builds perception’s past into its image of presence.”¹³¹ In other words, film may work against its technological basis (i.e., dividable unites of time). Technologically speaking, it is a time-based medium, while, sensually speaking, it may transform the time unites into an immeasurable type of time.

Pasi Valiaho also discusses the elusiveness of time as a central problem in comprehending the temporal nature of the world through moving-images.¹³² “The main

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ For Bergson, Cinematograph, and by that cinematographically thinking, treats time as if it is made up of discrete states or units. See Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 305-306.

¹³¹ Bruckner, 15.

¹³² Pasi Valiaho. *Mapping the Moving Image: Gesture, Thought and Cinema Circa 1900*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010) 157.

point of Bergson's criticism is that the cinematograph, which represents a model of intellection, is characterized by fundamental incapacity to conceive of a movement itself."¹³³ Furthermore, he notes that "cinema as a mechanism appears as the antagonist to what Bergson calls 'life,' which is understood not as a reaction against death but as a virtual, creative tendency, that gives rise to the new and the unforeseen."¹³⁴ The problem with Bergson's criticism of cinema is that he tries to reduce our perception of cinematic experience to its scientific rational and technological means. However, Valiaho states that, "in its technical flows or blank intervals, cinematic presentation becomes attached to this pure perception."¹³⁵

On the Bergsonian concept of pure perception, Trifonova notes that "[i]nstead of placing the image on the side of representation or signification—on the side of subjectivity or mind—Bergson places it on the side of matter, defining matter itself as 'an aggregate of image.'"¹³⁶ She goes on to say that "Image"—or, as [Bergson] also calls it, 'pure perception'—refers to the instantaneous presence of things to one another, i.e. to pure presence deprived of memory."¹³⁷ Accordingly, pure perception is always outside us beyond our subjectivity rather than something that we project from inside to the outside world.¹³⁸ In the concluding remark of Chapter Four of *Matter and Memory*, Bergson says that "the past should be *acted* by matter, *imagined* by

¹³³ Ibid., 158.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 158.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 159.

¹³⁶ Trifonova, 36.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

mind.”¹³⁹ Therefore, there is an essential difference between matter and perception of matter; by mechanism of the latter we form memory-image.¹⁴⁰

Prior to Doane, Bergson’s dismissal of cinema usually was explained simply by his lack of cinematic knowledge. For example, by choosing to ground his theory of film on Bergsonian concepts, Deleuze was also faced with the task of trying to overcome this discrepancy. Deleuze’s answer to this problem is that Bergson only dealt with “primitive” cinema.¹⁴¹ For those who do not believe in Deleuze’s film history and the idea that early films were primitive and simplistic, the problem should be solved in another way, since from early on movies were engaged in a complex development of narrative time. Doane argues that the irrational arrangement of film frames, which goes along with the common hierarchy of specific moments, is what Bergson had a problem with. However, moving-images as a form of instantaneous photography, although not inclusive of the distance between two captured moments, never make one of these moments more significant than

¹³⁹ *Matter and Memory*, 289.

¹⁴⁰ See Trifonova, 36-7.

¹⁴¹ Darlene Pursley, for example, asks the following question: “If we admit that Deleuze is correct when he argues that Bergson would not have criticized cinema had he witnessed its evolution, how would Bergson, not Deleuze, have read the cinema? How can Bergson’s philosophical analysis of space and time be translated into cinematic terms on the most basic level?” She goes on to say that “just because, as Bergson defines it, consciousness is an image among all of the other images in the universe, this does not mean that mind must be separated from body in the familiar Cartesian sense, resulting in a disembodied filmic spectator. Rather, let us imagine that the spectator’s consciousness is constantly rotating between space as narrative continuity and physical sensation and time as affect and memory.” (1193-1197) in “Moving in Time: Chantal Akerman’s *Toute une nuit*” Published in *The Moving-Images*, V14. N1. Spring 2014. Pursley then discusses Deleuze’s criticism of phenomenology Merleau-Ponty specifically in terms of the cinematic subjectivity. (Laura U Marks discuss this criticism in a more detailed way that I will touch upon later on).

another and put all frames in the same rank.¹⁴² No moment/frame is prioritized for selection, and indeed, the camera's banal treatment of a moment allows for a negation of static conditions that is fundamental to Bergson's idea of intuition. The link between the banality of shots and Bergson's intuitive perception of duration, in contrast to the static and hierarchical arrangement of symbolic time, is relevant to the film analyses I will conduct later in this study. Indeed, the banality of Leila's and Beatrice's ordinary existences, where routine and repetitiveness render all events equally insignificant, mirrors the non-hierarchical cinematic moving-image whose impression of duration appears through the repetitive persistence of the past within the present).

Bergson and His Critics

While this dissertation is rooted in the discourse of film studies and does not claim to be a philosophical treatise on the experience of time in the everyday, it is still worth discussing briefly the philosophical debates around Bergson's conception of time. I am not particularly studying Bergson philosophy on its own but using Bergsonian concepts along with the detailed analysis of particular films to elucidate particular forms of cinematic temporality. In *The Philosophy of Bergson*, Bertrand Russell criticizes Bergson's

¹⁴² Doane, 180.

philosophy by saying that “he does not give reasons for his opinions, but relies on their inherent attractiveness, and on the charm of an excellent style.”¹⁴³ He goes on to say that “Bergson is a strong visualizer, whose thought is always conducted by means of visual images. Many things which he declares to be necessities of all thought are, I believe, characteristic of visualizers, and would not be true of those who think by means of auditory images.”¹⁴⁴ Here I do not intend to argue for or against Russell’s criticism. Rather, my sole objective is to argue that Bergson’s philosophy offers a useful framework for understanding cinematic duration precisely because of his emphasis on the visual. If Bergson’s thoughts such as the involuntarily memory, the idea of the past penetrating the present, and temporal multiplicity, as Russell pointed out, are always conducted by means of visual images, cinema is then the best vehicle to engender Bergsonian epistemology. I am not suggesting that cinema is a superior form of art but I claim that it may be a Bergsonian form of art. Ironically, Bergson himself, discusses cinema not on its visual means but in terms of its material bases. As explained above, he criticizes the cinematic medium because of the fact that it is based on succession of images although unperceivable to us. Bergson’s criticism shows that Russell’s simplification of Bergson as a strictly visual thinker is questionable since he focuses on the material bases of the medium rather than its visual nature.

Merleau-Ponty is critical of Bergson’s equalization of the phenomenal field with the “inner world” or “mental fact.”¹⁴⁵ The answer to the criticism of the objective world, for

¹⁴³ Temenuga Trifonva, *The European Film Theory*, (New York City: Routledge, 2009) 30.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Maurice Merleau-Ponty. *Phenomenology of Perception*, (London: Routledge, 1962) 66.

Merleau-Ponty, is not introspection or intuition but rather phenomenological perception.¹⁴⁶

However, in the Deleuzian/Bergsonian cinematic reality, the fusion of the audience with the film-world is not without awareness, because both the perceived and the perceiver are part of the greater flow of movement and duration. Deleuze discusses out-of-the-field duration, durational presence beyond framed images; the correlation between our thoughts and the film-world is a system that is never perfectly closed.¹⁴⁷ What such a reading of cinematic experience gives us is the inclusion of the mental acts, such as involuntary recollections, in the analysis of cinematic experience. Moreover, Merleau-Ponty, while criticizing Bergsonian intuition, credits him for developing the idea of time as continuity. In this dissertation, I am not dealing with the philosophical short-comings of Bergson's arguments. My goal is to demonstrate how a movie such as *Suspicious River* illustrates Bergson's notion of reflective thought that events run into each other without specific points of transition. Without seeing the necessity to adjudicate the dispute between Bergson and Merleau-Ponty, I believe that Bergson may be seen as providing an appropriate framework for studying this film because his philosophy of temporality explains to us the fact that each present layer is always interpenetrated with a network of past events.

Levinas underlines the importance of Bergson's philosophy for "the entire problematic of contemporary philosophy" based on the fact that it is not inspired by a thought of "a rationality revealing a reality which keeps to the very measure ... of a

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 67.

¹⁴⁷ Anna Powell, See page 163-165.

thought.”¹⁴⁸ In other words, priority is not given to the rational intellect to picture a reality but to the relationship between the internal world and such reality. Hence, the concept of time here becomes irreducible to external phenomena and detached from any sort of reasoning. Levinas demonstrates how Bergson shows us that our being-in-time never engages with the “reality” outside us. The feeling of disengagement is central to the films I am discussing in this dissertation. In Chapter Six, for example, I will discuss in detail how the symbolic indications of time in the external world become irrelevant to the internal feelings of the lead character in *Suspicious River*. Following Bergson, Levinas tries to find the ethical outcomes of treating time as multiplicity.¹⁴⁹ Influenced by Bergson’s intersubjective understanding of time, Levinas contends that the future becomes impossible in a solitary subject.¹⁵⁰

Temenuga Trifonova notes that Sartre’s description of consciousness is similar to Bergson’s description of memory.¹⁵¹ Moreover, “Sartre, too, conceives the image as negation of the present.”¹⁵² The essence of Sartre’s criticism of Bergson according to Trifonova is Bergson’s reduction of image to things. In short, the image for Sartre’s is emancipated from the material world.¹⁵³ Contrary, the image for Bergson theory is somehow

¹⁴⁸ Keith Ansell-Pearson, *Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life*, (London: Routledge, 2002) 73.

¹⁴⁹ Megan Craig, *Levinas and James, Towards a problematic Phenomenology*, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010) 79.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Temenuga Trifonova, *The Image in French Philosophy*, 46. Trifonova argues, furthermore, that unlike Bergson, “Sartre believes the image is a reality radically different from a thing and there is more than a mere difference in degree between being and being perceived, between being perceived and being represented.” 92.

¹⁵² Ibid, 49.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 46-53.

rooted in our materiality despite very ambiguous character of matter itself in Bergson's theory.¹⁵⁴

For Bergson, the virtual becomes that aspect of things that seems unusable or impractical.¹⁵⁵

Indeed, it is our memory that can produce a consequence out of object for the subject. For

Trifonova "[o]nly memory is capable of producing the virtual (matter as such is devoid of

virtuality) and the privileged expression of the virtual is, in Bergson's view, the experience of

déjà vu."¹⁵⁶ In Bergson's theory, therefore, déjà vu is not a false recognition. It is indeed on the

top in the hierarchy of memory-images, because, it illuminates the involuntarily presence of

duration in the act of recollection and preservation of the past.

Walter Benjamin notes that, in so far as the life experiences in the modern age have become more and more standardized, Bergson's philosophy has grown in importance since it links experience to the structure of memory not in the form of re-assembling isolated facts, but rather, as a site of convergence of involuntary data collection.¹⁵⁷ Bergson privileges involuntary memory (i.e., pure recollection) over voluntary memory. In contrast to voluntary memory that remains dependent on our conscious will, involuntary memory is entirely impulsive in its virtual states. He indicates that "[w]e start from a virtual state' which we lead onwards, step by step, through a series of different planes of consciousness, up to the goal where it is materialized in an actual perception; that is to say, up to the point where it becomes a present, active state; in fine, up to that extreme plane of our consciousness against

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 55.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Peter Osborne, *Walter Benjamin: Modernity*, 219.

which our body stands out. In this virtual state pure memory consists.”¹⁵⁸ Benjamin writes: “The fact that death has been eliminated from Bergson’s *durée* isolates it effectively from a historical (as well as prehistorical) order.”¹⁵⁹ In my discussion of *Suspicious River* in later chapters, the idea of cyclical life that resists death will come into view. In general, within this context again, Bergson can be viewed as a relevant thinker for discussing a movie that deals with unintentional acts of memory. Paul Ricoeur suggests that Bergson “appeals to that more attentive psychology which often shows us effects which precede their causes.”¹⁶⁰ Moreover, Ricoeur believes that Bergson not only provides us with an insight into the survival of the image but also into the phenomena of forgetting.¹⁶¹ This complex and to some degree obscure claim is linked to my discussion in Chapter Eight on how the act of violence in *Suspicious River* is not locked up in the past.

In short, the past-present nexus which I see in *Suspicious River*, *The Law of Enclosures* and a few other films is what drove me to Bergson. The Bergsonian idea that the past is alive in the present is illustrated in those films as the act of remembrance is brought forward in some ways to create a messed up temporality and trigger in the spectator the experience of the present that is actually alive with the past. In other words, it is not a causal relation but an experience. It is again similar to Bergson’s philosophy because he was not interested in causal relations but something intuitive or something that has to do with the subjective grasp of time. More to the point, unlike mainstream films,

¹⁵⁸ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 319.

¹⁵⁹ Peter Osborne, 220.

¹⁶⁰ Paul Ricoeur, 160.

¹⁶¹ Keith Ansell-Pearson, 73.

Suspicious River and *The Law of Enclosures* do not try to ultimately lockdown time to a causal explanation.

Augustine writes in his *Confessions* that “[t]he things which we sense do not enter the memory themselves, but their images are there ready to present themselves to our thoughts when we recall them. We may know by which of the senses these images were recorded and laid up in the memory, but who can tell how the images are there ready to present themselves to our thoughts when we recall the.”¹⁶² Likewise when Deleuze says that “it is in the present that we make a memory, in order to make use of it in the future when the present will be past,”¹⁶³ he reclaims Augustine’s thesis that the past is not an object preserved by memory but an image that performs in the present. Bergson also detests the idea that memory represent the past like linguistic systems. I will argue that recollections-images in *Suspicious River* are interesting examples of a kind of memory that Augustin/Bergson talk about—the one that without any decision is receptive and open to the realm of the past. Bergson says:

To call up the past in the form of an image, we must be able to withdraw ourselves from the action of the moment, we must have the power to value the useless, we must have the will to dream. Man alone is capable of such an effort. But even in him the past to which he returns is fugitive, ever on the point of escaping him, as though his backward turning memory were thwarted by the other, more natural, memory, of which the forward movement bears him on to action.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Augustine, *The Confessions*. Penguin Books. (1961), originally written in AD 397. 9.

¹⁶³ *Cinema II*, 2.

¹⁶⁴ *Matter and Memory*, 94.

Chapter 2

Bergsonian Cinematic Time

In this Chapter, I will discuss Bergson's theory of intense coexistence between past and present in relation to cinematic theories derived from it. I will examine how the essential discontinuity between objective versus subjective simultaneity affects our memory. With respect to film theory and spectatorship, the latter discontinuity will be analyzed in relation to the notion of attention versus fluidity. For example, Gilles Deleuze argues that cinema can potentially become a means of illuminating certain Bergsonian qualities with regard to duration such as the intense unity of past and present.¹⁶⁵ According to Bergson, this unity is suppressed by the scientific approach¹⁶⁶ to understanding the experience of time, which is incapable of explaining duration. Yet, by residing in duration, Bergson argues, we experience a sort of becoming by which each temporal layer flows into another.

¹⁶⁵ For example, View Gregory Flaxman's *The Brain is Screen: Deleuze and Philosophy of Cinema*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000) 67-71.

¹⁶⁶ I refer to science as an abstract concept in the way that Bergson understands it and not the widespread views of the scientific community. For Bergson, a scientist is a person who eradicates subjectivity and believes that there is an external-world in itself.

In this thesis, I intend to outline how certain films (with my focus, of course, being on *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*) may confuse the audience by disrupting and fragmenting the authority of a linear narrative (but as will be further elaborated upon in the next chapter, this confusion functions quite differently from other contemporary films such as *Memento* and *Irreversible*). As I discussed in the introduction, temporality in mainstream films is usually governed by the dictated by the perceptual intellect of the characters. The chains of temporal events are connected by linear causality, and more to the point, the character's intellectual perceptions directed by what we assume to happen in the present as real. Even when temporal continuity is momentarily, it is always justified by a sort of rationality that places these intervals outside of what we think as the present situation. However, at certain points during a cinematic experience, specifically, through the unconventional use of recollection-images, the audience becomes incapable of maintaining a consistent relationship between their perceptual simultaneity and the objective simultaneity of filmic events. In real life, Bergson further argues, when we have the experience of abandoning our attention (i.e., attention required to solve problems, and puzzles), we experience pure duration that has been socially pathologized as a form of perversion or mental illness. Moreover, I will bring in Bergson's understanding of the notion of *déjà vu*, which he believes happens because of the collapse of the strong linkage between perception and encoding (learning). This collapse causes the subject to become situated in a confusing state of "perverse" or false recognition.

In this Chapter, I will discuss the issue of cinematic duration as an abstract term within a purely theoretical and philosophical framework. I will discuss these concepts in relation to

theories that, in my opinion, have oversimplified Bergsonian duration in their cinematic application. I will also give examples of little discussed films that I think maintain a more authentic understanding of Bergsonian time. I believe that the cinematic experience of confusion resulting from interpenetrating past and present has a certain legitimacy in not being rationalized but rather kept intact as a primal experience. Similarly, Donato Torato, explains Bergsonian intuition by saying that “[d]uration rests within the consciousness of a person and cannot be ‘stopped’ or analyzed like the mathematical conception of time as a line. Our true inner self, our emotions, thoughts, and memories do not lie next to each other like shirts on a clothesline but flow into one another, one sensation gnawing and overlapping into another.”¹⁶⁷ Likewise, we may experience temporality like déjà vu in cinema when one feels that she recollects a past experience without being able to really trace such experience to her memory of the past. The past, in this sense, keeps taking the place of the present and not revealing itself as past.

Bergson’s theory of simultaneity and our sense of inner duration is based on two hypotheses. First, the simultaneity between two instances of two motions outside us is the main presumption for us to measure an interval of time. Second, two moments in our inner duration should be dotted along with latter simultaneity to give us the possibility of externalizing our experience of time.¹⁶⁸ In that way, for Bergson, we can never experience time internally when there is always a tendency to externalize the experience of time from moment (point) to moment (point). According to Eva Brann, this “externalizing configuration of time” refutes a possibility

¹⁶⁷ Donato Torato, 2014.

¹⁶⁸ Keith Ansell-Pearson and John Mullarkey, *Henri Bergson: Key Writings*, (Bloomsbury Academic, 2002) 85.

of having a science of time in the Hegelian or dialectical sense.¹⁶⁹ In order to do so, it would be necessary to pause time and reduce it into measurable units.¹⁷⁰ Brann further argues that “[f]or Bergson duration will be the now of human life insofar as all past moments are collected in it through a reiteration of interpenetrations. It is a passing eternity, so to speak.”¹⁷¹ Although we come to believe that this experience now can be fully measurable, a dilemma develops when we experience the fluid and irrational passage of time. Bergson thinks of duration as a heterogeneous experience that cannot be arranged in any given direction and, therefore, its parts cannot be orchestrated in a causal manner through a succession of distinct parts. Bergson says that, “externality is the distinguishing mark of things which occupy space, while states of consciousness are not essentially external to one another, and become so only by being spread out in time, regarded as a homogeneous medium.”¹⁷² Consequently, this measurability is the fundamental illusion that we have about time. With respect to Bergson’s understanding of external world as a freezing of reality, George H. Mead states: “If you get a spatial statement of time, you get that which has no succession in it, at least no duration in it. Duration involves the appearance of something that was not present before.”¹⁷³ The illusion has several levels including the belief that our experiences of certain events are reversible. Moreover, we think that there is a symmetrical relation between time and its experience by a human being.

¹⁶⁹ Eva Brann. *What, Then, is Time?* (Rawmann and Littlefield Publisher: Boston, 1999) 29. For Hegel, though, pure number is prior and independent of space. For him, number is a logical concept and then is being understood spatially. (Ibid., 30).

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 99.

¹⁷³ George H Mead, *Movements Of Thought In The Nineteenth Century*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) 504.

The past both conditions and coexists with the present and, for this reason, it has an affective relationship with the present.¹⁷⁴ There is no causal relationship, but there is a unity. This unity between layers of time posits time, not as a quantifiable process, but as a phenomenon constantly in the course of becoming pure duration. We can feel this pure duration without having an illusion if we dismiss certain aspects of attention on the world around us.¹⁷⁵ We have the illusion that there are moments in our lives that are distinctive in themselves. In other words, attention sometimes is a conscious effort that limits certain possibilities of multiplicity. Jonathan Carry suggests that attention may become “an imprecise way of designating the relative capacity of a subject to selectively isolate certain contents of a sensory field at the expense of others in the interests of maintaining an orderly and productive world.”¹⁷⁶ Accordingly the notion of attention contributes to the instrumentalization of our perception. (The concept of instrumentalized perception will be discussed in the two chapters on *The Law of Enclosures*). On the other hand, Trifonova notes that, for Bergson, inattention actually forms our natural state of mind, while society (and medical science in particular) views it as symptoms of malfunctioning.¹⁷⁷ She goes on to argue that the feeling of certainty in recollecting an event has nothing to do with how much attention we have paid to it in present moment.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Leonard Lawlor, *The Challenge of Bergsonism*, (London: Continuum, 2003) 58.

¹⁷⁵ Attention according to Bergson, is always concentrated on a series of seemingly discontinuous acts. (See Bergson’s *Creative Evolution*, 2-7). Therefore, we believe that these acts are distinct elements in the span of our life time. This point about attention will be discussed in this thesis in relation with *The Law of Enclosures* in the last chapter. I will argue that, Greyson is conscious of how peace, unlike what we think of, is only an interval of a continuous war.

¹⁷⁶ Jonathan Cary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, Cambridge, 1999) 47.

¹⁷⁷ Temenuga Trifonova, *Warped Minds*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014) 41-47.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 67-79.

Bergson's rejection of the notion of pure contemporaneity may help us in internalizing a type of cinematic experience that foregrounds the possibility of durative layers of time. As one of the most important Bergsonian commentators, Deleuze argues, the nature of cinematic perception is not always commensurable with measured, homogeneous, single-layered segments quantified by clocks. The traditional linear narrative prompts the spectator to put himself above time rather than in time so that he can maintain and constantly reaffirm his transcendent self. In contrast, non-linear time can transfer its paradoxicality and flexibility into the filmic image and thus create a sense of confusion or frustration. For Deleuze, in cinema, "there is no mixture or average of two subjects, each belonging to a system, but a differentiation of two correlative subjects in a system which is itself heterogeneous."¹⁷⁹ I will argue, however, that, in order to be authentic to Deleuze's cinematic time, this confusion need not turn out to be symbolic and immobile (i.e., the fixed state of "being confused"). Indeed, confusion can possibly avoid appearing as a narrative construct or content of film events whereby established film conventions continually generate a stable image of confusion over a multiplicity of temporal layers. Therefore, the experience of multiple layers of time in cinema may be constant and less attentive by upsetting rational and cognitive positions in interpretation, even going so far as to challenge continually its own modes of going against convention. In other words, a cinematic experience of becoming-confused does not render the past through film techniques that represent it as past. Rather, it constantly rejects the past's identity as something separable from present and future time by making the experience of it indistinct.

¹⁷⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II*, 73.

I have discussed Bergson's concept of pure duration as internal time, that is, a form of time essential to the self but inapplicable to the outside world unless cut into segments and spatialized. Bergsonian duration is interpreted by Bliss Cua Lim, as "the survival of the past, an ever accumulating ontological memory that is wholly, automatically, and ceaselessly preserved."¹⁸⁰ Consequently, with respect to a cinematic experience, this automatic preservation should not be limited to a purely subjective recollection of the past. Deleuze indeed notes that one of the most profound but, at the same time, often misunderstood Bergsonian concepts is the theory of durative memory. He writes: "We have great difficulty in understanding a survival of the past in itself because we believe that the past is no longer, that it has ceased to be. We have thus confused Being with being-present."¹⁸¹ Hence, unlike Being, being-present always tends to differentiate itself from the past, and therefore, demolishes the possibility of its existence. In other words, the present cannot be a being; rather, it is a form of perpetual motion that always maintains the past regardless of whether or not we have a conscious attention towards it.

Garrett Barden, examines Bergsonian duration in relation to the notion of attentiveness.¹⁸² Barden explains that attention is different than understanding. We understand "duration" as a result of being attentive to consciousness.¹⁸³ In other words, for Bergson, attention to consciousness is only a pre-supposition for understanding. In a passage that reminds the reader of the Cartesian cogito, Barden notes: "What is true of the subject, of the 'I', is true of

¹⁸⁰ Bliss Cua Lim, *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique*, (Durham: Duke University press, 2006) 15.

¹⁸¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, (New York City: Zone Books 1988) 55.

¹⁸² Garrett Barden "Method in Philosophy" in John Mullarkey. *The New Bergson*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999) 30-35.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 33-35

the mind. The mind (*spirit*) is not imagined— and that the mind is commonly imagined is hardly deniable with once ‘a picture leading us astray’— as a static, complete ghostly, invisible body.

‘Mind’ is the name for developing, creative, historical set of interrelated activities.”¹⁸⁴

Accordingly, Bergson’s notion of the self is different than that of Descartes’ because when someone says “I am an enduring subject,” she becomes attentive to her conscious activity and the fact that she is a subject that its essence is that of becoming.¹⁸⁵ This is in contrast to Cartesian depersonalization of the subject summed up in his ‘I think, therefore I am.’¹⁸⁶ In view of that, Barden suggests that, the self for Bergson is not a metaphysical ‘I’ as a subsisting core, but rather a subject and in the process of becoming.¹⁸⁷ Bergson himself introduces the example of listening to an uninterrupted continuity of melody and the fact that we have a tendency to divide its parts into a picture. We picture notes placed next to one another upon an imaginary piece of paper. “We think of a keyboard upon which someone is playing, of the bow going up and down of the musicians, each one playing his part along with the others.”¹⁸⁸ If we become free of this habitual application of sight (spatial imagination) into hearing, we experience a continuous flux of melody. This is similar to how we perceive history as series of interruptive moments.¹⁸⁹ Hence,

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 36.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 35. In short, for Bergson, perception is very subjective and non-photographic that is taking place in our body, and more importantly, taking place in time. It can simply be a situation for virtual remembrance.

¹⁸⁶ Temenuga Trifonova. *Image in French Philosophy*, 2007. 13. Trifonova argues that 20th century philosophy is shaped only by one aspect of Descartes’ philosophy, namely, that of disembodied, a historical, and self-transparent subject. (Ibid).

¹⁸⁷ Barden, . 36-37.

¹⁸⁸ Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 123.

¹⁸⁹ According to M. Capek, Bergson’s analogy of melody and heterogeneous temporal process also shows that “change does not need to be a change of something,” and therefore change, does not need any support. (See *Bergson and Modern Physics: A Reinterpretation and Re-evaluation*. 317.) With regards to my analysis of *The Law of Enclosures*, this idea that the change is not necessarily should be a change of something is evident. Although the

in the chapters focusing on *The Law of Enclosures*, I will discuss in detail how this representational approach to specific moments (i.e., mapping divisible elements) such as the announcement of peace, is in conflict with how the leading characters experience the passages of time durationally.

Since the coexistence of the past with the present is an involuntary act, the concept of attention then becomes important in my analysis in that I will put into question the assumption that the cinematic experience should be consciously and attentively recognizable. What I mean to say is that a character should not be perceived in a state of conscious act of remembering nor should there be an effort on her part to associate a consciously-constructed memory from the past to the explanation of a current situation. Indeed, Bergson suggests that through involuntarily or pre-reflective recollection we understand that duration is greater than our subjectivity.¹⁹⁰ In my opinion, the survival of the past in a cinematic experience only becomes involuntary if there can be no subjective hierarchy of the present-self over past-self. For example, in my analysis of *Suspicious River* in the core chapters, I will demonstrate how the typical hierarchy of the present-self over the past-self in the experience of recollections is eliminated.

Some writers suggest that a reaction against Albert Einstein's theory of relativity in physics is evident in Bergson's rejection of absolute time when he talks about the paradox of a consciousness being in two identical moments.¹⁹¹ For the possible existence of a living conscious

female lead experiences life duratively, there is no change in terms of the background history. In other words, change does not need a moving force or explanation.

¹⁹⁰ Trifonova, 56.

¹⁹¹ For example see Chapter Four of Mullarkey's *The New Bergson*, Written by Timothy S. Murphy. Accordingly, because of Bergson's insistence on the independence of time and his rejection of Einstein's example of twin brothers

being, therefore, the past and present need to be synthesized into one. Bergson notes that: “Take for example the simplest feeling, suppose it to be constant, absorb the whole personality in it: the consciousness which will accompany this feeling will not be able to remain identical with itself for two consecutive moments, since the following moments always contains, over and above the preceding one, the memory the latter has left it.”¹⁹² He goes on to say that “[a] consciousness which had two identical moments would be a consciousness without memory. It would die and be reborn continually.”¹⁹³ Barnard says that the transition for Bergson are continuous and is called duration.¹⁹⁴ And For Bergson the most durable aspect of our inner life is our memory.¹⁹⁵ For Steve D. Brown and Paul Stenner, this is the most fundamental aspect of psychological life: “The transitory feeling of, say, anxiety, is not constituted by the rapid succession of anxious instants, but is rather a ‘continual winding’, subject to infinite variations, like a melody subject to innumerable arrangement.”¹⁹⁶ If time and memory are not divisible, are psychological mood, consequently, cannot be self-contained.

Deleuze, in his reading of Bergsonian notion of pure recollection, notes the importance of distinguishing between mental-images of dreaming and pure-recollection.

Bergson calls the virtual image ‘pure recollection’, the better to distinguish it from mental images – recollection-images, dream or

traveling, many physicists assume that, he was attempting to refute theory of relativity entirely. The twin journey requires at least two moments of accelerations. Deleuze and many physicists believe that Bergson misunderstood Einstein’s theory. But still in his criticism, we can see that travelling twin, and therefore time in general, are images with no physical reality.

¹⁹² In Henri Bergson, *Living Consciousness: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 193.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Barnard, 17

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Steve D Brown and Paul Stenner, *Psychology without Foundations: History, Philosophy and Psychosocial Theory*, (London: SAGE publication. 2009) 146.

dreaming – with which it might be readily confused. In fact, the latter are certainly virtual images, but actualized or in the course of actualization in consciousness or psychological states. And they are necessarily actualized in relation to a new present, in relation to a different present from the one that they have been: hence these more or less broad circuits, evoking mental images in accordance with the requirements of the new present which is defined as alter than the former one, and which defines the former one as earlier according to a law of chronological succession (the recollection-image will thus be dated). In contrast, the virtual image in the pure state is defined, not in accordance with a new present in relation to which it would be (relatively) past, but in accordance with the actual present *of which* it is the past, absolutely and simultaneously: although it is specific it is none the less part of ‘the past in general’, in the sense that it has not yet received a date.’ As pure virtuality, it does not have to be actualized, since it is strictly correlative with the actual image with which it forms the smallest circuit which serves as base or point for all the others. It is the virtual image which corresponds to a particular actual image, instead of being actualized, of having to be actualized in a *different* actual image. It is an actual-virtual circuit on the spot, and not an actualization of the virtual in accordance with a shifting actual. It is a crystal-image, and not an organic image.¹⁹⁷

For Deleuze, the virtual image that corresponds to particular actual image speaks of a past that does not have a particular space in the past.¹⁹⁸ Pure virtuality, is remote from the temptation of chronological succession since as, Bergson suggests, there is no rational explanation why recollection happens at one moment and not the other. Bergson says: “The truth is that memory does not consist in a regression from the present to the past, but, on the contrary, in a progress from the past to the present.”¹⁹⁹ In terms of what Deleuze conceptualizes as Crystal-images, Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier states that:

¹⁹⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema II*, 83.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ *Matter and Memory*, 319. In the introductory chapter, as well, Bergson argues that there is a mutual tension (but not a causal relation) between memory and perception since perception always contains memory. See 25-40.

[T]he foundation of visible time in the very Bergsonian fabrication of the crystal-image. Actual and virtual “at the same time,” it guarantees, thanks to Bergson’s linked circuits, “the indivisible unity”—visible in the crystalline image—“of an actual image and ‘its’ virtual image.” But this image, too, is traversed by the double inverse movement of two heterogeneous directions, “one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past.” Becoming, as lack of the present, is already at work in the first time image; the present depends only on the crystal, which shows to what extent it is fragile. And if one *sees* time in the crystal, it is an originary secession of a time that flies in and by the time-image.²⁰⁰

The virtual image then is not an organic image, because it is not simply another image different than the already represented one. Indeed, *Suspicious River* would be a good example of this Deleuzian conceptualization, because recollection-images in this film include all past perceptions, contracted together still not being confused with dream-images. In other words, the virtual images in *Suspicious River* are not mental or psychological.

Outside the realm of philosophical debates, Bergsonian duration as opposed to homogeneous time has been used in discussions touching upon such subjects as the experience of time in colonialism, capitalism, the temporal structure of narrative plot, and generic formulas. Lim argues that the genre of the fantastic is by nature Bergsonian. Because the unfamiliar world usually “takes the form of a supernatural realm in which the linear chronological time of clock and calendar does not hold, the fantastic has a propensity to foreground a sense of temporal

²⁰⁰ Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier, in “Image or Time? The Thought of the Outside in *The Time-Image* (Deleuze and Blanchot)” in D.N. Rodowick *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze’s Film philosophy*, 25. Deleuze himself says that “[what constitutes the crystal-image is the most fundamental operation of time: since the past is constituted not after the present that it was but at the same time, time has to split itself in two at each moment as present and past, which differ from each other in nature, or, what amounts to the same thing, it has to split the present in two heterogeneous directions, one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema II*, 81.

discrepancy that cannot be entirely translated into the terms of modern homogeneous time.”²⁰¹ I would argue, however, that, if we only see these tricks as a generic convention, the experience of the unfamiliar remains symbolic. Hence, in Chapter Two and Three, I will discuss that the temporal inconsistency in the genre of fantastic is usually limited to generic conventions and chronotopes.

The concept of duration leads to the understanding of another phenomenon, the experience of *Déjà vu*. This feeling occurs when memory and perception collide with each other. Bergson compares the relationship between memory and perception in the experiencing of *Déjà vu* as being analogous to an object and its reflection in a mirror.²⁰² The object embodies the possibilities of certain actions and therefore, it exists in the realm of the actual. The image, however, although in almost every respect identical to the object, is certainly virtual.²⁰³ But the key point for Bergson is that the virtual (i.e., the image) is in fact the real and capable of generating affective responses in the subject. Usually the virtual aspect of our life is imperceptible. But *Déjà vu* occurs when this virtual realm is in the process of becoming perceptible. On the notion of reflective consciousness, Bergson notes, “Whoever becomes conscious of the continual duplicating of his present into perception and memory will be in the same state [, i.e., the duplication of the self into two personages.]”²⁰⁴ This form of temporal multiplicity can be realized in a cinematic experience. Hence, in a cinematic experience the, temporal multiplicity may become both actual and virtual beyond simply an act of voluntarily

²⁰¹ Lim, 28.

²⁰² Keith Ansell-Pearson, John Mullarkey, 20.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ *Henry Bergson: Key Writings*, 149.

recollections. Because past memories and present states are now not diachronic but synchronic (past and present never denote two successive moments), we can experience Déjà vu or paramnesia. Deleuze says that “there is the recollection of the present, contemporaneous with the present itself, as closely coupled as role to an actor.”²⁰⁵ The past in a Deleuzian cinematic experience is thereby synchronized with the present, in other words, it is no longer limited to the role of explaining certain epiphanic moments in which one remembers specific dates, times, or places. Accordingly, recollection-images constantly violate the present situation, and in so doing, reveal the incompleteness of the present.

In his interpretation of Deleuzian movement-image, Rodowick notes that our perceptual field establishes a horizon of action. “In this temporal interval, the subject judges simultaneously the virtual action that things may have on it and the possible action, reaction, or response that will be appropriate.”²⁰⁶ In fact, the distinction between what is mentally subjective (imaginary) and what is objective (real) results in a slow collapsing of these two that originates from the inside and not the outside. I will suggest that, in films such as *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*, our temporal confusion remains to some degree within the limits of the horizon of our perception. What is avoided then is the cinematic “trickery” of revealing virtual actions that go beyond the audience’s horizon of expectation. If the confusion is experienced within our horizon of actions and reactions, and not as a cinematic trick, the outcome will be an internalization of the confused state, a sense of becoming astray.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ David Norman Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze’s Time Machine*, (Durham: Duke University press, 2003) 37.

Unlike Bergson, Deleuze holds that cinema is not a process of immobile photographic images being added to or succeeding one another. Indeed, he believes that a cinematic experience is linked to our ability to internalize the totality of time as duration of a qualitative rather than quantitative phenomenon. What he describes as time-image puts time and the cinematic experience of time in the role of being a narrative goal or objective. For example, the Uruguayan film, *The Silent House*, is intensively involved with layers of time despite the fact the whole film is shot in one single take (duration). *The Silent House* is about a father and his daughter who intend to spend a night in a house with its upper floor harbouring some rather dark family secrets. Our confrontation with time in this film relies on the horrible past being translated into the present action. The return of the repressed as it manifests itself in *The Silent House* is not shown in a symbolic way as being the cause of a monstrous act; it is rather something that has been internalized. The camera at several points identifies with perverse gestures of the victim (father) who in the past abused his daughter (monster). Indeed, the camera positions itself as a sort of ghost that reflects the acts of the apparent instigator of certain abusive actions in relation to the daughter. In other words, the camera typifies what the father did to her in the past. The effect has been internalized in that all these cinematic effects represent nothing other than the imagination of the monster (daughter) operating in the real time of the movie. The contemporaneous past becomes, as Bergson puts it, like a reflection in a mirror. The camera/eye, that normally in such films is supposed to have an indexical relationship with present time (or the actual), now in fact, embodies a layer of past that exists in the present.

The crucial Bergsonian distinction with respect to cognitive recollections of the past is between a voluntary and an involuntary immersion in them. However, involuntary recollecting

should not be confused with recollecting that is forced from without. For example, the leading character in *Memento* resists involuntary recollection by claiming that he suffers from amnesia and, at the same time, he takes vigorous efforts to reconstruct his past life.²⁰⁷ I will argue that Stopkewich depicts involuntary recollecting as a sporadic flow of memory out of oblivion. I would say that *Suspicious River* is an example of depicting involuntary memory because the leading character is oblivious to the fact that the past has its own identity; as a result, her past persona functions independently in the diegetic space/time of the film.

Stopkewich's films are, in my opinion, the result of a tremendous effort to present time as indivisible flux. One should keep in mind that cinema is a limited medium and that, according to Bergson, it is incapable of engaging with time in purely qualitative terms. It goes without saying that a film such as *Suspicious River*, like other films, employs cinematic effects such as tricking the audience on the issue of temporality. What I propose, however, is that the narrational goal of this film does not distort the essentially fluid nature of time. Thus the viewer is capable of intuiting the flux of time without any causal explanation of narrative events. Flashbacks are not revealed by different visual effects and they are not causally mechanical reactions to present

²⁰⁷ Scholars such as George Bragues, for example, discuss that films such as *Memento* may be seen as a pedagogical means to educate the young people about complex philosophical discourse. This is very different than having an imminent experience of multilayered temporality. In an article published in *Film-Philosophy* Journal, Bragues notes that "[i]t is a common lament that people, the young especially, are increasingly shying away from books and instead turning for intellectual sustenance to video games, film, and television that is, images are displacing words, with the result that the culture is becoming less tolerant of cognitive complexity. Instead of vainly trying to reform, or negate the influence of, popular entertainments, it might be better to embrace them, making selective use of them to cultivate an interest in philosophic topics among young minds. Perhaps we can lead them to the words of the great philosophic texts by showing them how some of the actions and dialogues portrayed in the images they avidly consume exemplify and explore themes, concepts, and arguments otherwise dealt with by the likes of Plato, Descartes, and Hume. Guided by this pedagogical hope, this paper aims to plumb the philosophic significance of *Memento*." In "Memory and Morals in *Memento*: Hume at the Movies" September 2008. 3.

situations (and thus making them more comprehensible); rather they are freely performed (by what Bergson calls the fundamental self) to intensify the present (and thus giving it another layer).

Suzanne Guerlac notes that thinking in time requires the breaking of many frames.²⁰⁸ In a cinematic experience, breaking the frames may be achieved by dismissing the importance of the semiotic units of film. As I noted before, contemporary art films such as *Silent House* or, for that matter, its American remake, try to achieve this counter-framing feature by keeping all actions in one single shot. It is my opinion, however, that the Bergsonian agenda may be achieved by, rather than relying solely on long takes, opening up the diegetic space of the film to various time-frames.

Guerlac goes on to say that, “[thinking in time] lets us recognize the obsession with space that orients Western philosophy, limiting what we can think.”²⁰⁹ Bergson challenges the fundamental assumption of cognitive theorists who analyze divisible elements of each representation. Only by going beyond this then we can regenerate the way our brains preserve memory. Indeed, Bergson defines perception in terms of actions and constantly affirms that the past does exist in the present and that we can act upon it.²¹⁰ “Evolution is not something that happens to life, Bergson proposes, it is life itself, a perpetually contingent movement of

²⁰⁸ Suzanne Guerlac, *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henry Bergson*, (New York City: Cornell University Press, 2006) 3.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 5

differentiation.”²¹¹ Any film with a Bergsonian affect will not rely on a mechanistic and scientific chronology. For Bergson, the process of time as duration is neither mechanistic nor teleological; it is a form of constant changing beyond the mechanistic framework of physical science and the static metaphysical categories.²¹²

The number of articles and books that have been written on Bergson’s philosophy is vast. Notwithstanding this, I intend to use the next section of this chapter to add to these philosophical debates the historical background surrounding the subject of time and space as they were discussed while Bergson was developing his philosophy in his life time. Moreover, I will compare the culture of that era with what has been called the digital and information revolution of our time. I have claimed that past, present, and future in *Suspicious River* become incalculable through the temporal experience of its narrative development. I think bringing in a historical argument is important because I consider films such as *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* as superior to other contemporary mainstream films dealing with the problematic of temporality in conceptual and in more direct ways.

Bergsonism in History

This section functions as a brief historical commentary which complements the philosophical account of Bergson’s views in the previous section. Suzanne Guerlac claims that

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid. Further on she notes: “He calls this *ellan vital*, proposing the term not as a concept of rational knowledge but as an image ... for the process of time as duration.”

the period in which Bergson began to write (i.e., which is commonly called the age of modernity) is similar to our own (i.e., the digital era). In fact, she compares the crisis of time in the historical era which Bergson was situated with contemporary interests in topics dealing with memory/consciousness hybrids (specifically how this interest has been fetishized in contemporary mainstream cinema). During the historical turn in which we may situate Bergson, time was no longer a more or less fluid concept; its increasingly more precise measurement became a crucial aspect of modern life.²¹³

For example, during that period, the temporal structuring of modern-day transportation, as most notably observed in scheduling of arrivals and departures, was vastly extended and accelerated.²¹⁴ The efficiency of measuring time thus became highly significant. Certain film historians also acknowledge the importance of train-travelling in altering the fixed experience of space-time. In his book, *The Cinema Dreams Its Rivals*, Paul Young states that even before the introduction of moving pictures in the late nineteenth century, “the train’s uncanny transformation of space had attracted utopian wishes that technology contained the needs of social transformation.”²¹⁵ At the same time, certain anxieties were produced as a result of the ever-accelerating pace of all manner of activities both public and private. Similarly, as with today’s digital media, the technology surrounding the internet induces anxiety among a large number of people because of a non-stop ever-expanding flow of information.

²¹³ Ibid., See Chapter 1.

²¹⁴ Paul Young, 14

²¹⁵ Ibid.

Although the new technology surrounding the railroad resulted in a very organized system of transportation, it, at the same time, provoked certain hostile reactions against the *pervasiveness* of this new mechanistic way of life. Moreover, the focus of both physics and mathematics was shifting their concentration from causality to uncertainty and probability. Bergson began writing within the cultural tension that arose from these social and industrial shifts. In a letter to William James in 1908 (two years before publishing *Time and Free Will*), Bergson states: “I saw, to my great astonishment, that scientific time does not *endure*.”²¹⁶ He goes on to say that “positive science consists essentially in the elimination of duration.”²¹⁷ James, later on, admitted that this letter was a point of departure for him and changed his point of view entirely.²¹⁸ Indeed, we can see Bergson’s influence on modernist authors and the modern world in general. That influence, sometimes perhaps without our awareness, still operates today and continues to change the way we think of time in our contemporary world.

According to Bergson, science only deals with the universe as a mediating through symbols. The symbolic and mechanistic representations of how we perceive the world “deform our sense of reality to the extent that they immobilize what we experience as occurring in temporal flow.”²¹⁹ Guerlac goes on to say that “ordinary language only reinforces the worldview established by the formal languages of mathematics, and that all of these modes of symbolic

²¹⁶ In Robert D. Richardson, *William James: In the Maelstrom of American Modernism: a Biography*. (Houghton Mifflin Company: 2006) 426.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 427. James, indeed notes that, Bergson philosophy “tells of reality itself, instead of merely reiterating what dusty-minded professors have written about what other previous professors have thought. Nothing in shop-worn or second-hand.”

²¹⁹ Guerlac., 19.

representation interfere with our ability to grasp the temporal nature of reality. They crush our sense of duration.”²²⁰ William Barnard suggests that “unknown to most of us, language acts as a type of prism in that it fragments our experience, splitting the dynamic flux of our consciousness into unchanging, self-contained parts (i.e., ‘states’ of consciousness, such as ‘fear’ and ‘pleasure’).”²²¹ Accordingly, since words are contained, fixed units separated from each other, we think that, as time passes, one word is replaced by another.²²² In short, language, for Bergson, fragments our experience of duration and divides the dynamic flux of our consciousness into separate unities to the degree that we separate our emotions (e.g., fear is replaced by pleasure).²²³ Quantitative intellectualization, according to Bergson, separates given unities into differentiative elements. To be systematically communicable, words and linguistic units need static descriptions. Creativity, for Bergson, in the art of the novel and poetry, then, is the reducing of the original function of linguistic units in “ordinary language.” Language, consequently, fixes “only the objective and impersonal aspect of love, hate, and the thousand emotions which stir the soul. We estimate the talent of a novelist by the power with which he lifts them out of the common domain, to which language had thus brought them down.”²²⁴ Thus because words are loaded before hand, there is no objectivity. In Chapter Seven, I will discuss how Stopkewich uses lengthy close-ups without dialogue. Stopkewich tries to grasp the dynamism of the inner world

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Barnard, 13.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 164.

and immanent experience of instances by reducing dialogue and focusing solely on ambiguous facial expressions.

Indeed, Damian Sutton and Patricia Pister consider the emergence of films such as *Run Lola Run*, *Being John Malkovich*, *Memento*, *Irreversible*, and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* as evidence of a historical shift. What they argue is that contemporary popular culture is becoming increasingly fascinated with what Deleuze calls “the crystal of time.”²²⁵ According to Deleuze, the crystal image in fact is a portrayal of a mental image that constantly creates fragmented reflections. However, going against the current trend of popularizing French philosophy via Hollywood cinema, I view these films as still operating in a capitalistic framework. Capitalism of course enforces the division of time for the sake of efficient labour exploitation. The latter happens because the homogeneous division of time gives equal value to all segments of our timely experience to the extent that even the leisure time or sleep time become as quantifiable as work-time in our value-system. According to Walter Benjamin, the fact that Bergson was not interested in attaching any specific historical label to memory does not mean that his theory should not be analyzed with respects to the historical era he was from

²²⁵ In chapter four of *Cinema 2* entitled, “The Crystal of Time,” Deleuze brings into view the two dimensions of image formation, namely, actual and virtual. In dream-images or recollection-images, “opsign finds its true genetic elements when the actual optical image crystallizes with *its own* virtual image, and the smallest internal circuit” (69). The crystal-image should be distinguished from the confusion produced by the real and the imaginary, mainly because, it is the objective characterization of the actual images through which the uncanny illusion of double comes into view. For example, the multiple mirrors in *The Lady From Shanghai* (Orson Welles, 1947) are perfect examples of crystal images since they “have assumed the actuality of the two characters who will only be able to win it back by smashing them all, finding themselves side by side and each killing the other” (70). The Bergsonian concept of paramnesia (Déjà vu or the illusion of already having been in particular circumstances) simply makes perceptible the fact that the past coexists with the present while our actual existence duplicates itself by a means of the “recollection of the present, contemporaneous with the present itself” (79).

namely, big-industrialism.²²⁶ He goes on to say that, in order to link Bergson's theory to capitalism, we have to insert wage-labour into his theory of involuntarily memory.²²⁷ The real moments of personal past never integrate into the way time functions in a factory as a series of quantifiable and homogeneous entities. However, the digital revolution puts this form of alienation in jeopardy. Memory-images here are repeatable, reversible, and recordable. Therefore, the multi-layered presence of time is no longer something that only functions as a fantasy or dream. In other words, prior to the age of digital media, measured time was imposed as one and only reality.

Lim points out Marx's theorization of surplus value that highlights the pervasive rapid sense of time in modern days. "Homogeneous time, as Marxist critics underscore, is a labor relationship, one that involves not only production but also consumption and pervasive reification under capitalism."²²⁸ Both Marx and Bergson were criticizing mechanical clock and divisible time to a sense of alienation, in that, free time or leisure time was growing to be meaningless.²²⁹ That is why Bergson's theory should not be seen as ahistorical. In the post digital turn, the crisis of time recalls Bergson's criticism of homogeneous time. Contemporary films such *Suspicious River* do not deal with these tensions conceptually unlike films which show cell phones or internet as the main source of humans' alienation. But these films feature characters who are against the idea of progress. In other words, they are not goal oriented. They react

²²⁶ Helen Gorth, *Victorian Photography and Literary Nostalgia*, 83.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Lim, 72

²²⁹ Ibid. 73.

against non-durability of the new era by emphasizing on childhood experiences before these changes and showing that there is coexistence between different layers of time hidden under codified structure of digitalized culture. In fact, prior to school-age, kids do not have a sense of linear time. The insight about linearity of time (i.e., thinking about future) induces the idea of growing up. Awareness of the linearity (i.e., the warning that time is ticking) functions against how kids experience eternity. However, as it is shown in *Suspicious River*, children constantly experience boredom, pure memory, déjà vu, and in general, sometimes they act against the repetitive characters of the event.

Guerlac notes that the charges of anti-rationalism and anti-intellectualism against Bergson are comically inappropriate.²³⁰ Bergson developed his theory of duration in accordance with the philosophy of science of his day.²³¹ As well as having advanced training in mathematics and hard science, he witnessed in his lifetime the experimental research which led to the discovery of electrons, as well as the development of quantum theory, and the theory of relativity.²³² For Bergson, some of the scientific or mathematical paradoxes were only pseudo-problems. I think the idea of introducing and fetishizing certain paradoxes, evident in films such as *Inception* or *Memento* where virtual reality is expressed as being quantifiable and disjointed, does not correspond with Bergson's attempts to analyze duration.

²³⁰ Guerlac, 30.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid.

Although Bergson did not foresee all future possibilities with respect to the cinematic experience of duration, his theory should be seen in relation to certain scientific and philosophical views developed in his time. The rejection of symbolism, the belief that language usually falls short of describing duration, his disagreement with the scientific developments in modern physics, and his disavowal of the idea of the flow of time as essentially predictable and separable are all part of this larger “Bergsonian” context.

As Bergson notes, “there is no perception which is not full of memories. With the immediate and present data of our senses we mingle a thousand details out of our past experience.”²³³ Moreover, to function in a day-to-day basis “life demands we put on blinders.”²³⁴ Therefore, we reduce recollection and memory of the past by symbolic categorization to make sense of our present time action. However, according to Bergson, the artist should not be fully “intent on utilizing [her/his] perception.”²³⁵ In the next chapter, I mainly discuss mainstream films that deal with the failure of constructing memory in the process of selection and categorization for practical existence. Of course, these films remind us of the gaps and inconsistencies in our perception of reality and how we omit what we do not desire to see. However, these movies fail to bring in an experience of memory that is based on the plurality and continuance of present moment.

²³³ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*. 24.

²³⁴ *Henri Bergson: Key Writings*, 259.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 310.

Chapter 3

More on Conventional Films and Theories of Temporal Confusion

Analysis of Irreversible, Memento, Run Lola Run, and Caché

As mentioned in the previous Chapter, the recent “digital turn” has reignited debates around the experience of “time.” In film theory, much has been written about contemporary films that call into question the linearity of temporal experience. However, rather than focusing on the Bergsonian notion of the multiple layering of time, most film scholars have focused on the non-chronological reshuffling of Deleuzian time-images, (mis)represented as discrete elements of temporality. Indeed, over the last two decades, Deleuze’s time-image has been analyzed in relation to films which deal with the concept of confusion both contextually and symbolically. The films of Christopher Nolan, David Lynch, Darren Arronofsky, and the less commercially-inclined Michael Haneke have been turned into case studies in several books focusing on Deleuze’s theory of time-image. I will argue that, for several reasons, these films are not good examples of what I refer to as becoming-confused by means of the fluid superimposition of past, present and future. First of all, the majority of these films are structured around a very clear

hypothesis about confusion. This is to say that, so-called authentic time, which is the illusion of objective time separable from personal experience, is never abandoned due to the fact that the confusion is shown to be experienced only in the mindset of the protagonist detached from the real world. In other words, “objective” homogeneous time in these films is “objectively” authenticated as being something superior to the “distorted” subjective experience of duration.

Herzogenrath notes that “[t]he classic narrative film represents time in film with well-known narrative strategies such as organic montage, rational cuts, continuity editing, flashbacks, hence, with the action-reaction model.”²³⁶ He goes on to say that “[e]ven in its connection with more complex plots [see *Back to the Future*, or *Memento*], narrative film is ultimately based on the concept of an abstract and linear time — exactly what Marey had in mind.”²³⁷ Accordingly, the main structure of classical cinema is spatial continuity based on the movements of the protagonists.²³⁸ Herzogenrath rightly identifies seemingly complex films such as *Memento* with what Marey had in mind (i.e., the mechanical succession of time intervals which indeed is an opposition to becoming). Moreover, although there are different fragments of temporality offered in these films, the resolution of the plots in these kinds of films is usually based on the recognition of a clearly defined difference between past and present.

Second, confusion is symbolic because usually a certain set of conventions becomes the vehicle for *representing* it and fostering an intellectual conception rather than a felt experience.

²³⁶ Bernd Herzogenrath, “Double Deleuze: ‘Intelligent Materialism’ Goes to the Movies” in *Cinema Journal*. 6. 2014. 55.

²³⁷ Ibid., He goes on to explain that the cinema based on action-reaction schema, in Deleuzian lexicon, is called Movement-Image, the cinema of rational intervals and continuity.

²³⁸ Ibid.

These well-established conventions prepare the audience for moments of confusion separated from the rest of the narrative. Third, the characters are clinical examples of schizophrenia in that their experience is not that of becoming but of being. (For example, the characters from the very beginning are diagnosed as amnesiac or simply confused about reality). Consequently, through decipherable film conventions, the spectator recognizes that the protagonist's perception of time is a sort of mental aberration that does not parallel the "normal" perception of time, which is assumed to be sensed homogeneously. In other words, the protagonist is fully affected by certain illogical patterns of thinking, often, to the degree that his brain is understood by the spectator to be irreparable. He is (sometimes) involuntarily withdrawn from reality and, therefore, his condition is not a struggle for becoming. There is little room for intentionality and mobility in his disorder.

To summarize: 1) the main characters in films like *Memento* (Christopher Nolan, 2000) are examples of clinical schizophrenia and thus their experience of time is immediately understood to be abnormal; 2) to emphasize the abnormality of their temporal perceptions, their experience of confusion is conveyed through the use of conventional film techniques that clearly distinguish between "real" time and "aberrant" time; 3) as such, the experience of confusion is rendered "symbolic" rather than ontological, given that specific scenes are cinematically constructed in a way that makes them stand out as *signs* of confusion. For example, in *Memento*, the main character has been diagnosed from the very beginning as suffering from an acute case of amnesia, meaning that his individual identity remains stable and fundamentally constant even in his experience of confusion. Even at the end of the film where,

for the audience, an epiphanic moment dispels all confusion, he remains in a confusing state. Therefore, his mental and psychical essence is unchanging.

There are moments in *Inception*, *Memento*, and *Caché* where the characters with whom we are aligned with become the observers of their lives from outside. The plot devices of these films, in fact, cover certain moments when the external world of the characters (the real) suddenly becomes very different from internalized reality. However, the idea of recording and rewinding one's own daily routine is not that of becoming and thus rejecting the so-called real time. In point of fact, the "real" time is still operating but reversible. Bringing some of Bordwell's concepts into the discussion, one might say that the ambiguity in films such as *Caché* is achieved by the unusual independence that the fabula has from syuzhet.²³⁹ By contrast, in films such as *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*, syuzhet does not block, complicate, or distract the formation of the fabula. Moreover, there is no alternative perception outside the mindset of the character to elaborate on the temporal inconsistency of the film. In short, the individual subject in *Suspicious River* never requires a different explanation from the outside to perceive the passing of time. In contrast to films that I will discuss a little further on in this Chapter, the lead character's past is not reversed or replayed but merged with the present. In short, the majority of contemporary films dealing with the discontinuous memory are still preoccupied with the idea of re-blocking, reversing, or finding an access to memory (rather than with the idea of Bergsonian multilayered recollection). Moreover, these films are preoccupied

²³⁹ According to Bordwell's definition; the audience construct the story through fabula. Syuzhet, on the other hand, elaborates or complicates the narrative logic, and therefore, facilitates or blocks the typical formation of the fabula. See David Bordwell's *Narration in Fiction Film*, 370-372.

with the notion of individual identity in so far as revealing what has been blocked, forgotten, or deceptive as a means for realizing one's real identity.

***Irreversible* (Gaspar Noe, 2002)**

The mathematical characteristic of rational languages, according to Guerlac, transforms the mechanics of mathematical calculation into codified abstract concepts. This reinforces a tendency to view physical processes as *reversible*.²⁴⁰ In geometrical terms, we can formulate a movement in space from left to right as passing from right to left.²⁴¹ Against this view, Bergson introduces the dynamic logic of irreversible time. There are no specific points in the experience of real duration that can be reformulated in reverse. Despite its title, *Irreversible* fetishizes the idea of the reversibility of time. While the film is articulated chronologically as a succession of specific points in space ($A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C$), it is shown in reverse.

Irreversible employs a linear narrative constructed in reverse. The movie begins with the ending credit sequence, which off course is normally to be found at the end of the film. Furthermore, the order of the sequence is reversed in that instead of being scrolled down, the credits are scrolled up giving us the end at the beginning and the beginning at the end. But this symbolic reversal is not going to be maintained throughout the film. While the movie constructs

²⁴⁰ Guerlac, 31.

²⁴¹ Ibid. In another chapter she demonstrates that “[c]oncrete experience is radically singular because it attaches to the unique moment in which it occurs. Whereas we imagine space as empty homogeneous medium, to be filled up with things we can juxtapose and count, duration is not an abstract framework for something else. Bergson asks us to think duration as fullness instead of emptiness. Duration is the qualitative lived experience that occurs in and through it, in its irreducible concreteness and singularity. It cannot be known because it is always changing. It can only be lived in the very specific time of its unfolding. The most important point to emerge from this discussion, then, is that duration does not contain intensities through, or as the irreversible time of the becoming.” 90.

a series of sequences in reverse chronological order, each sequence itself (usually done in one take) moves forward in a typical narrative action. Therefore, one cannot say that this film strongly reflects what is normally thought about the influence of either VHS or DVD, namely that, these have made possible an absolute control over the continuity of the film.

Irreversible begins with the words: “Time destroys everything.” The first sequence is unbearably violent and the last scene shows the two main characters sitting on grassy field on a nice sunny day. But the cliché of a happy ending is of course subverted by knowing that, in truth, it is about the ephemerality of love. Commenting on this film, Roger Ebert says: “The film doesn’t build up to violence and sex as its payoff, as pornography would. It begins with its two violent scenes, showing us the very worst immediately and then tracking back into lives that are about to be forever altered.”²⁴² However, since the movie is essentially constructed as a causal narrative such that, for example, the linear chronological plot can be easily found and reconstructed, all sorts of initial confusion can potentially be dissipated once everything is in the right order. Given this reversal of normal time-sequence, this film is designed to be watched more than once, such that the beginning as violent ending falls into its proper causal position and becomes completely intelligible.

Ebert goes on to say that, “[t]he movie does not end with rape as its climax and send us out of the theater as if something had been communicated. It starts with it, and asks us to sit there for another hour and process our thoughts. It is therefore moral - at a structural level.”²⁴³ Since

²⁴² Roger Ebert, “Cache,” *RogerEbert.com*, 12 Jan. 2006, <http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/cache-2006> (accessed 22 Feb. 2013).

²⁴³ Ibid.

each sequence is less interesting than the previous one, together with the dropping off sound-track effects and all other techniques (e.g., the extreme lack of distance in the opening scene versus the God-eye-view shot of the closing scene), it could be very well argued that the film as a whole follows an anti-climactic and ironic trajectory. In other words, the climax of the film is still the beginning.

Allan Cameron suggests that *Irreversible* succeeds in creating a sense of time that flows into a non-transparent structure.²⁴⁴ Another critics notes that the film's reverse structure "destabilizes the rape-revenge narrative."²⁴⁵ In my view, however, the reverse credits given at the beginning are only a symbolic "boast" because the film itself is not wholly reversed process but rather a disordered chronology of sequences. Indeed, it is disordered sequentially. Furthermore, it is what I consider to be an example of the reduction of Deleuzian time-image to playing game with narrative structure. Although narrative events are structured towards the past, these events are both logically and causally connected. A causes B causes C, etc. has been presented as a "right-to-left" reading that is $C \leftarrow B \leftarrow A$. Moreover, in terms of the Bergsonian duration, the audience does not endure time qualitatively because each sequence is separated from the other, and therefore, there is no coexistence between the layers of the past.

My earlier distinction between being-confused and becoming-confused also comes into play. The viewers are confused right from the beginning to know why the two characters get into a taxi, having no idea where they come from or what they want to do. The confusion, however, is not going to be maintained or developed since as the movie goes on it reveals more and more causal connections that eventually explain the initial confusion. Cognitively speaking, the

²⁴⁴ Allan Cameron, *Modular Narratives in Contemporary Cinema*, (New York City: Palgrave Macmillan , 2008) 54-66.

²⁴⁵ Susan Hayward, *French National Cinema*, (New York: Routledge, 1993) 326.

experience of initial confusion that we get in this film does not deviate to any great extent from classical narrative films (e.g., *Mildred Pierce*), wherein after some initial confusion about some criminal act, we witness an extensive flashback that clears it up. Another point to bring up is that, in *Irreversible*, by bringing the ending up front at the beginning, the audience knows all of that which is to follow is both causally and narratively predetermined and unchangeable (this is typical of *film noir* narratives, such as *Double Indemnity*). Thus the rearrangement of the temporal aspects of the film does not subvert the linear quality of the “real” time of the story. In a Bergsonian sense, therefore, the experience of time is not qualitative because we never internalize the rearranged temporality of the film as “real.”

Bergson believes memory is not a form of passive and mute register of the past; therefore, an actual experience becomes unique by ceaselessly changing our configuration of the registered memory in relation to the affects of the present action. Moreover, he believes that the elements of perception are organically extended into memory without any point of distinction. Hence, the duration of action is irreversible and only moves in one direction because it engenders the unique intense quality of the moment in which it occurs. Unlike its title, *Irreversible* fetishizes reverse duration. For Bergson, although we imagine space as a blank field in that we can insert different occurrences in different points in it, duration cannot be seen as movements from a point to another. In fact, every moment of experience is simultaneously configured by both the objective experience and reformulation of the subjective memory. We are not programmed robotically by our past to have a specific destiny. For Bergson, duration is actively manifested in our experiences of present moments. Films such as *Irreversible* reduce duration to a series of quantitative and calculable moves. Whereas, subjectively speaking, duration is mutable. Unlike *Irreversible*, the fabula of a movie such as *Suspicious River* is always changing.

It escapes the causal orders of films such as *Irreversible*. Here, the past is never connected to the present in a logical causal way; it only lives in the very specific time of its unfolding. Therefore, one can never go back in *Suspicious River* from $B \rightarrow A$ because A does not cause B but coexists with it. For example, the little girls act of staring at the lead's character's present-persona is not a possibility unless we think of her adult life as a furtherance of her past life and not as a causal follow-up. Indeed, duration is full of intensities, and more to the point, it is irreversible. In contrast to the classical narrative endings, there is no going back because the time of violence does not set an initial state²⁴⁶. Moreover, the violence is not shown as the cause of something else (as is the case in *Irreversible* where it is initially unexplained but eventually made clear) but in a time that coexists with other layers of temporalities. I will argue in the next chapters that the qualitative duration in *Suspicious River* is not a symbolic representation but a form of becoming that allows us to grasp the temporal nature of our internal reality.

Memento

Similar to *Irreversible*, *Memento* follows the form of a series of segments, arranged in reverse linear order. However, unlike *Irreversible*, *Memento* further complicates the narrative structure by throwing sequences beyond temporal determinacy of the narrative events by generating “objective” commentaries outside the subjective perceptual field of the lead character. The latter device, at the same time, makes things more conventional with respects to how the audience would internalize time. *Memento*'s non-linear chronography does not discourage the audience from piecing together the past as a series of sequential layers related to each other by cause and effect logics.

²⁴⁶ Here I am thinking of initial state in quantum mechanics, in that, the latter never determines the original and initial conditions of the particles. Moreover, the issue of the time of violence is going to be demonstrated in chapter eight.

Memento is about the memory loss of an insurance adjuster called Leonard whose main concern is to find the man who raped and murdered his wife. Allan Cameron claims that the plot in this movie does not have a traditional narrative structure. Instead of waiting to see what will happen *next*, he says, “our attention and anticipation are drawn towards the mystery of what has *already* happened.”²⁴⁷ However, the chronological perspective that the amnesiac (i.e., Leonard) lacks slowly becomes that of the audience. At the same time, the audience is lead away from having identification with the initial subjective experience of Leonard’s interior state of mind. What this ultimately results in is that the perceptual position of the audience moves from a subjective position (becoming) to a more representative of being (objective) than becoming. In other words, recalled past moments thereby become more and more distinct from the subjectivity that does the recalling.

Moreover, Nolan’s films constantly teach the spectators about the general structure of the narrative. Todd McGowan demonstrates that “[t]he typical Nolan film has the formal structure of a lie designed to deceive the spectator concerning the events that occur and the motivations of the characters.”²⁴⁸ Deception itself is something that has always been shared in his films unvaryingly.

As I have brought up in the introductory chapters, Bergson thinks of *déjà vu* as a privileged authentic experience that perfectly illuminates the involuntary or automatic presence of duration in our recollections. Although not personalized or subjectivized, *Déjà vu* is something that has not been erased from one’s memory. *Déjà vu* is, therefore, different than a sense of amnesia that takes place in these films, because in amnesias, one has a tendency to find

²⁴⁷ Cameron, 96.

²⁴⁸ Todd McGowan, *The Fictional Christopher Nolan*, 1.

a personal reason behind the act of misrecognition. Whereas, déjà vu exists in larger realm than that of the subject.

In addition, what Leonard cannot remember is given to us in black-and-white segments. These are moments of clarification for the audience to put together more and more pieces of the puzzle. Leonard's quest for narrative order can be paralleled with the audience's desire to create a linear plot-line. It has been frequently said that *Memento* follows film noir conventions. For example, Clair Molloy, in her book on *Memento*, offers a chapter that is entitled, "*Memento* as a noir."²⁴⁹ Leonard's inability to do anything but punching the *femme fatale* character, she argues, corresponds to the archetypical new-noir anti-hero.²⁵⁰ However, beside these nostalgic and semantic elements of genre, *Memento* does not fit into non-causal organization of the events that is typical of classical film noirs. Although the past manifests itself in the present in film noir, detecting a causal relationship between the events and solutions to a mystery becomes impossible and secondary. In contrast to the lead character of classical noir film, Leonard searches coherency and logic through (the illusion of) the plurality of identity.

Garrett Stewart compares films such as *Memento* and *Run Lola Run* with European fantastical films such as *The Double Life of Veronique* (Krzysztof Kieslowski, 1991) and argues that:

Deleuze on the overthrow of logical succession in screen editing by the irrational series might resemble the latest *Screen* article on Christopher Nolan's *Memento* (2000) or Gaspar Noé's *Irréversible* (2002)—except that he

²⁴⁹ Clair Molloy, *Memento*, 2010. View Chapter 4. She lists other sources that describe this film as a film noir, new-noir, or post-war Freudian film noir.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, 93.

is in fact speaking of Straub-Huillet and Godard. In remarking on the discontinuities of virtuality's "new" editing style, with its retroactive divergences in the time frames of action, memory, and conjecture, Deleuze suggests that 'the forking points are very often so imperceptible that they cannot be revealed until after their occurrence, to an attentive memory.' In this, though, his evidence is not what would come first to the contemporary spectator's mind. He is not referencing that rash of alternate-world plots and 'forking-path' narratives so familiar lately to screen viewers. He is not thinking of *Sliding Doors* (1998) or *Run Lola Run* (1998) or *Swimming Pool*, or the science fiction premonitions of *Minority Report* (2002). He is thinking of Welles and Fellini. At the same time, the 'attentive memory' that he finds requisite for the spectator is often displaced onto characterization as a deciphering function of lived time, so that plot agents struggle heroically to retain and decipher the very shapes of time. Characters themselves become not just viewers of their lives, but sleuths of its elusive crossroads in the throes of virtual replay. It is in this sense that Deleuze's grasp of the high modernist moment of postwar cinema quite strikingly anticipates the trick solutions and retroactive adequations of much more recent films. These are plot devices as well as visual figurations common not only to the ontological gothic of American thrillers, but to the mnemonic uncanny of humanist fantasy, with its erosion of mental borders and its preternatural relays of consciousness.²⁵¹

Damian Sutton describes the use of photograph in *Memento* as a metaphor for the distinction between two types of memory—active (ahistorical) and inactive (historical).²⁵² The photograph does not tell the truth. It only reframes memory and gives the illusion of natural protection.²⁵³ In *What is Philosophy*, Deleuze and Guattari insist that "creative fabulation has nothing to do with memory."²⁵⁴ *Memento* is accurately critical of photography's shortcomings in

²⁵¹ Rodowick, *Afetrimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, 337-38.

²⁵² Damian Sutton, *Photography, Cinema, Memory: The Crystal Image of Time*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Publishing, 2009) 216.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ See Keith Ansell Pearson, 195.

configuring the relationship between, as Deleuzian terms, sheets of the past and layers of reality. But this shortcoming is only represented as a metaphor. The movie does not offer a possibility of a new kind of memory that interacts between objective and subjective temporality without presupposing one to the other.

Trifonova suggests that *Memento* “focuses on *getting access* to memory rather than on the nature and significance of *what* is being remembered.”²⁵⁵ More to the point, she argues that re-inscription of the past in such films is a way playing with the narrative structures. The ideological motif beyond these films, Trifonova argues, is to justify our banal daily-life existence by promising a specific event in the future that makes sense of my present being.²⁵⁶ What we experience beyond narratively presented memory blockage is in fact revealed to be a causal set of connections and related events.

Run Lola Run

In contrast to the last two films, *Run Lola Run* deals with the possibility of reversing duration. What is shown is the ability of Lola (the female lead) to go back in time and change the course of the events by changing her actions at crucial moments. As a consequence, she sets in motion a series of unpredictable and divergent events that escape even her control. Small initial changes in the narrative may result in endings of entirely different order. At some points, a small change as cause of the events can lead to a significant change as effect. At other points, events follow one another in a predetermined conduit.

In all scenarios of the film, the image of a ticking clock generates a specific rhythm. This rhythmic experience of the film obstructs the internalization of time and gives equal significance

²⁵⁵ Temenuga Trifonova, *Warped Minds*, 195.

²⁵⁶ Ibid. A good example of such prophecy is *Déjà vu* (Tony Scott, 2006).

to each scene of the film. In short, it does not allow the subjective experience of time to be superior to the clock time. The homogeneous progression of clock-time, therefore, is always in the background. Public time thus becomes unavoidable.

Commenting on this film, Jan Jagodzinski draws from Deleuze this passage from *Cinema 2*: “Time’s forks thus provide flashback with a necessity, and recollection- images with an authenticity, a weight of past without which they would remain unconventional... it is a story that can be told only in the past.”²⁵⁷ Jagodzinski goes on to claim that *Run Lola Run* is an example of time’s forked narrative. He notes: “To Deleuze, a univocal All underpins the repetition no matter what the outcome, for each ending suggests a new point of departure, a new fork for another possible world.”²⁵⁸ However, the fork-layers of *Run Lola Ron*, I think, are not structured to undermine the typical expectation of the audience as narrational goal of the film. Like a videogame, it repeats various actions until the achievement of the victory at the end. Therefore, the happy-ending is shown to be achievable only if one repeats the experience of the key moments of the film. In fact, the fork narrative is still spatial and not durative. These stories do not coexist within a same temporal layer. These are possible independent temporal layers outside of the real passage of time (e.g., the clock with no hands in the beginning of the film point to this fact) that each one may become a fixed contained layer if it would be proven as a correct one.

It seems to me Jagodzinski does not realize that all types of conventional narratives show several motifs at key moments in the film that suggests different possibilities. Classical

²⁵⁷ Jan Jagodzinski, *Psychoanalyzing Cinema: A Productive Encounter with Lacan, Deleuze, and Zizek*, (New York City: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012) 136.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

Hollywood films often offer a range of motifs and scenarios with respect to each character (e.g., *The Seven Years Itch*). Thus the main character's movement in the world is shown to be the outcome of circuits of chance and contingency in relation to other characters at the key moments in the film. The only additional element in *Run Lola Run* is the repetitive dimension. However, this dimension is always kept within the limits of linearity. Therefore, time is shown to be reversible and controllable if the right choices are made. More to the point, in all these experiences, keeping the clock time as the focal point, even with the added feature of the tempo by accompanying the music as a soundtrack that imitate the ticking of the clock, surrounds the multi-linearity of the narrative within the limits of the rational spacialized time. Although segmental, all layers of narrative in this film are deterministic and goal oriented.

***Caché* (Haneke, 2005)**

In *Cache*, as a less commercialized and more extraordinary film among this group of films, virtualization of tedium time (i.e., the experience of boredom) causes confrontation with what is internal or subjective time. Because of the mysterious hidden camera focused on the protagonist's front step, the leading character is forced to replay over and over again the monotonous events of his everyday life. In this strange manner, he is made to recall his forgotten or repressed past.

The ambiguity of *Caché* has generated various responses from critics. Roderick suggests that the movie along with dealing with the conceptualization of memory and history as the past re-emerges, raises the question of power relations among individuals and the viewer as an

individual observer.²⁵⁹ This sort of allegorical criticism reduces the collective memory of the wrongdoings of the past to an abstract concept which at the individual level only touches people on moral level. This bars more resemblance to codified sense of guilt rather than genuine internal suffering.

Ricardo Domizio reads this film through a Deleuzian lens by saying that the digital cinema of Michael Haneke is manifestly schizophrenic.²⁶⁰ The schizophrenia of the digital image, he says, is “the intrinsic by-product of this decoding process— the spark that incites, in an irreducibly unpredictable way, the next image.”²⁶¹ The ambiguity in this regard is the product and tendency of the digital images that always harbor a possibility of going out of control. He says: “Ultimately, rather than conforming to a conventional linear causality *Hidden*’s logic is ‘digital’, which is to say its images bespeak circularity and repetition.”²⁶² However, in opposition to this observation, it must be pointed out that having an imbalanced relationship between fabula and syuzhet is not necessarily the product of the digital imagery. The irrational outcome of the film (as evidence when we raise such questions as who sends the tapes? And who films the diegetic space of the film?), with respect to the critical reception of this film as allegory of national guilt and French culpability, is reduced to a mere metaphor to lacking existential pathos and loss.²⁶³

²⁵⁹ In Ben McCann, David Sorfa, *The Cinema of Michael Haneke: Europe Utopia*, (New York City: Columbia University Press, 2011) 8.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 244.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 245.

²⁶² Ibid., 246.

²⁶³ Ibid.

The film constantly tricks its viewer. First there is the long take establishing shot that proves to be merely a recorded image that can be replayed. Second, although the editing of the film is straight, there are some divergences from past to present locations in single takes. Third, the last scene exploits the viewers' cognitive habit of looking at the center of the film in order to raise a point about how "superficial" the average viewer is that does not see the mystery is revealed in the corner of the frame and not looking at what happens in the margin.

In describing the latter scene, Roger Ebert in his review of the film says: "Only on my third trip through Michael Haneke's 'Cache' did I consciously observe a shot which forced me to redefine the film." He goes on to say that "I was not alone. I haven't read all of the reviews of the film, but after seeing that shot I looked up a lot of them, and the shot is never referred to. For that matter, no one seems to point to a conclusion that it might suggest."²⁶⁴ I think that Haneke shows us the possibility of manipulating different layers of expectations. As a consequence he plays with the issue of disorienting his experience from objective view (static shots) to a more subjective one (being replayed and watched by a person). Shocking sequences are inserted when we do not expect them. By disrupting the flow of the narrative the audience constantly reconfigures both his alignment with the character and his position in understanding the film's diegetics objectively. Cache also links memory to specify group that in itself establishes a set of fixed identity, as if a group of people are repository of specific trace of memory. It suggests that if a nation has forgotten its crime, one unchanged real memory of it exists somewhere to be found.

In contrast to *Suspicious River*, the divergence of past and present only happens through merging of the locations and not characters. There is no other point-of-view than that of Georg's

²⁶⁴ Roger Ebert, "Cache."

(the leading character) and the camera. The past layers remain in his brain and they do not have any effect on the present events. In short, the recollection-images are causal explanations for present events but they happen to be trickery explanations. I call it trickery because they explain what was happening but they do not rationally explain the subjective mindset behind the actions. Jefferson Kline notes that “[a]t the film’s end we are offered no solutions to this puzzle and must simply accept our inability to solve this mystery.”²⁶⁵ Consequently, it is suggested that *Caché* is a puzzle film but insoluble one.

All these films drew boundaries between different worlds we live in, thus rejecting the Bergsonian concept that the world that one inhabits is co-created by both active memory and what happens externally. In that sense, the types of movies I discussed in this chapter reveal how our experiences of the universe are both objective and subjective. However, they reject Bergson’s radical continuity. I think that the majority of these movies typically move from subjective (i.e., becoming) experience to a more objective one. Thus the objective “reality” ultimately becomes superior to the “schizophrenic” one. I champion *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* because I think they subvert the latter manner. The internal or subjective experience in these two Canadian films is not only a psychic state but it is shown as an activity that directly affects the objective world (not in a predetermined and automatic manner, but rather in an intermingled form).

Theories

²⁶⁵ In Roy Grundmann. *A Companion to Michael Haneke*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2010) 554.

In the Literature Review Chapter, I covered the general scholarship on the representation of time in film. In this part, I will focus on theories that seek specifically to conceptualize cinematic experiences such as narrative incongruity, the power of the false, the multiplicity of temporal layers, and some other issues related to creating a sense of uncertainty

In his book, *Hollywood Incoherent: Narration in Seventies Cinema*, Todd Berliner speaks about how a number of well-known Hollywood films of the seventies show a tendency towards violating patterns and introducing moments of narrative frustration. He goes on to hypothesize that these films try to “integrate, in incidental ways, narrative and stylistic devices counterproductive to the film’s overt and essential narrative purpose.”²⁶⁶ Moreover, he claims that they “prompt spectator responses more uncertain and discomforting than those of more typical Hollywood cinema.”²⁶⁷

In this thesis, I propose to conceptualize the notion of the cinematic experience of confusion in a way which is very different from how Berliner defines narrative incongruity. Berliner is primarily concerned about the self-conscious inefficiency of certain climactic moments in narration. According to him, certain narrative devices work against the essential narrative purpose of conventional Hollywood films, thereby discomforting the audience. However, I think there is no fundamental confusion with respect to the linearity of the narrative in his selected films such as *Chinatown* or *Taxi Driver*. In *Chinatown* (Polanski 1974), for example, there is supposed to be only one “right” version of the past. The confusion originates at the point where the detective-hero, whom the spectators are technically aligned with, ultimately fails to realign his role with “reality.” As a consequence, there is no fundamental confusion over

²⁶⁶ Todd Berliner, *Hollywood Incoherent: Narration in Seventies Cinema*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010) 51.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

the truth and there is no coexistence between the present and the past. What is presented in *Chinatown* is the trace of the past. So, the past rather than coexisting with the present one, leaves its traces that eventually affects the character's situation in present time.

In *Chinatown*, the audience is intended to align with Jake, who does not trust Evelyn. However, this allegiance is ruptured only in certain climactic moments. For example, it is revealed that, Evelyn, unlike the generic archetype of classical film noir, is the trustworthy character. Moreover, despite the fact that we largely see the story from Jake's point of view, it is nonetheless the case that Evelyn still comes across to us as a person in her own right, indeed one whose knowledge and insight that go beyond Jake's. In other words, the audience is eventually prompted to mistrust and act against the detective's perspicacity. Thus Jake's infallibility is put into question. *Chinatown* subverts certain expectations one has from common generic archetypes (i.e., *femme fatale*)²⁶⁸ that have become familiar to the spectators over time. Consequently, the confusion that eventually is the outcome of the Detective's failure comes from the affirmation of the warning we receive halfway through the film that Jake's investigation, unlike what is expected, is full of inaccuracy. Given all the points that I have raised thus far, I think it is safe to conclude that a film theorist such as Berliner only views tricking of the audience by manipulating the generic devices to misinform the spectators as the primary means of creating incongruity. In short, sometimes in film there is an incongruity between what the narrative agent

²⁶⁸ The subversion of the characteristics of the archetypal *femme fatale* leads to the subversion of gender scripted or binary. Thus the dark and uncanny characteristics of film noir's *femme fatale* have been demystified. It is revealed that in *Chinatown*, Evelyn embodies the violence of *the past* while she actively wants to escape being entrapped by it. Jake's inability to possess Evelyn, which means his inability to possess time, is the main cause of his failure as a typical noir detective. In the next chapter I will talk about *Memento* that has also been linked to revisionist film noir. I would argue that, in contrast to *Chinatown*, *Memento* does not have this radical stands towards the violence of the past that exists in the present. *Chinatown* is a movie about the past as being non-interventive, while *Memento* possession and explanation of past.

(in Bordwell's sense) present and what the whole film entails (e.g., *The Others* or *The Sixth Sense*). The viewer at some point realizes that she needs to look at another source, beyond the narrative agent, in order to grasp the intent of the film. I will argue that this idea of tricking and misinforming the audience is something that contemporary criticism based on Deleuzian film theories continues to apply by connecting this idea to his concept of "the power of the false."²⁶⁹ However, according to Deleuze, the power of the false is not the opposite of truth, rather the power of the false is linked to life's becoming.²⁷⁰ In other words, breaking away from sensory motor, in a Deleuzian sense, is momentary and in flux not in a fixed state, opposite to what is assumed to be the truth. Further on, for Deleuze, the power of the false is different than the type falsifying narration that engenders the notion of "each has its own truth."²⁷¹ Rather the power of the false should restore the coexistence of past and present as a truth.

According to Trifonova, for Deleuze, the time-image, as a result of breaking of sensory-motor linkages, does not refer to anything outside itself and does not describe the state of things.²⁷² Falsification of the narration, for that reason, must be beyond signification and representation.²⁷³

²⁶⁹ In chapter six of *Cinema 2* entitled, "Power of the False," Deleuze contrasts the organic narration to the crystalline narration in which the latter implies a collapse of the sensory-motor schemata. The falsifying narration frees itself from the system of the chronological narration by deconstructing the legal connection of the latter system because "the power of the false affects the investigator and the witness as much as the person presumed guilty" (133). In fact, the falsifying narration depends directly to the time-image (i.e., opsigns and chronosigns) but free from the sensory motor signs and continuity editing (137). Deleuze argues that there are two kinds of chronosigns: those concerned with the order of time and those concerned with time as series. The first one takes place when a character inhabits different sheet of time in a single shot. The second one takes place image reveals the before and the after. The latter, Deleuze argues is directly related to power of the false. The time-image's quality of the power of the false is not to remind us a false perception but to discharge the link between our belief and the image's identity and thus providing us possibilities other than the "truth."

²⁷⁰ See *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, 103. And *Cinema II*, 149.

²⁷¹ *Cinema II*, 127.

²⁷² Trifonova. *The Image in French Philosophy*, 249-51.

Falsifying narration is, in Deleuze's view, beyond metaphysics and beyond postmodernism, whose relativism still rests in the idea of truth. This kind of narration is supposed to restore the original neutrality and meaninglessness of a world without truth. Falsifying narration is meta-narration, and its self-referentiality restores to us the pre-signifying regime of pure images.²⁷⁴

Unlike Saussurian linguistic, Deleuze does not identify image with its sign referral.²⁷⁵ And unlike postmodernist's relativism that is still rooted on the idea of truth, for Deleuze, falsifying narration is similar to Bergson's interpretation of mental life as it is continually expanding upon different layers of time.

The films of directors such as Christopher Nolan, Tom Tykwer, and Michel Gondry have frequently become case studies for applying Deleuzian theories to film studies. In his book, *Framed Time*, Garret Stewart argues that digital cinema offers the possibility of a variety of departures from normal perception. A chapter of his book, focusing on *Memento* and *Insomnia*, is entitled "Trick Beginning and The European Uncanny." Stewart notes that, "[h]ere are beginnings at times so thoroughly tricked that when their 'switch' is finally pulled, and their ontological reversal pulled off, we realize that the protagonist whose quest they launch was never there at all—never anything to begin with."²⁷⁶ At this time, I think a similar argument that Berliner makes about the Hollywood films of the seventies is reclaimed by Stewart and utilized with respect to some contemporary Hollywood and European films. In short, the audience is prompted to align with a hero who unexpectedly offers very inconsistent perspectives on the same event.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 251.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 252.

²⁷⁶ Garret Stewarts, 86. In Rodowick, D.N. (editor), *After Images of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2002).

For example, *Memento* reflects upon certain aspects of modern capitalism that Bergson claims are founded on amnesia. In fact, the electronic media can generate the experience of virtual reality only through some degree of memory loss (forgetting the origin of being). As well, the film questions the possibility of the damaged memory and perception being healed on a purely subjective level. In the previous chapter, I argued that there is one “revealed truth” in films such as *Memento* or *Inception* but it is presented in a way that requires the spectators to constantly reevaluate it in antithetical ways. In European films such as those of Michael Haneke, there are fundamental inconsistencies between the *syuzhet* and the *fabula* (according to Bordwell’s conceptualization of these terms). Therefore, the solving of the puzzle in these films is never meant to be achieved (as is the case with respect to Hollywood films), and indeed, the spectator is further misled in her attempt to build the *fabula*.²⁷⁷ However, I think this last point does not change how these films try to provoke uncertainty. I consider both types of cinema limited and conservative in terms of engendering confusion. In previous chapters I tried to establish an opposition between being confused and becoming-confused. Accordingly, I will contend that the confusion provoked by some underrated art films such as *Suspicious River* is far greater. I will argue that, rather than being in a contradictory state as they are in such films as of Nolan’s and Haneke’s, the past and the present in *Suspicious River* become indistinguishable and remain so.

In this dissertation, I deal with Bergson’s concept of *duration* as internal time, a form of time essential to the self, irrelevant to the outside world unless cut it into segments and

²⁷⁷ I use this term in accordance with how Bordwell theorizes narrative films. *Fabula* is “the imaginary construct that we create.” David Bordwell, *Narrative in Fiction Film*, (The university of Wisconsin Press, 1985) 53.

spatialized. I will go on to argue that films such as *Memento* and *Inception* prompt the spectator to spatialize inner time as it is paradoxically presented in the head of the protagonist. For example, Clarke and Doel²⁷⁸ discuss what happens in the colour and black-and-white segments of *Memento*. According to these critics, the colour scenes illustrate Deleuzian affection-image and black-and-white scenes belong to the category of perception-image. They note that “[t]his movement of expression carries *Memento* between different levels of articulation between the embodied and the visceral, and the abstracted and calculated.”²⁷⁹ According to Doel and Clarke, affection-image is usually used in the minimal intermediate zone between perception and reaction images. In other words, they reduce the characteristics of affection-image to inbetweenness. Although, for Deleuze, perception-image may find a particular status in what he calls camera-self-consciousness (Non-human perception), it is furthermore directly related to our nervous system.²⁸⁰ In *Memento*, the colour versus black-and-white distinctions between these layers of articulation helps the spectators know if they are perceiving the intuitive or calculated space. This is very similar to classical devices (e.g., irises, foggy textures, and black-and-white scenes) that suggest flash-backs. In other words, the past is like a dream and always distinguishable from the present.

²⁷⁸ According to Robert Sinnerbrink, “[t]he affection image ... already expresses pure qualities that articulated a virtual power of the image independent of sensory-motor narrative (Dreyer’s silent masterpiece, *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928), is hardly ‘sensory-motor’ action cinema, being one of the finest examples of affection-image/time-image film.)” in *New Philosophies of Film: Thinking Images*, Continuum International Publishing Group, New York City. 2011. 68. More to the point, the concept of any-instant-whatever that is strongly present in Dreyer’s film but the example of flashbacks in *Memento* can hardly be perceived as purely qualitative segments.

²⁷⁹ David B. Clarke, Valerie Crawford Pannhauser, Marcus A. Doel, *Moving Pictures/Stopping Places: Hotels and Motels on Film*, (Lanham: Lexington Book, 2009) 224.

²⁸⁰ See *Cinema 2*, Chapter 2.

In short, all these films deal with the circulatory question that if the present presupposes the past, then can we change the past. David Couzens Hoy notes:

Can one change the past? As one might expect of philosophers, the answer is yes and no. No, if the past is the context within which our present self-understandings arise and which gives our projects the grid that makes them intelligible in the first place. As a cone, the past can be expanded and unpacked, or it can be condensed into the present moment only. Merleau-Ponty calls this way of thinking about temporality “snowballing.” The disadvantage of this way of seeing temporality through the eyes of the present is that it makes the independence of the past difficult to explain.²⁸¹

However, *Suspicious River* resists, for the most part, any attempt on the side of the spectator to spacialize inner time. Several devices are at work to maintain this sort of temporal confusion. First of all, the film does not prompt its audience to find a resolution so that they may view it as a clever narrative. Second, the confusion central to the mind of the main character never becomes something symbolic. (In other words, it is a matter of *becoming-confused* and not being confused.) And, third, certain resolutional themes given for the closure of the film are not strong and remain insignificant in relation to the more profound experience of the film, and more importantly, the inner experience of time. No moment in *Suspicious River* is represented as external to the main character (given that certain temporal experiences of this film are aligned with protagonist’s various psychological states). The screen then becomes her present and past life prolonged and mingled together. In short, “the power of the false” is not created by loss of memory; it rather becomes, synchronic with all levels of time. Laura U. Marks suggests that “[w]hat Deleuze calls ‘powers of the false’ in the cinema are at work when there is no single

²⁸¹ David Couzens Hoy, *The Time of our Lives*. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009) 73.

point that can be referred to as real or true.”²⁸² She goes on to say that “[a]ctual and virtual images are constituted around the splitting of time, and their indiscernibility, the inability to designate either as the true image, constitutes the power of the false.”²⁸³ Hence, the power of the false, in *Suspicious River*, is experienced through a constant state of indeterminacy that is inseparable from becoming-insensible towards the truth or falsity of the narration.

Suspicious River has some semantic and syntactic elements characteristic of ghost movies. According to Lim, the multiple temporalities together with the merging of the diegetic and non-diegetic space in ghost films “resonates with the Bergsonian understanding of existence as characterized by both permanence and change, a world that both moves and remains.”²⁸⁴ In ghost films, Lim argues, the house becomes a “heterogeneous space in which past and present coexist and in which being is a question of memory.”²⁸⁵ Hence cinematic confusion may be achieved through a temporal uncertainty resulting from the fact that the chronological situations of flashbacks cannot be distinguished clearly. Consequently, spectators become uncertain about the true temporal index of both the actions and the event. But in ghost movies this uncertainty is depicted metaphorically to show psychological manifestation of one’s loneliness and depressive states. For example, in *A Tale of Two Sisters* (Kim Jee-Woon, 2003), a two shot of the sisters on the wharf early in the film is graphically matched with the film’s last shot, which reveals the final secret: the lead character, instead of being continually in the company of her sister, has in fact been entirely alone. This kind of sad revelation pathologizes the main characters (usually a

²⁸² Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*, (Durham, NC: Durham University Press, 2000) 65.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Lim, 240.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 241.

child or a woman) as being in an extremely depressed mental state thereby distancing the audience from the experience of the temporal confusion that reflects the main character.

This sort of distancing can also be evidenced in films such as *Ju-on* (2003), where it is suggested at the end that all the injuries of the main character were self-inflicted. Here certain ghostly appearances turn out to be manifestation of the female lead's proper self both in a physical and psychological sense (e.g., we find out that the ghost has her hands, eyes, clothing, etc.) In *Suspicious River*, however, the syntactic elements of ghost movies are subverted in such a way that the revelation of the little girl as a ghostly figure does not terminate her affective value in the diegetic space of the film. In short, *Suspicious River* works against the corruption of photographic memory that Bergson is concerned about. The memory, in *Suspicious River*, is not very precise or detached from any movement.

In *Ju-on*, the clock does not signal anything about her present situation, but becomes a reminder of terrible acts that happened in the past that are forever repeated. The ghost's relation to symbolic time is not that of negation, but rather, the ghost reflects upon the trace of what happened in the past in a very indeterminate and unpredictable fashion.

The main concern of the *mise-en-scène* of the ghost films, Lim states, “is that *space* has a *memory*.”²⁸⁶ The question one may ask is: to what degree is this fragmentation of spatial continuity a temporal one? There is a notable sequence in *Ju-on* where, an elevator, going up several floors, reveals an uncanny apparition on each floor of a little boy (always the same boy) who is standing behind the door. The repetition of the image of a dead ghost child on linear movement of an elevator is a form of mapping out (i.e., spatializing) of the temporal fragmentation. The scene is a metaphor to show how the dead child impresses his permanent presence on the temporal flow of life like a series of pictures in a film reel. By recalling that Bergson was against how movement is mapped in a film reel as a reconstruction of duration, this scene may also be viewed as an attempt to reconstitute the uncanny atemporal presence of a ghost into an abstracted and fixed attitude. In ghost films, Lim says, “*space remembers*. The haunted house refers to a space of recollection charged with affects: alternately fearsome, thrilling, or tragic.”²⁸⁷ Because of the way visual elements impress their physicality on consciousness, I think this fragmentation is still metaphorical. In other words, images in such circumstances are spacial effects and remain superior (in a Bergsonian sense) to the experience of temporality. More to the point, in line with these films exhibiting time as being confused rather than becoming-confused, we see that the lead characters usually seek a cure for this perversion of spatio-temporal continuity.

Later on, I will discuss the spatial and geographical characteristics of nostalgia (etymological meaning is: a painful condition of returning home). Ghost films are similarly spatial. The difference is that instead of seeking a return, they mark the house as a terrible place. Moreover, in films such as *Ju-on*, the space is still superior because the unfastening of the

²⁸⁶ Lim, 204.

²⁸⁷ Lim, 205.

chronology of the narrative events is wholly motivated by the spatial heterogeneity of the terrible sites. Therefore, although time is to some degree distorted, its distortion is highly motivated by the space. More to the point, the repetition of fate is another important element of Asian ghost stories that suggests a circular (instead of being arranged in a straight line) progression of time, which still may be seen as move from one point to the other.

Bergson believes that human beings, unlike animals, are capable of seeing their own reflection, or in other words, they can imagine being outside of themselves.²⁸⁸ As a result they can create tools. But also because of this sort of imagination, they sometimes feel unbalanced, depressed, and detached from life.²⁸⁹ Thus we try to set thing right again and to do this, Bergson says, we need a “fabulation function.”²⁹⁰ The latter is a specific form of imagination or voluntarily hallucination by cause of which there is a feeling that there exists an invisible but efficacious presence that keeps watching us.²⁹¹ Bergson believes that this fabulation is superior to imaginative representation. Asian ghost films to some degree intend direct representation of this natural process of fabulation. This demonstration of confusion reduces the freedom one seeks in reversing their unbalanced feelings in this process of fabulation. In other words, ghost films eventually reveal fabulation as a form of madness. However, indeed, rather than representing these visions (i.e., voluntarily hallucination), I will argue that in *Suspicious River* the protective figure of a child normalizes the experience of fabulation.

In *Mutual Images: Reflections of Kant in Deleuze's Transcendental Cinema of Time*, Melina Szaloky focuses on the notion of a future philosophy that Deleuze argues is based on

²⁸⁸ Lawlor, 88

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

Kantian principles of transcendental critique.²⁹² An important feature of Deleuze's writing on cinema, Szaloky states: is the incommensurability of the Western idealization of rationalism and the temporality of movement-images.²⁹³ For Deleuze, the cinematic shot, that is unpredictable and instantaneous, immediately gives us a movement-image manifested in a semi-subjective camera use, reversing the formation of the Kantian *I* by turning the outside of our thoughts inside. In other words, unlike Kantian perception of time as wholly contained in cogito, the simultaneity of time in movement-image creates a momentary self-loss wherein, while experiencing becoming one with time and being in time, one witnesses a temporal state of non-identity.

Jurate Baranova notes that "Deleuze opposes the position of a transcendental subject, which retains the forms of the person, personal consciousness and subjective identity, and which is satisfied with creating the transcendental out of characteristics of the empirical. That, according to Deleuze, is evident in Kant when he directly deduces the three transcendental syntheses from the corresponding psychological syntheses."²⁹⁴ Martha Blassnigg in *Time, Memory, Consciousness and Cinema Experience* notes that, in reaction to Kant's transcendental philosophy, "Bergson proposed to overcome the dichotomy of matter (body) and spirit (mind)

²⁹² See Chapter Four of David Norman Rodowick. *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, (Minneapolis.: University of Minnesota. 2010)

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Jurate Baranova. "Artraud Versus Kant: Annihilation of the Imagination in Deleuze's philosophy of Cinema" in *Cinema Journal* 6 (2014): 137.

without the necessity to establish a transcendental force or realm, or to consider consciousness as epiphenomenon.”²⁹⁵ In *Creative Evolutions*, Bergson writes:

These doctrines are thus found to fall short of the Kantian criticism. Certainly, the philosophy of Kant is also imbued with the belief in a science single and complete, embracing the whole of the real. Indeed, looked at from one aspect, it is only a continuation of the metaphysics of the moderns and a transposition of the ancient metaphysics. Spinoza and Leibniz had, following Aristotle, hypostasized in God the unity of knowledge. The Kantian criticism, on one side at least, consists in asking whether the whole of this hypothesis is necessary to modern science as it was to ancient science, or if part of the hypothesis is not sufficient. For the ancients, science applied to concepts, that is to say, to kinds of things. In compressing all concepts into one, they therefore necessarily arrived at a being, which we may call Thought, but which was rather thought-object than thought-subject.²⁹⁶

Alexander Lefebvre notes that for Bergson, Kantianism is dogmatic mainly because it assumes that it is applicable to the whole of reality while it cannot be used to explain the temporal half of it.²⁹⁷ This concentration on the experience of subjectivity, in particular psychological experience

²⁹⁵ Martha Blassnigg in *Time, Memory, Consciousness and the Cinema Experience*. (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V, 2009) 30.

²⁹⁶ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 387. The discussion of the notion of “pure perception” against Kantian realism is repeated at the end of Bergson’s other book, *Matter and Memory*. (specifically in p306-310) Bergson tries to restore perception into things, and likewise, brain into universe. Unlike Kant, Bergson does not think that absolute knowledge can be constructed through the realm of transcendental consciousness. He states that “[i]f we prefer the standpoint of the Kantian realism, we find between the ‘thing-in-itself,’ that is to say the real, and the ‘sensuous manifold’ from which we construct our knowledge, no conceivable relation, no common measure. Now, if we get to the bottom of these two extreme forms of realism, we see that they converge towards the same point: both raise homogeneous space as a barrier between the intellect and things. The simpler realism makes of this space a *real* medium, in which things are in suspension; Kantian realism regards it as an *ideal* medium, in which the multiplicity of sensations is coordinated ; but for both of them this medium is given to *begin with*, as the necessary condition of what comes to abide in it. And if we try to get to the bottom of this common hypothesis, in its turn, we find that it consists in attributing to homogeneous space a disinterested office: space is supposed either merely to uphold material reality, or to have the function, still purely speculative, of furnishing sensations with means of coordinating themselves.” In *Matter and Memory*, (307).

²⁹⁷ See Alexander Lefebvre, *Human Rights as a Way of Life*, 19.

of time that science tend to eliminate, can potentially redirect the materialistic approaches in understanding a cinematic experience (i.e., cinema as a time machine, or automatic reproduction of realism) into the more internalized experience of duration.

Bergson indeed notes: “Hence there are finally two different selves, one of which is, as it were, the external projection of the other, its spatial and, so to speak, social representation. We reach the former by deep introspection, which leads us to grasp our inner states as living things, constantly becoming, as free states not amenable to measure, which permeate one another and of which the succession in duration has nothing in-common with juxtaposition in homogeneous space.”²⁹⁸

In *Darkness and Light*, Dorothea Olkowski talks about how discontinuity in time and the knowledge that we derive from it keep us in a state of confusion. Time, she tells us, “is composed of moments or instants; it is a series of immobile ‘nows.’”²⁹⁹ Recalling Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception*, Olkowski notes that although perception was conceived for as being a series of causal relations, it is now the case that one can no longer view images as being placed in consciousness and their movements as pure separated phenomena.³⁰⁰ Thus in cinema every perspective consists of a multiplicity wherein every configuration of particles produces an alternative world.³⁰¹ According to Martha Blassnigg, “this spectrum seems to allow us to enfold a great variety of theoretical perspectives around the issue of the cinema perception,

²⁹⁸ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 231.

²⁹⁹ David Norman Rodowick, *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010) 80.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 83-6

³⁰¹ Ibid.

such as approaches to the cinema as illusion dream- and personality-factory, mirror-phase, the double, the signifier of the imaginary, etc.”³⁰²

In *Wrapped Minds*, Temenuga Trifonova brings in Foucault’s discussion of the temporality of madness into the analysis of multiple personality films.³⁰³ Accordingly Foucault believes that mental illness is the result of a reversal of the normal experience of the temporal flow—rejecting society’s hierarchy of the moment.³⁰⁴ Hence, one’s experience of time is measure for testing one’s social existence and ability to recount the events to others.³⁰⁵ In other words, to carry on an action in the present requires a belief in the existence of the present that in the future becomes a past event.³⁰⁶ Then the past events becomes narratable in linear forms. Hence post-filmic cinema (to use Garret Stewart’s terminology) parodies Foucault’s model of madness.³⁰⁷ Multiple identity films, she argues, generate disturbance and disbelief in their character’s experience of the temporal flow.³⁰⁸ In short, these films (Hollywood psychological disorder films) aestheticize the complexity of psychopathology within the structural elements of the film’s narrative.³⁰⁹

Trifonova suggests that *Hollywood multiple films* such as *The Matrix Trilogy* (Andy Wachovski 1999-2000), *The Return* (Asif Kapadia 2006), *Session 9* (Brad Anderson, 2009), *The Sixth Sense* (M.Night Shyamalan, 2001), or *Déjà vu* (Tony Scott, 2006) shows Hollywood’s

³⁰² Martha Blassnigg, 42.

³⁰³ Temenuga Trifonova, *Warped Minds*, 23-24.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 40.

interest in chronological confusion and apparent demythologization of a Cartesian notion of the transcendent stable self/subject only to reinforce a sense of agency into the protagonist to deal with the traumatic experiences and use the chronotope of multiple realities to construct a self-referential narrative structure.³¹⁰ These alternative layers of temporality are meant to be seen as distraction for a character's who is in his way to reaffirm his true identity (e.g., *The Bourne Trilogy*). I am in agreement with Trifonova when she says that in these types of films "multiple realities are not, strictly speaking, 'multiple'— they are subordinated to a single *real* reality, even if they originally have precedence over it by obscuring it."³¹¹ Accordingly such films are like puzzles or games as both characters and the viewers are ought to guess which layer of reality/temporality is the right one.³¹²

For Deleuze what distinguishes cinema from other forms of art (that are theoretically based on narrative or representation) is its mental and corporeal affects in the process of a filmic experience. Deleuze believes that there are no fixed status for the content, its aesthetic expression, and the sensorial and the mental experience of a film. Deleuze (in perhaps contradictory style) tries to provide us these cinematic affects with logic and applicability in order to show how cinema is capable of producing a habitual change in our thought. He notes: "crystalline narration will fracture the complementarity of a lived horological space and a represented Euclidean space."³¹³ According to Trifonova, "Deleuze privileges the time-image

³¹⁰ Ibid., 172-177.

³¹¹ Ibid., 177.

³¹² Ibid., 178.

³¹³ *Cinema II*, 325.

over the movement-image because the former constitutes itself beyond representation.”³¹⁴ Hence in representation, the subordination of movement to time is not possible.

In short, I think Deleuzian concepts are used by many scholars usually in relation to how these concepts are represented in such films and how they regenerate multiple truths (e.g., the analysis of the “power of the false” in relation to films such as *Caché* or *The Matrix*). In the next six chapters, I will discuss *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* as movies that have rarely been talked about according to these theories. I have brought it up that, as Trifonova suggests, only through reversal of the subordination of time to movement we can have a more authentic Deleuzian experience.³¹⁵ I will try in my analysis of *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures* to suggest that such art-films generate stronger affective responses with regards to our recognitions of the memory-images than movies discussed in this chapter.

For Deleuze, the crucial component of cinema is the emergence of *opsigns* and *sonsigns*, specific dimensions of image formation that cannot be readily assimilated within a common-sense perception of space-time.³¹⁶ This disturbance of sensory motor schema and the appearance of opsigns and sonsigns lead to the reversal of the time $\leftrightarrow$ movement relationship so that, time no longer remains subservient to the linear movement. In short, our commonsense understanding of the world is undermined. The experience of this undermining in *Suspicious River* is, I will argue, not that of a shock (as one finds in *Cache*) or observation (as one finds in *Inception*) but is

³¹⁴ Trifonova, *The Image in French Philosophy*, 224.

³¹⁵ Trifonova, 262. Having in mind that time-image for Deleuze is in contrast with the movement-image which is conceived spatially.

³¹⁶ Deleuze, *The Time-Image*, 69-70.

a form of becoming in that the experience of confusion becomes, but never fully is, internalized and perceptible.

Chapter 4

Multilayered Experience of Time in *Suspicious River*

In this chapter, I intend to analyze how the experience of time is rendered ambiguous and confusing in *Suspicious River* as a result of the lead character's recollecting a multitude of temporal layers from the past. Indeed, by coming into her perceptual field, these past recollections slowly liberate her from living in accordance with the linear and symbolic progression of time. *Suspicious River* is based on an American novel of the same name by Laura Kasischke. In both cases, it is about a motel receptionist who lives in a small town called Suspicious River and who is fundamentally dissatisfied with her life. We later start to find

out that she is prostituting herself to the men who come to the motel and she herself does not quite know why she is doing this. Stopkewich does not explain the character by going back in time, but she depicts Leila's past self (or child self) existing in the same time-frame as the adult self. Although the novel is about the internal world of the character, Stopkewich uses little voice-over and instead uses the lead character's facial expression to show the tension between what goes on in the world inside her and what she does in the world around her.

Bergson notes that "[our] perception, however instantaneous, consists in an incalculable multitude of remembered elements; in truth, every perception is already memory."³¹⁷ He goes on to say that, "[p]ractically, we perceive only the past, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future."³¹⁸ The present never really occurs because it comes to mind with it as no longer a present. Thus, we only have presence in the past. In fact, "memories supplant our perception."³¹⁹ However brief a perception may be, it contains plenty of details from our past experiences.³²⁰ Memory then can never be detachable from perception. Basically, Stopkewich's entire narrative and stylistic design revolves around this idea that the present is always layered onto the past. The fundamental alienation of our daily life namely, the illusion of being present in present, is eventually carried off by the narrative construct of *Suspicious River*. In this part of

³¹⁷ S. E. Gontarski, Paul Ardoine, Laci Mattison, *Understanding Bergson, Understanding Modernism*, (New York City: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013) 150.

³¹⁸ Ibid 150. (Bergson's emphasis in italics). He says further on that "Consciousness, then, illumines, at each moment of time, that immediate part of the past which, impending over the future, seeks to realize and to associate with it." (Ibid.) In other words, he stresses on how habit memory adapts and merges itself to the present situation. This is a kind of memory that performs our past. In *Matter and Memory*, for example on cases of dementia, Bergson says that "we sometimes that intelligent answers are given to a succession of questions which are not understood: language here works after the manner of a reflex." In *Matter and Memory*, 86. Language here wholly functions in a fashion of motor memory and automatism.

³¹⁹ Ibid. He goes on to insist that "there is no perception that is not full of memory." 96.

³²⁰ Ibid.

the study, I will discuss certain recollection scenes from *Suspicious River* which, unlike conventional recollection-images, do not have a narrative purpose. Rather, they simply function as counter-points to the images of the present. Recollection-images in this film introduce intensity on a moment-to-moment basis which, in short, generates certain cinematic experiences with multiple durations.

In *Suspicious River*, Stopkewich relocates Leila's childhood story within the diegetic world of the film. Instead of what Deleuze would view as conservative flashbacks, the past exists independently but within the present. Her past is not treated analytically as a means by which to understand the present, that is, as a causal vector that produces her destiny. In other words, her past is not reduced to representation but is rather actualized horizontally in present-time. Near the end of the film, the future also plays a part but, rather than being a form of prediction or anticipation typical of Hollywood films (such as one finds in *The Sunset Boulevard*), it is an additional layer to the present. In other words, the image only launches towards future possibilities. When Leila's life is threatened and she is running away from Gary, (the man who has been the vehicle of her self-destructiveness tendencies), her childhood persona suddenly appears by her side and warns her of a tragic fate which is in store for her. She says to her adult self while being persuaded by Gary and his companions:

He has a gun ... He will push you down on your knees. And fire once into the back of your head. They will put your body into trunk of your car. At the end of the road they [will] set you on fire.

Her ghostly existence in the diegetic world of the film sufficiently distracts Garry and his companions and thus this intervention allows Leila to escape. Hence her survival shows that the

future revealed by this warning of the imminent death from her childhood persona is simultaneously avoided and never becomes a future in the sense of anticipation and thereby ultimately having no narrative purpose. It is only a possible layer that coexists with the present at the moment of her struggle to survive and stay alive.³²¹ No past experience at this point is separated from the moment-to-moment experience of the so called present.

In short, the Bergsonian notion of paramnesia (i.e., déjà vu or the illusion of having already experienced the present circumstances) simply makes perceptible the fact that the past and future coexist with the present while our actual existence duplicates itself by a means of the “recollection of the present, contemporaneous with the present itself.”³²² The horizontal existence of multiple layers of Leila’s past in the present evokes infinite possibilities of the moment which radically challenges the audience’s expectation in constructing the fictional linearity of time. At the scene discussed above, the authoritative force of the normative present-time is interrupted by such recollection of a specific memory-image, through which a very different and non-normative type of connection between the past experience and the present moment of action has been formed.

For Deleuze, “it is not the recollection-image or attentive recognition which gives us the proper equivalent of the optical-sound image, it is rather the disturbance of memory and the failure of recognition.”³²³ This failure of recognition engenders a kind of virtual-image that

³²¹ Her Ghostly appearance has immanent affect that is relevant to Deleuzian concept that *Time only moves forward*. Events occur in such a way that cannot be predicted. The perceptibly virtual presence of the little girl, in fact, has real effect in the local temporal layer of the movie.

³²² Gilles Deleuze, *The Time-Image*, 71.

³²³ Ibid., 92.

cannot consciously be recognised as virtual. The past in *Suspicious River* is larger than the subject's field of recognition and action. It is the subject that is in the past. The past, indeed, is a world for the subject.

When we conceive time as points in line or segment of a circle, as it has been discussed with reference to Zeno's paradox, it stops moving. However, we inadvertently turn time into space by measuring a simultaneous movement that occurs between two moments. To avoid this problem, Stopkewich right away effaces the significance of the moment. Leila's past-persona serves a purpose in the present moment but this is not an epiphanic moment that governs the future in any conventional sense. Because the scene is taking place in the diegetic world but does not have any role in propelling the narrative forward or to any kind of closure, it can be both real and unreal. What happens and what does not happen are taking at the same place. The time-image remains mobile and does not allow a static conceptualization for this moment. Thus the audience does not gain a feeling of experiencing time by acting upon what has happened in this moment.³²⁴ The chain of events is deconstructed and time enduring inside the events. Thus there is no customary sense of mastery over the experience of time. Indeed, the temporal aspect of the film remains dynamic and totally open.

This unusual linkage between past events and present ones in *Suspicious River* is not the essence of its plot. For cognitive film theorists, flashback has always been linked to causality. According to this view, the flashback explains the reasons (sometimes repressed) for a

³²⁴ Having in mind that according to Laura Marks, Deleuze's theory of time-image is not a theory of spectatorship, bringing in the audience's experience cannot be easily justified by Deleuzian terminologies.

character's actions.³²⁵ In *Suspicious River*, however, flashbacks are neither bracketed nor do they confirm the linearity of the narrative. Here, the function of flashbacks is not to reveal the causes for present events but simply to intensify them, not to reveal "constituted memory," but to install a recollection endurable in the present. In other words, memory becomes dynamic and involuntary that is always ready to *act* upon the past rather than (re)presenting it.

The re-creation of a childhood persona in adult life is a common practice in modern novels in that, childhood experiences and emotions habitually underlie an adult identity. The incorporating of a childhood persona into a narrative usually articulates a psychological longing for a lost past which itself is often an idealization of home. In contrast to this celebration of the happy home, *Suspicious River* is about the process of recalling painful childhood experiences. Specifically, because Leila's present life is not a continuous evolution of the early stages, it is simply interconnected layer-likely to the past events. In other words, the present life must have a character of being interfused with the past layers.

In *Suspicious River*, the voice of Leila's childhood persona signals an additional or alternative personality for her, one more naïve and open than the adult voice. For example she says to Leila "When I grow up I will stay in the motel and will ask my boyfriend to pay for it." This honest and humorous way of expressing herself is in contrast to Leila, who with serious expressionless face usually responds with silence, never expressing her inner thoughts to other people. Cinematically speaking, Stopkewich does not invite us to perceive the childhood

³²⁵ For example view David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Minding Movies: Observations on the Art, Craft, and Business of Filmmaking*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011) 130-139.

memory as a recollection or representation but as a felt presence. Although the presence of the girl in real is slowly becoming unreal, there is no stable point-of-view in this act of recollections.

For Deleuze, the virtual exists beyond our subjective position. In a complicated form, Deleuze argues that “[s]ubjectivity is never ours, it is time, that is the soul and the spirit, the virtual. The actual is always objective, but the virtual is subjective: it was initially the affect, that which we experience in time; then time itself, pure virtuality which divides itself into as affector and affected, ‘the affection of self by self’ as definition of time.”³²⁶ Keith Ansell Pearson responds to this passage by saying that time “is never a simple possession or property of the subject simply because it is in time that the self becomes other to itself, becomes double; both loses itself and creates itself.”³²⁷ With regards to *Suspicious River*, the otherness of self to itself is shown by the independent existence of the childhood persona in the diegetic universe of the film. This is to say that the childhood memory is not shown as an interiority or as a property of the self. With respect to the above statement by Pearson, the notion of the self’s distanciation from the self is shown in a way that Leila can literally have a communication with herself in the form of her adult persona conversing to her childhood one. The latter phenomenon, moreover, is a dramatic recreation, and hence the experiencing, of the self’s being in time that normally escapes the threshold of our consciousness and our social beings. In short, both characters who

³²⁶Deleuze, *The Time-Image*, 82-83. The cinematic experience then, rather than remaining in the realm of representation, becomes closer the actual experience of an event. Therefore, both characters and spectators become observers. In this passage the virtual is linked to the none-chronological time in the self is affected magically by self (double) without any sense of priority.

³²⁷ Keith Ansell Pearson, 184.

belong to the same identity (the childhood figure and the adult figure) have their own interiorities, neither is superior to the other.

The relationship between Leila and “the little girl who lives down the lane” unites various perceptual layers into one. Stopkewich doesn’t explain the lead character by virtue of going back in time. Hence there is no explanation for the deviant psychology of the lead character. Indeed, Stopkewich’s use of this device, by which Leila’s childhood past exists in the same time-frame as her adult life, prevents this character from being judged that way. In other words, the audience does not interpret this seemingly hallucinatory state in pathological terms. For example, in an early scene, the little girl bikes to the motel and sneaks through the window where Leila is in a room with one of the motel guests. The scene is not a typical recollection-image because Leila is not aware that the little girl is observing her in a sexual act. Shortly after, the girl bikes down the path to her home breathlessly seeing her parents in fight. Later on, we realize that, as a child, she had the experience of similar circumstance (i.e., witnessing what her mother did in the same situation).

The above mentioned scene perfectly shows the experience of multiplicity of the interiorities. Although the little girl is the product of the memory, her existence in the diegetic escapes voluntary recollection because she has her own independent life (for Bergson, the voluntary recollection is something continuously in present). In other words, in a mysterious way, the adult self (i.e., the recollecter) is not superior in the experience of recalling the past than the childhood persona. The dramatic effect of this independent past-self, completely liberated in the present, is further heightened in two ways, first of all by this childhood persona

secretly witnessing the adult-self in a supposedly discrete situation. Secondly by parting from this scene in a way which, with very little changes in spatial movement (i.e., she goes off down the lane with her bicycle), takes her immediately back in time (all the way back to the scene with the circumstances of her childhood).

Recollection propels us to recognize situations immediately and enriches an experience, however rapid, with multiple durations. Bergson talks about incidents in dreams in which our brain is capable of creating an antecedent dream narrative to a moment when some phenomenon from the outside world penetrates into the dream world and thus our subconscious. For example, at a precise moment, some loud sound from a nearby construction site can turn into a sound of a gunshot taking place in a dream. According to Bergson's explanation, it is not likely that when, for example, we dream a situation having characters with guns going off, there simultaneously be a shooting like sound accidentally occurring outside our bedroom. He claims that the only explanation for these kinds of dreams is that the brain is capable of instantaneously constructing a full fledged narrative immediately at the basis of some external stimulus. Hence we often wake up with the recollection of a dream that we feel has lasted a lengthy duration. When this phenomenon is carried over into our waking life, it would of course be pathologized as disruptive, anti-social life, and wholly at odds with our practical day-to-day life that requires order and should be matched with spatial time. Montage sequences can potentially allow us to become involved in these kinds of experiences. The above-mentioned scene in *Suspicious River* shows a character creating a prequel narrative ("I can see it now") right at the moment of crisis and provocation as a response to external stimulus (i.e., truck's headlights turn into an

overexposed bright perception and a series of recollection-images) in order to recognize and eventually deal with a situation and danger that is coming from the outside. Further to this point, the audience never knows whether or not this recollection is purely a construct of her imagination.

Temporality and Interior Design

Although space for Bergson is something calculable, there are certain points in *Suspicious River* where a set design goes beyond temporalization. This is to say that set design may be periodless or it can possibly suggest that the space does not say anything about the characters or their destiny of its inhabitants.³²⁸ Stopkewich's mise-en-scène frequently escapes temporalization. For example, a sense of confusion grows in the scene where Leila and her husband visit his parents. There is a classic situation in which her in-laws sense that there is something wrong with their relationship while, at the same time, they don't want to look too deeply into the matter. Rather, they pretend that everything is going well. The overall mood of the scene suggests both a melancholic and nostalgic recollection of her troubled childhood. The transition from Leila's sitting on a couch in her own living room to being in the same position in the living room of her in-laws is accompanied by low-key lighting that is reminiscent of dream/flashback sequences. Her mother-in-law bears an uncanny resemblance to her own mother. The living room is reminiscent of the type of living room that no one ever sits in—a type of living room common enough among suburban middle-class families in the seventies. The

³²⁸ This is in contrast to what Bakhtin describes as chronotope in genre studies. Stopkewich's spacial configuration never signifies a specific time, destiny, or turning points in the development of the narrative.

expression on Leila's face suggests that she could have grown up in a house with a living room like this. She could be a product of such a sterile environment. Looking utterly bored and lifeless in the face of the banal conversation going on around her while she sits on the pale-coloured couch, we once again catch a glimpse of her childhood persona of this character, this is to say someone who grew up in small town and who had an interior life exceeding her social or external one.

The first image is that of Leila in the living room with her mother-in-law, the second image is that of her mother and it shows the latter's resemblance to the former.

In the next scene, she takes leave of her in-laws earlier than expected, giving them the excuse that she has to go to work. But rather than doing this, she goes to meet Gary. What is notable is that his car is not very different from the model that Leila's parents drove in the flashback scenes. In the next scene on the road, in a series of shot-reverse-shots, there are flashbacks of Leila as a little girl who is sitting in the backseat while her mother and uncle occupy the front-seat. This driving scene fuses two front-seat scenes with two different couples (i.e., Garry and the adult Leila, on the one hand, and Leila's mother and her uncle, on the other) that ultimately alternates as a space in which the childhood Leila is in some kind of living contact.

The scene becomes more complex when they pull over to the side of the road to engage in sexual relations, Leila suddenly gets emotional. A passing car, reminiscent of her childhood,

triggers this reaction. Sometime later, while Garry is attempting to comfort her, the camera pans over some swans floating on the river. Leila says to him: “They will be gone soon. They will fly away all at once, and you never know when.” At this point, Gary says: “Tell me something about yourself. What your folks do?” The pan from the lake with swans, symbolizing the endless flow of time, to Gary and Leila’s discussion of her life is not a symbolic or intellectual montage. The relation between these living beings is not that of a conjunction but a sort of liaison. The duration is a form of becoming that neither can be experienced in itself nor as a total phenomenon.

In philosophical terms, duration is not something limited to our consciousness. There is an organic unity between duration as a whole (as Deleuze suggests) and duration as experienced by individual. For Deleuze, the whole of the universe and the whole of a living being are interrelated. In our experience of time, we are not dealing with a closed system.³²⁹

Heraclitus considered change, becoming, and flow as the most fundamental principle of the universe. He is celebrated for saying: “We both step and do not step in the same river. We are and we are not.”³³⁰ The notion of having a fixed identity then cannot explain the essence of the universe. Objects in the world do not have fixed places and lose their meaning over time. Heraclitus was known as a melancholic philosopher weeping over the absence of permanence in

³²⁹ Keith Ansell Pearson, 39. She believes that when Bergson states that “time is the interiority in which we move and change, he is not guarding time *in* subjectivity or in an intentional consciousness.” 169.

³³⁰ Eva T. H. Brann, *The Logos of Heraclitus*, (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2011) 5.

the world.³³¹ The swans in the above-mentioned scene move against historicization of events. The presence of swans in *Suspicious River* violates chronological time symbolically in that the suffering of its characters can no longer be situated within a historical sequence. Leila's presumably past experiences lose their calendrical significance and align themselves with non-chronological time, thereby, becoming immortalized. (The latter point will be elaborated in Chapter Seven.) Leila continuously pieces past events together without any attempt to make sense of them. In other words, she does not try to construct a logical narrative of her past in a fixed state but rather to synchronize her past and present side-by-side. (The river is always changing even though, in a commonsense way, it has a beginning, middle, and end.)

In short, the heterogeneity of duration is not something solely psychological. In the next Chapter, I will discuss how Bergson contrasts psychic time with clock time. One should remember that the reality, for Bergson, however, is comprised of both our psychic experience of duration and extensity (although indivisible).³³²

The visual world of the leading character has a resonance with one of the main narrative themes in *Suspicious River*, namely, a voyage of self-discovery. In other words, her self-destructive tendencies are in larger part this attempt to understand herself. The overall mood of

³³¹ Charles H. Kahn, *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) 89. Heraclitus did not want to define human life as reflected in culture. For him, the authentic experience of the universe is intuitive and qualitative. And unlike Plato, he didn't believe that memory was a storehouse that provides us access to what happened in the past in the form of fixed notion. Craig Lundy in *History and Becoming: Deleuze's philosophy of Creativity* states that the history of becoming in philosophy can be traced to at least Heraclitus. (View the Introduction).

³³² See Keith Ansell Pearson, 24. She further argues that, according to Deleuze, the extensity (quantitative) is the opposite of the intensity (qualitative with numbering). For example she states that space is a matter of extension while movement is an intensive act (quality).

this internal journey is represented by the colour symbology of the movie. Her house is always shown as colourless and monotone while the outside world is represented with vibrant colours. For example, in a scene shown below, the only source of light is what comes from the television. The dumbbells under the table are the only objects in the scene that may signify something (her husband's obsession with losing weight). Thus Leila leaves her husband and her home in search of the "colourful" because she finds so little bit of it in her home.

Leila's house, in contrast to the external world, is tonal and colourless. The only source of light is what comes from the television. The dumbbells under the table refer to her husband's preoccupation with losing weight.

In his article, "Pleats of Matter, Folds of the Soul,"³³³ Guilian Bruno talks about the fashioning of space in film, architecture, and fashion. He states that mood "is a process of

³³³ Published in David Norman, *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*.

imaging fashioned in movement.”³³⁴ He goes on to say that clothes and architecture “share a specific mobility: they are actions that develop in space as lived emotions.”³³⁵ Further on, he states: “To occupy a space is, literally, to wear it. A building, like a dress, is not only worn; it wears out.”³³⁶ He praises futuristic art in making this dynamic visible by creating the mood, emotion and the body parts of the architecture. Referring specifically to *In the Mood for Love* (Kar Wai Wong, 2000), as an example of an atmospheric film in which the space and architecture, frozen in time, are fashioned and internalized in the mind, he concludes the chapter by saying: “If fashioning your inner self is a way of life, this is your movie. It will move you. The mood is so pervasive that you can smell it. This is a film of pure atmosphere, hunted by the very spirit of the design.”³³⁷ In short, he states that “[i]t is an architecture of the mind. We do not know if it is a memory or fantasy.”³³⁸ Externality, as Bergson suggests, “is the distinguishing mark of things which occupy space, while states of consciousness are not essentially external to one another, and become so only by being spread out in time, regarded as a homogeneous medium.”³³⁹

Although it is true that we are wrapped in a mental atmosphere, this cinematic experience of the architecture of the film is not based solely on psychic interiority. On the concept of self in the architectural practices of Le Corbusier, Simon Richard argues that the exterior reality is an important part of his philosophy. Le Corbusier wants, however, “to preserve

³³⁴ Ibid., 229.

³³⁵ Ibid., 225.

³³⁶ Ibid., 230.

³³⁷ Ibid., 227.

³³⁸ Ibid., 226.

³³⁹ *Time and Free Will*, 99.

individuality as something sacred, which was to be achieved by making the individual less dependent upon his exterior milieu.”³⁴⁰ Indeed, this projection and even extension of psychic interiority into the set design is evident in *Suspicious River*. Stopkewich has a modernist approach towards the use of colour, soundtrack rhythms, and lighting. In her films, the exterior is constructed and fashioned in accordance with the extension of the psychic interiority of the lead characters.

The use of lighting or colour triggers Leila’s remembrance of her childhood past.³⁴¹ For example, near the end when Gary’s crews come to the house, the whiteness of the lighting that ultimately blanks the frame resembles the whiteness of the swan. In the next scene, she is covered by white blankets while flashback scenes are inserted as counterpoints to the act of violence taking place in Garry’s house.

Stopkewich was a production designer herself and pays much attention to the details of the set designs. All these details in the set design of *Suspicious River* create an atmosphere of place that reflects the inner psychology of the lead character, who is of course in a position of coping with certain horrific experiences that are external. A character who is the opposite of Leila is the blond pregnant co-worker in the motel, someone who can perfectly manage the

³⁴⁰ Simon Richards in *Le Corbusier and the Concept of Self*, Library of Congress Catalogue, Printed in China. 1973.

³⁴¹ Bergson, for example, in *Matter and Memory* discusses the plurality of moments. He notes that “there is no perception which is not full of memories. With the immediate and present data of our senses, we mingle a thousand details out of our past experience. ... However brief we suppose any perception to be, it always occupies a certain duration, and involves, consequently, an effort of memory which prolongs, one into another, a plurality of moments.” 33-34.

events of her life and is not prone to making “bad decisions.” She is happy to stay within the confines of the traditional marital situation. Moreover, she is someone who keeps herself at distance from Leila’s irregular doings and she is never affected by conflicts. Her presence in the office is apparently fulsome and animated which is in a sharp contrast with the nearby aquarium that oddly enough has no fish. Leila in contrast has the compulsion to self-destruct and fulfill that compulsion by her attachment to Gary. In the next chapter, I will discuss that how following Bergson, Stopkewich depicts the time that is experienced in the motel as highly measured and calendrical that is conceptualized as arrangement of defined segments by focusing on the motel booklets, clocks, and etc. Perhaps, suppressing the awareness of a durative experience of time is followed by the absence of continuity and movement in space (e.g., the absence of fish in the aquarium).

In short, the multilayered experience of time in *Suspicious River* reflects how the lead character submerges her existence in the present into a different layer, a virtual past, one in which childhood memories coexist with and extend into the present. The river runs through the whole of the film, both literally and symbolically, reflecting the fluid experience of time. This experience is repeated in other scenes, where for example, Leila and her husband sleep in a water-bed suggestive of *Suspicious River*. What is notable (that will be discussed in the next Chapter) is the existence of a digital clock positioned beside this water-bed. Stopkewich’s composition method with respect to recollection-images makes this temporal experience of Leila inhabitable. In other words, with respect to Guiliana Bruno’s use of the term, Stopkewich is

definitely “an architecture of the mind” since the atmosphere of this film tries to capture Leila’s mental and internal experience of temporality.

Chapter 5

Digital/Analogue Indications of Time in *Suspicious River*

In this chapter, I will discuss how symbolic time in *Suspicious River* is represented in tension with interior time.

In some instances, Stopkewich plays with the contradictory state of symbolic time and interiority. There are close-ups of clocks inserted that indicate the passage of time apart from any narrative purpose. For example, in one relatively long take, Leila, who is awake in bed

while her husband is sleeping, gazes at a digital clock that reads 2:39. It seems that the digital face of the clock registers one minute of her life (which is an empty cipher) and draws out its insignificance.

Critics tend to place these efforts within certain clichéd perspectives on Canadian cinema as merely a reflection of the slow, boring, and monotonous pace of life in Canada. For example, Kali Paakspuu attempts to convey that, since life in the valley (*Suspicious River*) is very slow, watching the clock's hands may be viewed as a form of entertainment.³⁴² However, the majority of her glances are directed at digital clocks. Therefore I come to the contrary conclusion of the critics such as Paakspuu. I think that these scenes are inserted to show Leila's growing alienation from linear time (i.e., the homogeneous time of the clock). In other words, the ready-to-be-used characteristic of clocks, caused by the objectification and spatilization of time, becomes irrelevant to the character who stares at this object without the latter somehow fitting into a causally related sequence of events.

Here, indeed, we have an illustration of the self whose existence is formed through distinct moments and only feels time as an external phenomenon (i.e., clock time now becomes merely an illusion). Bergson notes that, "[w]hen I follow with my eyes on the dial of a clock, the movement of the hand which corresponds to the oscillation of the pendulum, I do not measure duration, as seems to be thought; I merely count simultaneities, which is very different."³⁴³ He goes on to say that, "[o]utside of me, in space, there is never more than a single position of the

³⁴²Kalli Paakspuu, 397.

³⁴³ Henri Bergson. *Time and Free Will*, 63. Duration then cannot be reduced to image and can only be perceived internally.

hand and the pendulum, for nothing is left from the past.”³⁴⁴ So it is that, in *Suspicious River*, the shots of clocks provoke the sense of disconnectedness in Leila (and, for the most part, she keeps time pieces at bay), since she and her past self exist within the same time-frame. Here symbolic time (which, according to Bergson, prevents us from being aware of our inner duration) is shown as being irrelevant to the self— as pure illusion. The symbolic time becomes irrelevant because, first of all, the numbers turns into a blurred and unreadable image that signifies their arbitrary and ineffective nature. There are also the recurrent motifs of blue lighting and gaseous effects that pervade the film. Both are present in this scene as the digital clock, which Leila gazes at while lying in bed, goes from a distinct blue with the numbers clearly visible to a much darker tint that wholly obscures the face of the clock. In fact, the non-eventfulness of watching one minute going by on a digital clock suggests that structured time for her eventually becomes nothing more than number-signs.

³⁴⁴Ibid. Accordingly then, space never configures duration, it only becomes its representor.

Although, fundamentally, there is no difference between the conventional analogue clock and the digital one in terms of calculating time, the digital representation in this bedroom scene is even more effective in erasing all traces of time than the clock with hands. The analogue clock is symbolised by the movement of its hands in space. Therefore, its relationship to what it signifies is to some degree motivated. (It is analogous to a two-dimensional movement between two points.) With the digital clock, however, this relationship is arbitrary, which is similar to the process of signification in language. Consequently, the viewer is alienated from linear time to some degree by having it reduced to the mirror passage of number-signs. Indeed, it may facilitate the experience of boredom. Since the digital clock symbolizes time in a more arbitrary fashion, Zeno's paradox does not come into our view immediately. In fact, with the digital clock, no time is represented between, for example, 1:28 and 1:29. The passage of time between one minute to the next becomes unrecorded (in memory). Unlike the mechanical surface of the analogue clock, the ordered substitution of number-signs of digital clocks functions with hardly any visible cause and effect relationship. In short, for analogue clocks, we need to learn how to read certain geometrical (and therefore spatial) representations of time. For digitals, on the other hand, no such learning (as the experience of spatiality) is required. So it is that the digital clock, with its punctual representation of time, cannot always keep our attention.

The history of the cinematic representation of time, as the movie characters are related to it, has recently been documented in Christian Marclay's *The Clock* (2010), an art

installation that made its debut at London's White Cube Gallery. In each scene, there is an indication of time in different movies, perfectly synchronized with the actual time of the day.³⁴⁵ Multiple scenes all of which, indicating time pieces in different movies, were matched with what a visitor could read on her own watch. At the time that I went to the installation during the most active part of the day (roughly between 1:00 to 3:00 pm), the majority of the scenes being shown involved a time-bomb, and so normally a cinematic experience with a very high degree of suspense. In addition, the more cinephilic moments for me were scenes such as the following: Woody Allen's glancing at his digital watch (that indicates 2:59) when he had a date at 3:00 in *Mighty Aphrodite*, Diane's revealing of Laura Palmer's secrets in the voicemail (that indicates 2:47) in *Twin Peaks*, and Jane Fonda as a prostitute looking at her watch while faking a sexual pleasure in *Klute*. Despite this heterogeneity, the majority of scenes have some sort of cause and effect relationship with the representation of time. The image of time in movie usually warns us of the fact that time is running out (either in sympathetic or empathetic situation). This claim definitely bears upon more on the active time of the day. As the Guardian's review suggests: "*The Clock* unexpectedly [becomes] quite a sensual, sexy film, in that the late morning stretch features plenty of shots of people in bed, waking up, embracing and then realizing that

³⁴⁵ As Jacob Potemski, in his article, "The Cinema and Real Time: An Investigation of the Medium's Relation to Time" suggests, "[t]he question, which the film raises, is: what is the relation between these two times, the cinematic and the real? To put it differently, is real-time the universal that unifies all of the times invented by the cinema; or does each film, even *The Clock*, beat to its own measure?" He goes on to say that "[f]unctioning as a commentary on the cinema, it seems to say that no matter how hard they try, the movies will never make us oblivious to the present and to all the anxieties that are wrapped up with it." He, in indeed argues, that "[t]he fact that the two times become simultaneous, in a mirror relation, allows the subject to see its own time reflected as if it were the time of another." In *Kinema: A Journal of Film and Audio Visual Media*.

these are forbidden pleasures—forbidden by the clock.”³⁴⁶ But I would generalize that there is usually a causal relationship between the indications of time on the movie-screen and the narrational goal of the movie. *Suspicious River*, however, inserts these shots of clocks in an irrelevant and insignificant way, which is the antithesis of the interpersonal experience of time.

Jane Fonda is looking at her watch in *Klute*. This scene suggests that she fakes sexual pleasures. And, as a consequence, she is anxious about the slow passage of time.

In *Klute*, Bree (played by Jane Fonda) is concerned about “clock time” exclusively in terms of her profession as a prostitute, and as such, always makes an effort to separate her work from the rest of her life. Everything she does is in accordance with clock and calendar time. She goes to her analyst on a weekly basis and as the above scene (which is included in *The Clock*) suggests, in contrast to the male client in the scene, the slowness of time amounts to an ordeal for

³⁴⁶ Peter Bradshaw , “Christian Marclay's The Clock: a Masterpiece of our Times” April, 2011. *The Guardian*. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/filmblog/2011/apr/07/christian-marclay-the-clock> (accessed, April 2013)

her. Therefore, she (unlike Leila in *Suspicious River*) does not welcome or reveal the experience of boredom and she hasn't cut herself off from the dominant progression of time in the society. As such, she only tolerates the experience. However, as I pointed out earlier, the representation of time on the screen in *Suspicious River* does not have a specific narrative purpose. Although time is an important contextual element of *Suspicious River*, we never see the main character in an act of waiting for anything specific to happen. We very seldom see Leila in an act of expecting, anticipating, or waiting for something. In contrast to tolerating the experience to end (like the above mentioned scene in *Klute*), Leila alienates herself from the body. Prostitution is also represented in a very different way than it is in *Klute*. In contrast to Jane-Fonda's character, it seems that Leila does not need the money and only does this act as vehicle to give up the ordered "progressional" life. She only does this as a self-destructive act. What is important has already occurred, and therefore, any event in her life, no matter how threatening or harmful, is met with her indifference and sometimes even a kind perverse desire to provoke even more. An example of this perversity is to be found when a knife is being hold to her throat and she holds her neck even closer to the blade. There is no longer a limit to how far she goes in endangering herself by the time we reach the violent ending of the film.

Deleuze notes that the kind of temporality that operates through the main characters in Antonioni's films is one of waiting. The body in Antonioni's films "is the revealer of the

deadline.”³⁴⁷ By rejecting certain cinematic conventions, usually used to build action-images, Antonioni’s films are known to be perfect examples of what Deleuze calls time-image. By rejecting the representation of the characters’ interaction with their environment, Antonioni foregrounds the experience of boredom, wandering, and, in short, pure duration. It is true that waiting demonstrates the multiplicity of durations but this incompatibility of the internal duration with the external mathematical duration is expressed by the body in many different ways.

On the contrary, Leila’s facial expressions, seldom changing in often long extreme close-ups, does not indicate a neurotic awareness of the tension between the internal qualitative time and the external quantitative time. She has completely given up on the act of waiting in accordance to any fixed agenda and that is one of the main reasons for her masochistic behaviour. (What I mean by masochistic behaviour here is linked to her self-destructiveness that eventually leads to her suppression or complete denial of equal power role in her relationship with Gary.) Masochism, according to Anna Powell, “is adapted by Deleuze to map the operations of the body-without-organs.”³⁴⁸ For Deleuze, sadism is institutional while masochism is contractual.³⁴⁹ More to the point, for Deleuze “the masochist identifies the mother with the law and expels the mother from the symbolic order.”³⁵⁰ In fact, Leila is totally liberated from any deep concern about what could possibly happen to her in the future. Although painful, the past-present-future continuum always functions as a unity for her.

³⁴⁷ *The Time-Image*, View Chapter 8.

³⁴⁸ Anna Powell, 65.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Constance Penley, 118. ,

My comparative analysis of digital clocks versus analogue clocks has a certain kinship with Derrida's notion of trace. It may be useful then to bring in Derrida's criticism of Bergson's phenomenology. Derrida values Bergson's work in identifying the scientific suppression of non-segmented duration by virtue of the spatialization and the homogenization of time. However, he does not see the movements of the hand of a clock as a metaphorical spatialization of time but as a *trace* that defers the presence of the absence or what he specifically calls "dead time."³⁵¹ A symbolic representation of a trace can be found in the above-mentioned scene where the blurred image of the digital clock is superimposed onto the next shot. In short, the trace is the past that cannot be fully reactivated.³⁵² Trace, similar to a footpath, goes forward into the present that itself is absent. In view of that, I contend that the digital clock, more than the analogue one, has this self-negating quality by which a track or trace of the number signs that indicate time carries into the next image.

Symbolic Time in *Suspicious River*: A Close Analysis

In this section, I will examine all the scenes in *Suspicious River* which point towards a symbolic indication of time within the frames. I will demonstrate that, as the film goes on, the

³⁵¹ Patrick O'Conner, *Derrida: Profanation*, (New York City: Continuum, 2010) 53.

³⁵² David Wood. *The Deconstruction of Time*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press 1989) 271. The way I understand this is that, for Derrida, what repeats itself non-metaphysically never fully escapes metaphysics. Derrida is not against clocks, as mechanical machines, and as things that are building on the basis of repetition. There is no repetition without difference, and therefore, the trace of time is separable from and never identical to the point that it signifies. Therefore, for Derrida, even the clock time is very indeterminate and sudden.

tension between symbolic time in conflict with internal time, established at the beginning of the film, gradually disappears. As the story moves forward, symbolic time becomes increasingly insignificant with respect to the inner psyche of the lead character.

The movie begins with an establishing shot of a motel accompanied by Leila's voice-over narration. Following this, we see her watching attentively as the little girl feeds the swans. The voice-over goes: "The swans love to come to get fed. Sometimes they'd stretch their necks like they were trying to hear something far away... and I always wondered what they'd heard." This brief voice-over narration is one of only two; the second one coming at the end of the film. Correspondingly, these brief voice-over narrations are the only moments in the film where the internal world of the character is directly externalized. The next shot (shot number 9) shows a check-in calendar at the reception desk of the motel where she works. We can see 1PM and 3PM written beside the names of two guests while, at the top of the page, it reads Friday, October 15th. The next scene shows her glancing at the left wall and the following shot reveals an ordinary analogue clock which reads 3:12.

Right from the opening scene of *Suspicious River*, the assemblage of the first fifteen shots suggests that the movie is about time and, specifically, the antithetical relationship between calendrical time (i.e., the check-in booklet and the analogue clock) and non-segmented, durational time (i.e., as represented by the swans which symbolize ahistorical time or eternity). More to the point, the image of the little girl feeding the swans as a representation of Leila's past is wholly integrated into Leila's adult-time situation such that no one can guess, at this point, that this scene mixes two different layers of time. Both Leila's past and present personas have their own cognitive life and hence inhabit their own temporal flow. Therefore, her past experiences are not isolated by the narrative but rather alive in the diegetic. For this reason, narrative operates normally in *Suspicious River*. However, the virtual multiplicity of the individual is not subordinated to the narrative. The opening sequence suggests that the past dimension of Leila's life is not directly correlated to any of the images of time that appear in these first few minutes of the film.

In addition, in the beginning of the story, Leila hasn't yet completely cut herself off from the so-called real world. This is the reason that Stopkewich still keeps the analogue clock in the foreground as an indication of running time. As Leila glances at the clock waiting for her shift to end, we sense that she would like to be released from her tedious work at the desk. (This is the only time that she looks directly at a clock by obvious intent.) What is indicated at this stage is that time has a meaning and value for her and this situation is in contrast to what follows. The movie initially establishes a minimal immersion in structured time as a social being. At this point

of the movie, Leila is still coping to some degree with normal everyday scheduling. But later, she eventually breaks way from all that, and in a self-destructive manner, throws herself into a hellish situation that is not easy to understand. In short, all these symbolic indications of time shown at the beginning are not meant to be there for the audience to unlock a central mystery of the film later on. Rather, they help to set the overall mood of the film as the central character inhabits the flow of time and, hence, clock time eventually becomes almost insupportable for her.

The next scene indicating time is the one mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. It is the one in which, in the middle of the night, Leila glances at a digital clock after having turned her back on her husband while they lie in bed. Both the undulating water-bed and the dominance of the colour blue on the digital clock are reminiscent of the river. In other words, a very static image of a number sign becomes something like flux of a river when blue lines start merging into each other. Unlike the normal way that the digital clock functions that is to replace one static image with another homogeneously, the fuzzy image of the clock in this scene becomes a continuous changing image.

In the bed scene, the digital number on the clock ultimately becomes fuzzy as the shot dissolves into the next scene. In fact, like a river that does not have a fixed body-image, time

loses its rigid appearance like waves on the river. The defocused image of the digital number shows that what has been traced is traced. Trace is neither space nor pure time. It is what comes in between the present and its past and, in Derrida's language, it marks the becoming-space of time.³⁵³ This fuzzy image suggests that the character's insensibility to what marks time. In other world, she becomes aware of the self-negating quality of the trace— she recognizes that this digital number does not signify anything in the present time, it only refers to its none-presence. For her, there is no difference between a random number and an abstract, unrecognizable, and distorted image of it.

More to the point, glancing at a number sign that eventually becomes fuzzy generates a sort of tension on the fact that how she is alienated from the confines of the so called present layer of time (it is a sort of revelation on how we are artificially isolated from durative experience of past and future). The growing alienation of the lead character from the boundaries of present time is reflected at the moment of non-causal glance at the digital clocks. The leading character, in fact, becomes more open in experiencing time as duration.

It is only after significant interval (21 minutes) that a scene very similar to the last one appears. Besides the voice-over that comes both at beginning and the end of the film, there is one more very brief voice-over scene that comes right before this sequence. While the camera tilt down to show her hands holding and rolling up a hundred dollar bill, we hear Leila tells us: "That's what anyone would think I was doing this for."

³⁵³Patrick O'Conner, *Derrida: Profanation*, 53.

The next image of a clock appears fifty-three minutes into the movie. In this scene, Leila, as a child, enters into the forbidden territory. Her mother opens the door before she knocks. She enters into the room where her mother and uncle are sleeping together. She stays inside the room without apparent embarrassment, or discomfort, or even surprise, while her uncle without having clothes on calmly lights a cigarette. Beside the bed there is an analogue clock showing a quarter-past-nine. Her mother then comes back into the room (after speaking to her husband on the phone) and hides the clock. Before closing the door her uncle says: “Why the fuck are you talking to him that way?” While looking at her daughter, she replies: “because he is my fucking husband. That’s why.”

We may say that time has been objectified in this scene by being placed beside the light source. In other words, the low-key lighting in this scene draws attention to the shapes of objects in small part of the frame. Consequently, the function of clock in this scene is very decorative and, unlike other discussed scenes, is not related the strangeness of passing-time in this film. We may also refer to Bergson’s division of public versus private time and whether the public time is really time. Accordingly, what one can read on the clock is insignificant compared to the

experience of time as it comes to the child who has transgressed certain private space. Here, the clock suggests that there is the other time (i.e., the time of the private that should remain discreet), of which up to this point she has been unaware of.

In the scene just before when she runs off with Gary, we see Leila flipping through the pages of the check-in booklet and opening up a blank page. This suggests that as she becomes ready to give up her social life and all that it entails, the calendrical time has effectively come to an end for her. The remainder of the calendar in the check-in booklet, is now something concluded with only blank pages to follow without string of random time-number associated with names. After we see one of these blank pages in close-up, the scene dissolves into a car-window view of the swans. The swans themselves (graphically matched with the blank page) are the symbols of non-linear, immediate, and extra-calendrical apprehension of time.

More to the point, just before this dissolve we see a child's coloured drawing of a purple swan (as a metaphor for eternity) that has been inadvertently left among the pages of the check-

in booklet. The drawing was a gift she received from her childhood persona and there is strong suggestion that this tendency in her childhood past to give up calendrical time is now to become actualized.

The movie ends with the scene in which Leila's co-worker tells her: "Gotta get you out of the water. Gotta get you some help. Lean on me! Let's go home." It is not clear that this rescue is real or part of her imagination. The whole journey is bracketed as an adventure in a river (the symbol of constant changes). Her survival ironically depends on the possibility that her friend gets her out of water. The camera tilts up towards sky and fades in white (nothingness). The only possible notion out of the fluid time (river) is the void. Her voice over, at the end, on a static image of a river, says: "The swans came back and laid their eggs on the riverbank. When their babies were born, I went down and watched them paddle around the black water. Every now and then they'd lift their head and listen to that call in the distance, echoed by the river and their will to live."

In her first feature film, *Kissed*, Stopkewich employs dialogue reflecting on qualitative versus chronological (quantitative) experiences. Sandra's boyfriend is curious about the nature of her deviant sexual behaviour. In the scene where they are playing chess in bed, Sandra accidentally comes across her boyfriend's notebook in which he has been keeping track of her necrophilic activities and reads it: "Dates, time, frequency of occurrence..." He responds: "This is the record of everything I have done in the last two weeks." When Sandra shows that she is annoyed by this, he tells her: "It is just based on stuff you told me. You should be flattered." She

replies: “I am not.” He responds: “It just something I used to try to understand.” Sandra says: “This is not going to help you understand me. This is not about the fact and figures... It is about crossing over. By the time I get there I am out of myself. It is more than this.” In the next scene she leaves her boyfriend and goes back to the funeral home to sleep with one of the corpses. The scene shows her face lit up against a dark background while we hear a mysterious music. Her face then dissolves into the background as she enters a trance-like and grows ecstatic. As the preceding dialogue indicates, her boyfriend’s attempt to find chronological patterns in her sexual behavior is a wasted effort. The act of crossing-over for her, in Deleuzian term, is a qualitative move towards a schizophrenic mode of becoming. The chronophobic character of Sandra in *Kissed* becomes more reflexive in terms of narrative level in *Suspicious River*.

Kissed (1997)

In summary, there are scenes at the beginning of the film in which Leila looks at a clock or works with items that indicate the chronological passage of time. As the movie progresses, we see her giving up her career and social life, and, to this extend, the movie becomes more

“chronophobic.”³⁵⁴ There is a decline in the frequency of the scenes indicating the passage of time (e.g., close ups of clocks, calendars, and registers). At the same time, there is an increase of scenes incorporating metaphors of synchronic time (such as swans, sky, blank page, and white colour). At the end of the film, there is even an episodic recollection of childhood experiences wherein one shot fading into white. This motif (colour white) is repeated in the next scene where Leila is lying on a white blanket. The latter recalls the whiteness of the swans and their eternal urge to return. In short, her becoming-swan in a metaphorical sense is aligned with her becoming indifferent to chronological time.

³⁵⁴ What I mean by the term *chronophobic* is different than its other uses in cases such prisoners facing dead penalty. At that point the prisoner experiences high speed in passage of time. What I mean by *chronophobic* is disliking of chronological order.

Chapter 6

Paramnesia or Déjà vu

In *Suspicious River*, Stopkewich relocates the heroine's childhood story within the diegetic world of the film. Her past is not treated as a means by which to analyze the present, as something that simply produces her destiny. Thus her past is not reduced to representation; rather, it has been actualized horizontally in present-time. This can lead us to the notion of paramnesia (i.e., déjà vu or the illusion of already having been in a particular situation) wherein the coexistence between the past and the present becomes perceptible.

In this chapter, I will explain first how Bergson and Deleuze reflect on the phenomenon of déjà vu and how *Suspicious River* may be seen as evidence for certain qualities that Deleuze

(following Bergson) believes a cinematic image potentially expresses. Bergson believes that memory is larger than consciousness and Deleuze thinks that a cinematic experience of déjà vu gives us recollection-images, beyond the perceptual field of the character. In other words, the latter cannot control recollection-images that extend beyond her subjective view-points. Following this discussion, on a more metaphorical level, I will then discuss the issue of eternal return in relation to the symbolic presence of swans in the film.

Bergson treats the phenomenon of déjà vu as the most authentic appearance of the true nature of our mental life because it generates the involuntary preservation of the past in the present.³⁵⁵ Bergson believes in the constant existence of two self (doubling). He states that “[e]very moment of our life presents two aspects, it is actual and virtual, perception on the one side and memory on the other.”³⁵⁶ Accordingly, the experience of Déjà vu is a result of becoming conscious of this duality at certain time. Déjà makes our dual existence, that we are not conscious of, noticeable. In his writings on cinema, Deleuze elaborates on this Bergsonian notion of automatic conservancy of the past. In chapter three of *Cinema 2*, “From Recollection to Dreams: Third Commentary on Bergson,” Deleuze analyzes how Bergson distinguishes two kinds of repetition; *automatic* or *habitual* and *attentive*. However, he adds that the optical (as well as the sound) image functions differently in attaining recognition, and although it does not extend into movement, enters into relation with it. Employing a range of examples, Deleuze examines recollection-images, dream-images, and images related to the various states of extreme sensory-motor relaxation (e.g., the impression of déjà vu). As I mentioned before, the Bergsonian

³⁵⁵Trifonova Temenuga, *The Image in French Philosophy*. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, B.V. 1994) 221.

³⁵⁶ In *Henri Bergson: Key Writings*, 147.

concept of paramnesia is about making perceptible the fact that the past coexists with the present. Moreover, it tells us that our actual existence duplicates itself by a means of the “recollection of the present, contemporaneous with the present itself.”³⁵⁷ Although for Bergson pure recollection image is virtual, it should be distinguished from dream-image or dreaming.³⁵⁸

As it is stated before, in Bergson’s theory, déjà vu, (the superior and the most gainful stage of experiencing duration) is not a sort of false recognition. It is rather on the top in the hierarchy of memory-images, because, it reveals the involuntarily presence of duration in the act of recollection and preservation of the past. For Trifonova, for example, “[d]éjà vu does not concern two separate experiences, one in the present and one in the past ... it is the experience of the present as past, or of the present in its passing.”³⁵⁹ With regards to Bergson’s characterization of the experience of Déjà vu, and consequently, dual nature of the present, Deleuze notes:

What is actual is always present. But then, precisely, the present changes or passes. We can always say that it becomes past when it no longer is, when a new present replaces it. But this is meaningless. It is clearly necessary for it to pass on for the new present to arrive and it is clearly necessary for it to pass at the same time as it is present, at the moment that it is the present. If it was not already past at the same time as present, the present would never pass on. The past does not follow the present that it is no longer, it coexists with the present it was. The present is the actual image and its contemporaneous past is the virtual image. Bergson calls the virtual image ‘pure recollection’, to better distinguish it from mental images ... the virtual image in the pure state is defined, not in accordance with a new present in relation to which it would be (relatively) past, but in accordance with the actual present of which it is the past, absolutely and

³⁵⁷ *The Time-Image*, 79.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Trifonova, 57.

simultaneously. It is the virtual image which corresponds to a particular actual image, instead of being actualised, of having to be actualised in a different actual image.³⁶⁰

The sets and sound effects in *Suspicious River* integrate into the habitual memory of the heroine. In other words, this habitual memory is not related to the present, but to a past that repeats itself in itself without any voluntary act of recollection.³⁶¹ For example, while she is in the car with Garry on the trip to his house, we constantly see, in a series of shot-reverse/shots that Leila's childhood figure ambiguously occupies the backseat. The automatic integration of these scenes never suggests that the adult-Leila is consciously recollecting her childhood. Deleuze gives us the example of flashback scenes in *Hiroshima mon amour* and notes that the flashbacks are inserted automatically like musical counterpoints without a sense of self-control. However, because of the difference in textures, the flashbacks in the latter film are attentive. *Suspicious River* reduces the attentive aspects by slowly inserting flashback scenes within the same texture that are completely integrated with the present-actions. In one specific scene, when Leila is with Garry under a tree, she notices a passing car that looks exactly like the one her parents use to have. We see then that, subconsciously speaking, Leila is always ready to be carried away by images or sounds that take her out of the present. She goes along with any sort

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 80

³⁶¹ For example, Marie Cariou in "Bergson: The Keyboards of Forgetting" says that "[m]emories in fact do not occupy any place, whether in such or such a zone of the brain, or indeed outside of the brain or even in the unconscious. They are not of a spatial order and are not conserved anywhere. To make the unconscious into a sort of reservoir where we could bury memories or draw on them would be to succumb to that 'illusion of immanence' which is often denounced by Bergson, who brings up on many occasions the opposition between 'progress' ... and 'things'." In John Mullarkey, *The New Bergson*, 108.

of habitual distraction, which does not require attention, and is continually deviated from the present by the past.

The confusion that arises over this derangement gives an illustration of Deleuze's theory that a cinematic image is not a visual phenomenon but rather a collection of sensations that can possibly short-circuit the mechanism of common-sense by adding another layer of time into the present.³⁶² To be authentic to Deleuze's realm, I earlier claimed that this confusion should never turn out to be symbolic and immobile (i.e., what I call being-confused). I believe that, the majority of film scholars who incorporate Deleuze into their theories inaccurately interpret this confusion only on the level of representation. On the other hand, I wish to reclaim that Deleuze's purpose in theorizing the time-image should correspond to a type of cinematic experience in which confusion is inclined to be internalized, rather than merely delivering confusion via metaphor.

No moment in *Suspicious River* is represented as external to the main character's present life, given that, on the contrary, all her psychological states with respect to memory and recollection are prolonged or mingled together. In short, *the power of the false* (i.e., the falsifying capacity of the syuzhe) is not created by loss of memory. *The power of the false*, in *Suspicious River*, is made and experienced by the spectators through the lead character's refusal to live in objective time. She rather remains in a constant state of becoming undecidable and, more to the point, insensible towards the explanation of self within the orders of homogeneous time.

³⁶² *The Time-Image*, 12.

As I have already discussed the same issue with respect to the other scenes, the sense of déjà vu and confusion generated in the sequence, by which Leila and Garry are in his car, is not represented through a privileged point-of-view. We never know whether it is the adult Leila looking back to her past or her childhood Leila looking ahead to her future. Deleuze asserts that “unlike natural perception, which is grounded on a fixed and privileged point of view—namely that of the subject—and which is, therefore, limited by our practical interests, cinematographic [perception] is essentially *acentered*.”³⁶³

³⁶³ Temenuga, 227.

The six shots from this sequence suggest an unusual and *acentred* assemblage of duration. The fifth image has the camera staying with the little girl while a car passes precisely the one in which the adult Leila is a passenger. It is quite evident that the scene cannot be given us simply the adult Leila's perceptual view of the situation.

Suspicious River is one of the best examples of this Deleuzian interest in the possibility of camera consciousness. Although I am not entirely convinced that, with respect to Deleuze, the camera is able to act like a consciousness, it is still useful to think about a cinematic experience in terms of the Bergsonian notion that he was highly indebted to, namely, the view of time as a multiplicity of refracted realities that go beyond rational perception. The flashback scenes in the above sequence are not reduced to the perceptual field of the main character's consciousness. Multiple perceptual horizons from different layers of time are interacting with each other without a sense of a centre-point or *a priority*. For example, in the above sequence, the camera at the end stays with the little girl seeing (from her point-of-view) a car that passes. And it is precisely the one in which the adult Leila is a passenger.

In contrast to nostalgia, *déjà vu* goes beyond the merely personal, bringing in what one may call the experience of the other's past.³⁶⁴ "Déjà vu reveals that memory is always greater than the present, that what we don't recognize and therefore call 'false' is just impersonal."³⁶⁵ In a cinematic experience, this transition is possible only if the past recollection functions outside the perceptual field of the main character, which is precisely the technique used in the recollection scenes of *Suspicious River*. The frequency of using these prolonged recollection-images, and moreover, without disturbing the narrative events, ultimately makes this experience of *déjà vu* as one single experience. Or to put it in other way, the audience is not encouraged to

³⁶⁴ Temenuga, 57

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

formulate the layers of temporality in the film's fabula into two separate experiences to make sense of it. Hence these scenes are not recollections of the past by the present; rather, it becomes the experience of the present-past passing as one homogeneous whole.

Stopkewich often claims that she was inspired by the stylistic choices of filmmaker, David Lynch. *Twin Peaks* (Lynch, 1991) is an example of one of his films that is very similar to *Suspicious River*. Lynch positions, not the past, but what might be called the dream-like quality of the past as part of the on screen reality. As a consequence, it is very difficult to separate dreams from present-time reality because they form an organic unity. But in Lynch's film, an aim to disorient the spectator is usually achieved at the expense of unnecessarily extreme narrative fragmentation. By contrast, Stopkewich uses the same techniques but only to unify layers of the past around certain indeterminate moments that do not drive the narrative forward in any obvious way. Furthermore, the atmosphere of Lynch's work is purposefully strange or uncanny and, as such, his manipulation of time and space is paradoxically easy to accept for the spectator, who *expects* to be confused and disturbed. Conversely, Stopkewich's style foregrounds the banality of everyday repetitiveness which, as has been discussed before, has the destabilizing effect of opening up a fissure in the linearity of time, which allows for the unfolding of multi-layered temporality. Stopkewich does not employ narrative tricks or discomforting fragmented fabula in order to disorient the spectators and as a result, the spectator *becomes* confused without ever *being* in a fixed state of confusion. For Lynch, past and present are independent even though they may be mingled and simultaneous. For Stopkewich, on the other hand, the past has a more dynamic presence in the present since the past and the present of the events are fundamentally

coextensive. Moreover, in *Suspicious River*, the resemblance of objects in mise-en-scène that belong to different periods and yet are found in scenes juxtaposed to one another (i.e., car, road, house, and colour), not only gives the expression of time as multilayered phenomenon in an intellectual level (as it is the case for Lynch's films), it also works in emotional level to incarnate the phenomenon, and thereby, prompt the audience to internalize this inconsecutive universe.

The flashbacks are assembled in a way that is similar to the dream sequences in David Lynch's films.

Although the presence of the characters, objects, and locations formed from memory of childhood is evident in *Suspicious River*, the childhood memory is never intentionally brought back. The memory of childhood is not nostalgic because it has been situated freely within the field of perspective. Although flashbacks within the diegetic have been used in such films as those of Ingmar Bergman and Woody Allen, they are never meant to be internalized by the audience. First of all, a movie such as *Wild Strawberries* (Bergman 1957) plans its flashbacks so that the audience is able to immediately recognize that the character is metaphorically looking back at his childhood past. In the shot that comes before the diegetic flashback scene in *Wild Strawberries*, the voice-over states, “It reminds me of my childhood memory.” In the next scene, he sees his childhood friend from a distance and says, “Hey Sara, this is me, your cousin. I have aged a little but you haven’t changed.” The fact that he needs to remind this ghost from the past that he has grown older illuminates the existence of a real distance between his present and past self. This distance does not offer the past a possibility of being entirely re-experienced. The use of shot-reverse-shots also makes this experience less of a real interaction than an act of observation. Secondly, in these movies, it is the character that enters into his own past. In *Suspicious River*, by contrast, it is the past that enters into the diegetic. In addition, the feeling of nostalgia, humour, and the use of intellectualized dialogue in such films directed by Allen and Bergman—all of these create a sense of distance from the psychological state of the main character. Nostalgia in our culture refers to something that is lost and cannot be grasped again together with the sufferings that cannot be recovered. Therefore, in contrast to déjà vu, nostalgia is a very symbolic feeling about how the passages of time can be costly. The symbolic is

associated with the construction of meaning. Nostalgia is symbolic because it signifies a stable meaning about the past. Etymologically, nostalgia (*nóstos+álgos*), means the pain of homecoming. Nostalgia, accordingly, spatializes the past by putting it into a fixed location (i.e., the home), and thus the feeling of regret comes from our geographical distance from this subjective steady temple or idealized space (i.e., childhood home). Indeed, as Temenuga points out, “Bergson argues that what we designate as ‘absence’ is merely our disappointment at finding something else present in the place of what we expected or hoped to find.”³⁶⁶ Consequently, the correlation between the past and the present remains in the field of the symbolic (i.e., being confused) because the past is never really there.

Nostalgia is part of our spatial dimension— which is at the same time a longing for a place at a distance. This distance in *Suspicious River* gradually becomes a temporal component of life which in the film manifests itself as a desire to betray linearity. More to the point, unlike what happens in *Wild Strawberries*, this place at the distance is not idealized. Thus it has affective values that engender intense performance even in the present time’s space.

The flashbacks in *Suspicious River* are never meant to be fully comprehended by the audience and, therefore, never turn into a pure representation of the past. Thus a symbolic connection between the past and the present never develops. In short, the dichotomy between the present’s existence as opposed to the past’s non-existence has been completely abandoned in this film. As Bergson formulates it, the past is not dead; it rather lives in the present (diegetic) and, therefore, the experience is that of becoming. This becoming, I would argue, is not envisioned by

³⁶⁶ Temenuga, 163.

the narrative plot of the movie and does not demonstrate any causal linkage and, therefore, it can potentially be internalized. I link this becoming leads to internalization because when the diegetic past is not symbolically represented, it can only operate at the level of emotional experience and affects. As the character gives up living a temporally-structured and meaningful life and moves towards a self-destructive one, the audience correspondingly internalizes the collapse of symbolic time and as a result no longer separates perception of the past from perception of the present.

Returning

Returning, according to Deleuze, “is the being of that which becomes.”³⁶⁷ In other words, “[w]hat returns eternally is not the identity of the same, but the force of difference or differentiation. What being speaks of recurrently is difference from itself.”³⁶⁸ The simple narrative of the returning swans in *Suspicious River* contrasts sharply with the pain of certain childhood memories that Leila has. Listening to her voice-over narration (“Every now and then, they listen to that call in the distance, echoed by the river and their will to live”), we have a distinct impression that swans symbolize the pure enduring. In fact, Leila desires to *become-swallow* in order to inhabit this purely indefinite time. The cyclical experience of time resists death, while chronological experience of time confirms it. In the final chapter, I will discuss the negligence of progressive linear history in the two films I am analyzing oppose to the public concern with the end of time as moment at the end of the millennium (the year that these films

³⁶⁷In David Norman Rodowick. *After Images of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, 100.

³⁶⁸*Ibid.*

were produced). Instead, cyclical and annual (seasonal) repetitions offer particular depiction of history that is close the daily structure and the way in which time endures.

“The time-image’s powers of the false do not show that the image is an illusion, nor do they replace a false perception with a true one; rather, the powers of the false release the image from the form of identity and restore to it the potential for Becoming or eternal recurrence.”³⁶⁹

The audience is not meant to understand Leila’s self-destructiveness through the distinct transformation of time frames or, to put it in another way, we are not placed outside the constitutive experience. Since the duality between the objective and the subjective viewing of the film is avoided, the audience is in the immanent state of what I previously defined as becoming-confused. For Deleuze, becoming “is never imitation but always an entering into a zone of proximity, an in-between status on a microlevel.”³⁷⁰ Moreover, becoming-animal is not overtly represented in a metaphorical way, but it may nonetheless be perceived as opening oneself to virtual/eternal endurance by an identification of Leila’s voice-over’s with the swans that leave and return to Suspicious River. (“Sometimes they’d stretch their necks like they were trying to hear something faraway. But after a while they’d flag their wings and get back to those easy handouts from the guests and I always wondered what they’d heard”). At this point, becoming-animal is not symbolic because (unlike what happens in such movies as Cronenberg’s *Fly*) Leila neither assumes any swan-like characteristics as a human being nor does she metamorphosize into one. The absence of imitation eliminates direct signification and

³⁶⁹ David Norman Rodowick, *After Images of Gilles Deleuze’s Film Philosophy*, 104.

³⁷⁰ Patricia Pisters, *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press 2003) 69.

creation of meaning. In conjunction with this fact, the domain of becoming-animal only provides a possibility of escape. This deterritorialization is a matter of becoming rather than being because of this rejection of imitation (and so identity formation) in favour of affect and intensity. In *Suspicious River*, Leila's return to where she grew up as a child should be conceived as a process of deterritorialization, a possible space of return after giving up her social status. Her life at this point has become a cyclical experience, in which she has to pass over and over again the same series of points. Consequently, at the micro level, everything seems to be disjointed and fragmented but, for the outside-of-self (that is outside of time), the experience is cyclical.

According to Rodowick, "we could neither invent nor choose new modes of existence if the force of time as eternal recurrence, becoming or change, did not undermine identity with difference."³⁷¹ Accordingly, the past is always to some degree preserved in memory in order to maintain the possibility of returning. But the return itself should carry difference in order to unfold identity and become-other.³⁷² "The irrational interval does not signify or represent; it resists."³⁷³ This resistance to habitual repetition and rationalized time is possible by means of returning to and renewing memory which indicates the primacy of difference over identity. In *Suspicious River*, Leila reenacts her mother's "sins" without, at the same time, showing anything that resembles her mother's emotional and tempestuous nature. Her world is shown as a space that she has no chance of escaping. She says to her childhood persona in a very undramatic way:

³⁷¹ David Norman Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*, 200.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 202.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 204.

“I was born in Suspicious River, I grew up here, and now I live here.” Thus later on, the child Leila asks the adult one if she has ever wanted to run away. The reply that she receives is: “All the time - but I don’t.” Despite this seeming lack of willingness to move outside this limited space, her resistance takes place by manipulating the temporal situation of this fixed territory in so far as she is able to bring in a very solid and tangible way the past dimension of her life into the present.

Stopkewich’s obsession with water is also evident in her short film, *Man from Mars*, which is based on one of Margaret Atwood’s stories. This short film begins and ends with water as a dominant motif; the female lead spends a lot of time in the swimming pool to escape the social environment of her bourgeois life. Although the real victim in the movie is an Asian immigrant, the story is presented through the eyes of the heroine (Christine). The ironic mixture of real and fictional perception is very confusing. The Asian man, who is obsessed with her, always shows up looking exactly the same. At the end of the film, she dives into the pool with her clothes on and her gaseous view-point under the water shows distorted image of the Man (who in fact has already been deported before this scene) standing over the pool. The pool is the only place where social stereotypes are not working. The gaseous image of Christine does not reveal her “extra weight,” whereas that of the Asian man distorts the fixed image of his otherness. In other words, the stereotypical and fixed portrayal of this mysterious character

remains unconstituted through Christine's perception-images in this scene. Each time frame of the story maintains an independent identity refusing to be connected causally to earlier or later scenes. Thus there is no clearing up of the mystery surrounding this phantom-like personage of the Asian man. In short, the water remains Christine's means for non-linearity and more fluid experience of her life events.

In order to conclude this Chapter, I will once again look at Bergson's understanding of the notion of *déjà vu*. What Bergson basically puts forward is that what one remembers in memory is not something invented by one's consciousness, but rather something that happens(ed) at an earlier stage of life and not at the particular level of subjectivity that we are conscious of.³⁷⁴ "*Déjà vu* reveals the limits of subjectivity as it situates the subject in time, in Pure Memory."³⁷⁵ In other words, perception-images that we are not conscious of are preserved and at certain points impinge upon the present. For Bergson, *déjà vu* is not picturing the past; rather, it is a confusing state caused by the expansion of the virtual dimension of the past into our memory of the present.³⁷⁶ The past in *Suspicious River* is pre-reflective and repeats or extends itself into the present beyond the control of the subject. The past indeed attains such a level of autonomy and authority that it can operate outside the sphere of the subject's perceptual and cognitive field. It goes to the point at the end of the film, that it is the past that ultimately guards and even rescues the subject by being able to exist outside the limits of her sentient being. (It goes beyond her awareness and cognitive life).

³⁷⁴ See Trifonova Temenuga, 54-58.

³⁷⁵ Ibid. 57

³⁷⁶ See *Henry Bergson: Key Writing*, 165-6.

Chapter 7

Affection-Image and Eradication of Space/Time

In this chapter, I will first introduce a background to the development of the Deleuzian notion of affection-image. Following that, I will examine the uses of close-ups in *Kissed* and *Suspicious River*. Third, I will argue that Stopkewich, in contrast to the evolutionary view of history in Eurocentric discourses, resists the process of locking up the act of violence in the past. Violence in *Suspicious River*, I will argue, does not leave any momentary trace and is linked to eternity. Stopkewich uses close-ups that, as the movie goes on, become lengthier and more and more liberated from spatio-temporal situations. Thereby unlike more calendrical intervals in the beginning (quantitative), the close-ups near the end become purely qualitative.

According to Bergson, we should always keep in mind that one's body is not constituted as a mathematical point in space, but rather, its virtual characteristic is always manipulated by real actions and motions, and therefore, perception is always accompanied by some sort of affection.³⁷⁷ "Affection is, then, that part or aspect of the inside of our body which we mix with the image of external bodies; it is what we must first of all subtract from perception to get the

³⁷⁷Henry Bergson, *Key Writings*, 112.

image in its purity.”³⁷⁸ Deleuze views the cinematic experience of affection as the appropriation of the “false” role of space in our perception.³⁷⁹ Affection, in contrast to perception, is not rooted in the actual. For Deleuze, affection-images always constitute their own space independent from the realistic space of the film.³⁸⁰ In short, the affection-image always localizes space, color and background into a virtual state influenced by the senses and the emotions.

Deleuze clarifies close up as the affection by referring to Peirce’s notion of Firstness. “Peirce does not conceal the fact that firstness is difficult to define, because it is felt rather than conceived ... it concerns what is new in experience, what is fresh, fleeting and nevertheless eternal.”³⁸¹ He goes on to say that “these are qualities or powers considered for themselves, without reference to anything else, independently of any question of actualization.”³⁸² The absence of dialogue in lengthy close-ups of Molly Parker in Stopkewich’s films may be seen as a Deleuzian sign of expression rather than actualization or, as he notes, it is “potentially considered for itself as expressed.”³⁸³ For Deleuze, unlike other sets of images, affection-images must only refer to firstness (i.e. the quality of power as sensation).³⁸⁴

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Felicity Colman, for example, explains that this issue comes from the idea that a body has a potential. Affection image then engenders this potential and thus is not a representation. Affection-image is about the change and is unlimited. In Felicity Colman, *Deleuze and Cinema: The Film Concepts*, Berg, Oxford. 2011. See 84-87.

³⁸⁰ Eric S. Jenkins. *Special Affects: Cinema, Animation and the Translation of Consumer Culture*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014) 153.

³⁸¹ *Cinema I*, 98.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Ibid. On page 102, he says that, “[t]he affects would need to form singular, ambiguous combinations which were always recreated, in such a way that the related faces are turned away from each other just enough not to be dissolved and effaced. And movement in its turn would need to go beyond the state of things, to trace lines of flight, just enough to open up in space a dimension of another order favourable to these compositions of affects. This is the affection-image: it has as its limit the simple affect of fear and the effacement of faces in nothingness. But as it’s

When the causal relation between action and perception collapses or when the moment of affection is very strong that it interrupts the action-perception's assemblage of the sensory motor breakdowns. At this situation we perceive the images in its purest forms³⁸⁵ not in a way that we were guided to perceive them by narration. Accordingly, affection becomes an immanent form of perception in contrast to judgement as a transcendent value.³⁸⁶

What constitutes the site of affection, according to Bergson, is the body as the only image perceivable both from within and without.³⁸⁷ Accordingly, facial close-ups in a film do not merely turn a character to an object for viewers to look at. Close-ups that are mixed with affections are a part of the interior psyche of the film-world. For Deleuze, in fact, a tendency towards action must be actualized by affection. Indeed, it is the perception of the *body without organs*.³⁸⁸

substance it has the compound affect of desire and astonishment – which gives it life – and the turning aside of faces in the open, in the flesh.”

³⁸⁵ Deleuze believes that this is the moment of indiscernibility between spectator and spectacle. See Rolland Bogues. *Deleuze on Cinema*. Chapter Four.

³⁸⁶ View Miguel de Beistegui. *Immanence- Deleuze and Philosophy*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010) 107-109.

³⁸⁷ Valentine Moulard-Leonard. *Bergson-Deleuze Encounters: Transcendental Experience and the Thought of the Virtual*, (Albany: University of New York Press, 2010) 27. Bergson borrows this concept from Merleau-Ponty's discussion of “touching-touched” that ultimately supports the fact that the virtual identity of the body “coincides exactly with pure presence.”

³⁸⁸ Body-without-organs is a Deleuzian term that refers to the eradication of signification from one's body. The absence of fixed signification heightens its potential for change and that becomes very close to how he views affection images in his cinema books.

Deleuze's theory of affection is different than that of Bergson in that, Deleuze positions affection as an interval, something that comes between perception and action.³⁸⁹ I will argue that, in *Suspicious River*, the use of typically lengthy close-ups do not foreground any tendency towards actions. Therefore, it brings to mind the kind of independent quality that Bergson enforces on affection as pure intensity. For example, the externalization of Leila's inner experiences at the end of the film coincides with an absolute passivity on her part. Thus this is the opposite of Deleuze's appropriation of Bergson's formulation of affection and his subsequent application of it to a suspenseful situation in film. Indeed, at no point in the film, the frequent lengthy close-ups of Leila raise an expectation that she will do anything to counteract the received damages.

Background

Let us begin with an overview of a Deluzian conceptualization of affection image. In chapter six of *Cinema 1*, "The Affection-Image: Face and Close-up," Deleuze begins by stating that "[t]he affection image is the close-up and the close-up is the face."³⁹⁰ He identifies two poles of affect: power and identity. "What compromises the integrity of the close-up in this respect is the idea that it presents to us a partial object, detached from a set and torn away from a set of which it would form a part."³⁹¹ Deleuze goes on to say that the close-up of a face has nothing to

³⁸⁹ For Deleuze, affection is a mediator between perception and action and therefore is applicable to a sense of suspense. In a cinematic experience, it is not an independent intensity as Bergson suggests. See chapter six of *The Movement-Image*.

³⁹⁰ *The Movement-Image*, 87.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 95

do with a partial object.³⁹² The close-up is not an enlargement and it has no connection with space.

Before analyzing the rape-sequence that features a faceless group of men (i.e., we perceive only their legs), I think it is useful to refer to another Deleuzian thought on close-up. It will tell us about how the close-ups of the legs are connected to the actual space, while the close-ups of Leila's face are estranged from that space. Deleuze refers to Bella Balazs's writings on close-ups according to which, when we look at an isolated face, the space becomes imperceptible.³⁹³ Accordingly, only a close-up of a face can be associated with any-space-whatever (although the background can be seen), whereas, the close-ups of other bodily organs (e.g., a hand or a leg) are perceived within the space they inhabit. "There is no close-up of the face. The close-up is the face, but the face precisely in so far as it has destroyed its triple function—a nudity of the face much greater than that of the body, an inhumanity much greater than that of animal."³⁹⁴ The close-up may suspend individuation; it can divide one individual and unite two.³⁹⁵

In his article, "The Affection-Image and the Movement-Image," James Chandler discusses how some directors of classical Hollywood films such as Frank Capra, the director of *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946), employ certain techniques for creating sentimental sympathy and identification through narrative causality. Relying on a Deleuzian concept, Chandler claims that,

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 99. Claire Colebrook interprets this statement as the "face becomes impersonal." It is not, therefore, a face of an individual. See 178.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 100.

state of affection is the result of the state of in-betweenness where action and perception are not simultaneous. He goes on to argue that close-ups, as examples of affection-images, are eliminated from the continuity of the movement-images and, as such, are associated with meta-movements. In *It's a Wonderful Life*, the process of sentimentalization is heightened when the frame freezes on a close-up shot of James Stewart. Chandler's argument also may bring to mind Bela Balazs's conceptualization of the physiognomy of close-ups when he concludes this chapter by saying that "[t]he screen itself operates much as the face does in that it registers a translative movement, though it is not itself in motion."³⁹⁶ Chandler notes that Deleuze's insistence on the face as an immobile plate goes against his insistence on the mobility of the shot.³⁹⁷

Stopkewich employs long close-up shots with little or no depth in the background. How then can this be qualified as a Bergsonian mobile section of duration? For Deleuze, deterritorialization is mobile, hence, a close-up that induces affection deterritorializes the image into any-space-whatever. More to the point, in terms of Stopkewich's cinema, I will later argue in this chapter that close-ups do not solely work as delay or hesitation but take in layers from the past. As long as duration determines the territory, there is a movement in space. Indeed, as Bergson suggests, "perception is master of space in the exact measure in which action is master of time."³⁹⁸

Clair Colebrook recapitulates Deleuze's formulation of affection-image as "the pause or delay which is neither a subject seeing an object, nor an action transforming a situation, but

³⁹⁶ In Rodowick, 253.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 61.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 244.

absorption of movement by an inactive but receptive body [and] it has its cinematic liberation in any-space-whatever.”³⁹⁹ In short, close-ups actualize the quality of affection by abstracting it from its spatio-temporal state of being.

***Kissed* (1997)**

The reduction of space by abstraction is common in the films of Lynne Stopkewich. For example, in *Kissed*, the close up of Molly Parker has as background the window of a car that is going through a carwash. The mixed colour in the background transforms the space into an abstract painting. The reduction of the universe to a flattened background for a human’s face, the absence of depth of the field, and the use of a static camera—all of these factors create a world where Sandra (the female lead) deals with the outside as frozen in time. In other scenes, this effect has been captured by the use of over-exposed negative, by flooding the background with light, and the use of fog filter. Indeed, Sandra’s affection with dead bodies is thereby removed from the spatio-temporal realm.

³⁹⁹ Clair Colebrook, *Deleuze: A Guide for Perplex*, 58.

The any-space-whatever made through gaseous two dimensional background in *Kissed* (Lynne Stopkewich, 1997)

For example, this is different than Ingmar Bergman's "effacement of the face into nothingness."⁴⁰⁰ One can see the impact of Bergman's cinema on the films of Stopkewich. For Stopkewich, the fading of the face into white is always accompanied by recollections of the past into the present-time situation. In *Persona*, for example, the effacement crosses the space that different characters inhabit, whereas in *Kissed*, there is a crossing of different layers of time that one character experiences. Deleuze's reading of *Persona*, in fact, suggests that the affection-image is linked to the fear of the void or nothingness.⁴⁰¹ In *Suspicious River*, not only the female lead is depersonalized she is also dehistoricized.

Suspicious River

Similar techniques in using close-ups are employed by Stopkewich in *Suspicious River*. Dissolving the face into a background flooded with light or white coloured background frequently takes place and it is usually associated with fragmented flashbacks.

⁴⁰⁰ *The Movement-Image*, 101.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

For example, in the image above, we can see that the bright lighting in the background has provided a possibility of cross-space transition in that the close-up of Leila sitting on a couch at home dissolves into a scene where she is sitting on a couch at her in-laws'. However, I would argue that this is also a transition from present to past. Her facial expression suggests that she is having a moment of *déjà vu* in which she is reliving the solitary experience being in the living room in her childhood, a place devoid of life and interest. The physical similarities between her in-laws and her parents in conjunction with environmental similarities work towards creating this mood of *déjà vu*. Both interiors of her house and her in-laws' house are shot in lower contrast and so less vibrant in colour than the other scenes of the film, as if she were in need of removing herself from that environment and looking for a missing colour outside the confined of a domestic space.

Later on, other close-up shots of Leila suggest something similar. By eradicating the depth of the field, Stopkewich creates a sense of any-space-whatever. For example, the colour-match between her blue outfit and the blue background prevents her face from being an object among other things and positions it as the sole source of affection.

In a more symbolic realm, Leila's husband's anorexia can be linked to the Deleuzian concept of body-without-organs. For Deleuze, anorexia does not mean the refusal of the body as absolute unity but the refusal of the body's organism.⁴⁰² Moreover, the body-without-organs refers to a body where its organs do not function in accordance with what is traditionally expected from them.⁴⁰³ Anorexic refuses to consume and participate in the social world, since the elimination of the body is a sort of self-removal from the so called present-time. By not eating, her husband wants to remove himself from traditionally masculine position and get into female territory. Indeed, the anorexic can alter its organic existence and maneuver in different layers of time.

⁴⁰² Scott Wilson, *The Order of Joy: Beyond the Cultural Politics of Enjoyment*. (Albany: University of New York Press, 2008) 169.

⁴⁰³ Patricia Pisters, 86. Pisters is talking about Elvira in *In a Year of 13 Moon*. However, I think the latter film is more representational since transgression is directly linked to Elvira's outfit and not organs. *Suspicious River* is a better example for what she argues. Leila's husband enters into the feminine territory, not by wearing women's dress (symbolic), but by refusal to eat.

This form of cross-identification is not limited to Leila and her husband. As I mentioned earlier, there is a strong physical resemblance between Leila's mother and her mother-in-law. Another interesting scene is when Leila, after being beaten by Garry, examines her face in the mirror. Right after, her own reflection in the mirror is quickly replaced by the reflection of Garry's wife who, for the first time, came to the hotel to search of her husband.

Leila, as a form of cross- identification, sees the reflection of Garry's wife in the mirror rather than her own.

Near the end of the movie, where the greatest violence takes place, similar uses of white background are apparent, either those relying on such objects as white blankets, or those relying on bright lighting effects. However, the close-ups of Leila in these scenes, although reflecting her suffering, they do not usher in any form of action on Leila's part to remove herself from this situation. Indeed, her facial expressions in these close-ups suggest that she does not live in her body. In a way, her mind has the ability to vacate her body.

History and Violence

Chakrabarti refers to the homogeneous model of time as historicism, which is the colonial tendency to accord the geo-politics of time to the Western evolutionary view of world-historical progress.⁴⁰⁴ According to this view, modernity always relegates violence to the past, deeming it as a necessary step in the development of Western civilization. The unity between the past and the present (which Bergson advocates), on the other hand, prevents such violence from being relegated to a sort of museum-like existence. With respect to this issue, it is interesting to look at how Stopkewich positions acts of extreme violence within this complex display of temporality. The past violence in *Suspicious River* is always alive in present time. Running counter to the typical evolutionary Western view of locking the act of violence in the past, violence, in *Suspicious River*, is detached from its spatio-temporal surroundings so that it cannot be identified as one thing among others that has happened at a particular time. Violent acts in the movie do not happen in any pure moment of the present; but rather violence is always becoming present.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁴ In Lim, 84-88.

⁴⁰⁵ This reminds me of the fact that, in some reviews, Stopkewich films are suggested to be “darkly feminist.” Unlike an evolutionary conceptualization of our situatedness in patriarchy, the act of violence has not been locked-up in particular time-frame or space.

I will begin to analyze the climatic violent sequence more closely in conjunction with the above images which reveal to us their dynamics. A group of “faceless” and “headless” men enter the room where Leila is being imprisoned in order to sexually assault her. For the most part, we see the victim from the multiple view-points of men surrounding her in conjunction with shots of only of their legs. They are bodies without identities, with no personalizing characteristics; (almost like any-man-whatsoever). Violence, in fact, has been depersonalized; it does not belong to any single individual. These legs are attached to male bodies and, as I said before, they are objects in the space they inhabit. Laura Marks in her article, “John Grayson’s Critique of Masculinity” says: “Anonymity is a condition of male power. When the male body is revealed in its particularity, it loses that abstraction that bestows upon men the illusion of authority.”⁴⁰⁶ Unlike their assumptions, Leila refuses to react in a way that is expected from her by these men. Extreme close-ups of Leila, showing her to be hardly reacting at all, situate the scenes in a particular context; bodies-without-identity are positioned in a war with a body-without-organs. The anonymous bodies of men are spatialized against the enduring self of Leila that is losing its relationship with its externalized identity.

⁴⁰⁶ Laura U Marks, “John Greyson’s Critique of Masculinity” in *The Perils of Pedagogy: The works of John Greyson*. Edited by Brenda Longfellow, Scott MacKenzie, and Thomas Waugh. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2013) 373-4.

In short, the personalities of the male characters have been taken from them. In the next scene, one of these characters is hitting her while the frame shows him with his back to us. All this action is taking place with an impressionist painting in the background. It is as if nature were observing these acts of violence. The picture is showing an idealic, calm image of the fluid movements of the drifting clouds over a farmland. With respect to my earlier discussion of the problem of violence in the Western evolutionary discourse, the picture suggests that violence does not leave a trace. The merging of the image of the painting and the violence on screen emphasizes that the act of violence is not happening at a specific moment traced by the hand of the clock.⁴⁰⁷ Like clouds and grassy-fields, violence does not leave a trace, and therefore, is not relegated to a specific moment in history.

As Deleuze suggests; the close-up is not an enlargement of but rather a being liberated from the surroundings.⁴⁰⁸ Next we see a shot of Leila's face against a white blanket dissolving into a letter written by her uncle. Fragmented images of the past are inserted to interrupt what is happening in the present. Often the emotionless face of Leila is framed against the background. The only defense she has against this violence is impregnating the moment with the past and distending it to give it more layers.

⁴⁰⁷ One could say that, the contrast between the image of never-ending time and what happens in a moment shows that, in patriarchy, violence is eternal and it does not die. The spatial self associated with the anonymity of men in this scene is positioned against the enduring self (Leila) who is feeling the world without externalization.

⁴⁰⁸ Paola Marrati. *Gilles Deleuze: Cinema and Philosophy*. The Johns Hopkins University Press. Maryland. 2008. 40-43. Marrati explains that Deleuze does not detest the idea of making affection-image equal to the close-up. However, what we see in his philosophy is the reversal of its identification with a face. Close-up, in fact, does not enlarge an object from the larger set that it belongs to. Rather it is form of abstraction that detaches the object from its spatio-temporal existence and resubmits it into pure affectivity. Any object that can be abstracted from its habitual spatio-temporal functions, therefore, is a close-up. In other words, close-up express affect as an entity in itself (as a pure form) independent from what is connected to it.

In the previous chapters, I have demonstrated that there are a number of scenes in the first part of *Suspicious River* that indicate time and, as the movie progresses, we no longer see these images of clocks and calendars. This more or less metaphorical scheme may be correlated to how close-ups are used in this film. My shot-by-shot analysis of *Suspicious River* suggests that, as the movie goes on and becomes more chronophobic, the close-up shots of Leila become longer and more extreme.⁴⁰⁹ More close-ups of Leila are used in the second half of the film than the first half. Furthermore, they are usually associated with silence and blank facial expressions rather than dialogue or voice-over. Thinking in time, Bergson suggests, will always be incommensurable with language. And as I indicated earlier, it is remarkable that we can see a connection between the disappearance of calendrical intervals and the appearance of scenes with lengthy close-ups without any accompanying dialogue.

Affection-images are supposed to invest a cinematic experience with qualitative time (i.e., becoming rather than being). Stopkewich has achieved this task by employing close-ups that become more and more cut off, isolated, and liberated from the actual world as the movie moves from the quantitative level (i.e., the symbolic use of calendrical intervals) to the qualitative level (i.e., her employment of close-ups that evoke any-space-whatever). Stopkewich herself in an interview that is featured on the DVD version of her film notes that Molly Parker's face is like a giant billboard where it can register many different emotions and affections. As the movie goes on, the close-ups become more spatio-temporally independent. Leila's face becomes

⁴⁰⁹ Look at my entries on cinematics website. My studies suggest the same trendline for *Kissed*. Molly Parker's close-ups becomes lengthier and extremer.

ultimately liberated from its spatio-temporal referents and communicates affection beyond objectification in the territory of pure quality.

The idea of time as a multilayered phenomenon that I have discussed in relation with *Suspicious River*, can also be applied to another Canadian film made in the same year, *The Law of Enclosures*. The two films go along together since there is no privileged temporal layer that is aligned with the leading character's point-of-view in what is assumed to be the present-time. *The Law of Enclosures* may be a more influential film in that sense because not only does it deconstruct the temporal structure of the film and the agency of the present-time recollection, it also deconstructs the chronological historicism within a global and local relations.

Chapter 8

Queered Clocks and Queered Time in *The Law of Enclosures*

“The same psychical life, therefore, must be supposed to be repeated an endless number of times on the different storeys of memory, and the same act of the mind may be performed at varying heights.”⁴¹⁰

In order to see how a close analysis of a film such as *Suspicious River* can lead to an appreciation of similar films featuring the same tendency, I will discuss how the notion of multilayered time is depicted in *The Law of Enclosures* (John Greyson, 2000), a Canadian movie that was released the same year as *Suspicious River*. I will argue that Greyson’s portrayal of malfunctioning clocks, multilayered time frames within the narrative, recurring themes of countdown, and the depiction of a highly mechanized war are all interrelated. In fact, in *The Law of Enclosures*, the past and present coexist with each other to the degree that the historical background of the film is always the same. More to the point, like *Suspicious River*, the female lead in *The Law of Enclosures* (Beatrice) is to a great extent alienated from public time in that

⁴¹⁰ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 123.

the progression or movement of the horological time, communal excitement for countdowns, and plans for future—all of these become insignificant and meaningless to her. I will argue that, the theme of never-ending war is in line with Bergson's interpretation of modern warfare as it becomes more and more mechanized. Following this, I will briefly look at some other examples of films showing similar patterns.

The Law of Enclosures is another critically neglected Canadian film that deals with dual temporalities. It centers on the forty-year relationship between a small-town couple, Henry and Beatrice. Henry and Beatrice's younger and older selves mysteriously coexist in a single time frame without a sense of priority, with both couples (that is the younger on the older) on a more or less equal footing. To further confuse the situation, the historical background of this double layered story is the Gulf War, a relatively short term event. In other words, the news coverage of this war is ongoing throughout the film with no estrangement between past and present. With respect to *Suspicious River*, I have already argued that several devices, (for example, a fixed setting which does not alter over time, the unchanging models of the cars, and ageless interior decorations) blur the historical periods. Another one of these devices in *Suspicious River* is Leila's mother striking resemblance to her mother-in-law. In *The Law of Enclosures*, such familiarity between the past and present exists to the degree that the political atmosphere of the past is essentially no different from that of the present. Indeed, the end of the war is announced twice in this film, showing that the lives of these two people (be the young or old) are stuck in time.

John Greyson, the director of *The Law of Enclosures*, claims that he wanted to tell “the most-straightforward story in the most conventional way.”⁴¹¹ This tendency towards realistic plots is similar to the quasi-realism to be found in *Suspicious River*. Both films however, slowly confuse the spectators by radically mixing the temporal layers. In *Suspicious River*, the leading character, seeks timelessness while she is fully aware of the external ticking of the clock. On the other hand, in *The Law of Enclosures*, the leading character matches the external construct of time to her internal experience of timeless moments to the degree that malfunctioned clocks in the film shakenly tick only on one number without moving forward. In *The Law of Enclosures*, a common enough heterosexual relationship that lasts for forty years is portrayed, in an uncanny way, as covering only one calendar year. Hence the historical ambiguity of the film’s background does not alienate the audience in any Brechtian sense as it does in such art film as *Cache*. While speaking about art-films such as *Caché* and *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, Russell Kilbourne suggests that “*Caché* affords an excellent example of this newer form of (ironic) cinematic reflexivity. In this sense reflexivity ‘functions to prevent viewers from being completely absorbed in the illusion of an experience of a film or image, hence it is thought of as a means to distance viewers from that experience.’”⁴¹² To be sure, such irony does not have a strong presence in a realist film such as *The Law of Enclosures*. Indeed, it is precisely this absence of stylistic alienation which distinguishes this work from the films of famous art directors such as Ruiz or Godard.⁴¹³ Although the whole concept of aimless layering of time in

⁴¹¹ Quoted in George Melnyk, *Great Canadian Film Directors*, 139.

⁴¹² Kilbourne, 12.

⁴¹³ For example in Godard’s *Pierrot le fou*, there is scene in which a murder and its outcome are shown in a single take and time-frame. But the Brechtian appearance of a head-sculpt in the middle of the scene ironically creates a

The Law of Enclosures is ironical, Greyson tried to maintain a typically Canadian naturalist narrative throughout the film. Greyson himself states:

With *The Law of Enclosures*, we found there were only minimal opportunities for sustained critical engagement with the digital mediation of this uber-mediated war. We could allude to the cult of media consumption and the addictive quality of spectacle, but only as this was embodied within the limited bodies of our main characters. Within the confines of realist cinema, the limits of the quodlibet had been reached.⁴¹⁴

Greyson's insistence to keep *The Law of Enclosures* within a semi-naturalist narrative of realist cinema makes this film exceptional within the body of his work. Although the presence of the past is a recurring theme in his films, his theatrical unrealistic approach, as one finds it in *Lilies* (1996), creates a melodramatic restaging of the past. Commenting on *Lilies*, Christian Ramsay says: "The film is densely layered, self-reflexive, and Brechtian in structure, alternating between the prison and Roberval and using the same actors to embody different characters in both settings in this play-within-a-play-within-a-play-within-a-film about socio-sexual dissent."⁴¹⁵ By contrast the multilayered temporality of *The Law of Enclosures* with its passing social commentary on the Gulf War is played out "within a character-driven semi-naturalistic

sense of alienation. In *Time Regained*, Ruiz portrays the concept of totality of time by constructing complex multi-temporal images through the use of various optical devices that creates a surrealist atmosphere. Although pure recollection for Bergson is a virtual image, it should be distinguished from dreaming or dream-image. However, the experience of Ruiz's *Time Regained* is that of confusion between dreaming and recollection. In other words, there is not much of what Deleuze describe as "a pedagogy of the image" with regards to, for example, Godard's films.

⁴¹⁴ John Greyson. "A whore on Terror: Several Quodlibets" in *The Perils of Pedagogy: The works of John Greyson*. Edited by Brenda Longfellow, Scott MacKenzie, and Thomas Waugh. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2013) 318. Also, on the discussion of the shift from perceptual to informational culture, Laura U. Marks notes: "In all these cases, what we experience with our senses is simply the end result of processes of information that are ultimately more significant than perceptible images." In "Information, Secrets, and Enigmas: an Enfolding-Unfolding Aesthetics for Cinema." Published in *Screen Journal*. V 50. Issue 1. 2009. 84-86.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 284

narrative.”⁴¹⁶ Maybe one reason for the poor reception of this film is this unusual stiffness that collides with realism.

The unusual indication of time in *The Law of Enclosures* is also noteworthy. All the clocks that are shown in this film invariably stop functioning in a peculiar way, that is, several times we see the movement of their hands as being only spasmodic and fixed upon a certain moment. In other words, the clocks forever register the same hourly time (ticking without forward movement). With once again reference to Zeno’s paradox that has already been used in this thesis many times, then we can observe that this static movement shows chronological time (clock time) as being forever in a state of not being able to progress as a result of infinite increments. Of course, in the real life, such an incident normally happens when the battery is weak or when the spring is broken. The effect is that the hand ticks on the same number forever. This attempt to move forward that never succeeds is in line with what Bergson claims by bringing Zeno’s paradox into discussion— the inability of external time to move forward in space (infinite regression).

The analogy between the representation of the clock and the historical background of the film again depicts a situation where history does not move forward in any conclusive way and the time of violence cannot be contained in the distant past. The Gulf War, which does never really end and is repeated over different temporal layers of the film, subverts the hope of possible positive social changes that some people expected as the twentieth century came to a close.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 318-19.

Ironically, actual historical events surrounding the film are duplicated in a double sense in the lives of the protagonist, and are in line with the theme of never-ending war. Indeed, life follows art in the sense that, two years after the film was released, the second Gulf War broke out. Its continuity with the first one even goes so far as to have its direction, in terms of the US presidency, take on a dynastic character. In fact, the setting of the film and the news coverage of the Gulf war might not be so strange for the younger spectators who did not grow up in the nineties. Indeed, this is contrary to what was expected from the symbolic breakdown in time after the year 2000. The mainstream popular culture in the late 90s imagined a new history absolutely strange to the history that we knew. There was a fantasy that a symbolic breakdown in time would change the entire character of the current history and memory. However, as what Bergson may say with respect to war, “[t]he closed tendency of morality ensures that it will always come back.”⁴¹⁷

I will bring in Bergson’s interpretation of modern warfare again. But, in general, the way we access history has been laid out in *The Law of Enclosures* in a peculiar form. Memory may be articulated in involuntary and eruptive forms. But what is interesting about *The Law of Enclosures* is that our access to history is very dependent on memory and recollections. Andre

⁴¹⁷ Alexander Lefebvre, *Human Right as a Way of Life: On Bergson’s Political Philosophy*, 106 Lefebvre, further on, discusses how Bergson relates the idea of love to Zeno’s problem, in that the only through or possible love is uninterrupted love. Universal love of human kind is impossible if we start loving other humans one by one ad infinitum. Accordingly, only universal and open love can remove the root of the problem of war. More to the point (and with respect to how *The Law of Enclosures* shows sociability and war as permanently rival coexistence), Lefebvre says: “Bergson’s insight is that sociability sets the term in which the problem of war is posed. Sociability lets us live with war. It ensures the survival of the species in light of it. But it does not get rid of it. Quite the contrary: Sociability transforms war into a permanent but a manageable problem for the species ... War promotes the evolution of sociability and societies wage war.” Ibid 24.

Benjamin, in his book on Walter Benjamin, notes that time is “always the doubled, and only in its doubling united, moment in which one time recognizes itself in another as ‘meant’—intended, indicated, demanded, claimed.”⁴¹⁸ Thus every present moment is determined, indicated, and intended through the historical index synched with it. Each present layer in *the Law of Enclosures* has the same historical index attached to it. However, when, as suggested here, one historical index is synched with two or more present moments, the history becomes merely a perspective shaped in our memory.

Bergson thinks of peace as “the interruption of war and not visa-versa.”⁴¹⁹ Lefebvre and White in their book, *Bergson, Politics, and Religions*, note that, for Bergson, closely defined morality and closely defined religion forge the attitude of discipline in us in the name of the enemy.⁴²⁰ In other words, peace is just an illusory interval while war (and, indeed, having enemies) remain a constant. This commentary on war is in line with his philosophy of time when he discusses how our attention is usually concentrated on a series of seemingly discontinuous acts. For example, he states that “our psychological life is full of surprises. A thousand incidents arise which seem to contrast with what precedes them, and not to be connected with what follows. But the gap in their appearances stands out against the continuous background on which they are represented, and to which they owe the very intervals that separate them; they are the drumbeats which break into symphony of intervals.”⁴²¹ He goes on to say that, “[o]ur attention is

⁴¹⁸ Andre Benjamin, *Walter Benjamin and History*. (London: Continuum, 1999) 456.

⁴¹⁹ Alexander Lefebvre and Melanie White. *Bergson, Politics, and Religion*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012) 101.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 3.

fixed upon them because they interest it more, but each of them proceeds from the fluid mass of our entire psychological existence.”⁴²² In other words, our attention is fixed on intervals because they are distinguishable while other states of conscious beings do not have distinctly recognizable elements. Likewise, the memory of the characters in *The Law of Enclosures* is always associated with war while the announcement of peace is an interruptive moment that is played out twice near the end of the film. In other words, the awareness of the Gulf war, as we find it in the lives of the both younger and older selves is a permanent, and twice announced end of the war has an interruptive status.

In his book, *The Meaning of the War*, Bergson writes: “What would happen if the mechanical forces, which science had brought to a state of readiness for the service of man, should themselves take possession of man in order to make his nature material as their own?”⁴²³ Here, Bergson is pointing to the fact that such an inversion of human-machine relationship necessarily leads to the continuous rise of militarism. The idea of war, as conquest and domination, creates an ongoing tendency towards perpetuating itself indefinitely. In fact, Bergson goes on to say that:

What kind of world would it be if this mechanism should seize the human race entire, and if the peoples, instead of raising themselves to a richer and more harmonious diversity, as *persons* may do were to fall into the uniformity of *things*? What kind of a society would that be which should mechanically obey a world of command mechanically transmitted; which should rule its science and its conscience in accordance therewith; and which should lose, along with

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Henri Bergson, *The Meaning of the War*, (English Translation, 1915) (London: T. Fisher Unwin LTD, 1914) 35-36.

the sense of justice, the power to discern between truth and falsehood? What would mankind be when brute force should hold the place of moral force? What new barbarism, this time final, would arise from these conditions to stifle feeling, ideas, and the whole civilization of which the old barbarism contained the germ?⁴²⁴

In *The Law of Enclosures*, we see on a dual level that the protagonists are trapped in a year of war which features the latest and most sophisticated technology. This “never-ending” war that contains the film’s characters may be seen as illustrating the Bergsonian idea of how the material of war can come to include and overwhelm its human constituent (e.g., “as *persons* may do were to fall into the uniformity of *things*”).

This analogy between war machines and the uniformity of things may also be applied to the factory where (as Chaplin has perfectly showed in *Modern Times*) people are objectified as just another cog in the wheel of the clock/factory. The *Law of Enclosures* begins with an establishing shot of an oil factory while the diegetic sound of the oil pump creates a tempo that is reminiscent of the ticking of a clock. Indeed, the sound of the pump imitates exactly the sound that accompanies the malfunctioning clocks that we see throughout the film. However, (in contrast to a film such as *Run Lola Run*), this tempo is not about a forward or backward movement of time in space. This can be seen when we get the first close shot of a clock where the clock ticks but the hands do not move. Similarly, the sound of the pump suggests, apart from technological evolutions, a broader inability of humans to progress and move on, given that the oil war perpetuates itself from one century to another. It is always in the background for a

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 35-36. Deleuze, in explaining the concept of the plane of immanence “refuses to see deviations, redundancies, destructions, cruelties or contingency as accidents that befall or lie outside life; life and death were aspects of desire or the plane of immanence.” See Claire Colebrook. *Deleuze: A Guide for the Perplexed*. 4.

generation that thinks the turn of the new century would bring optimistic changes and resolutions. Although we see the characters age over the forty years period, the external time as background or historical space stagnates. With this scenario before us, we may ask ourselves: how can we experience time that both advances in a personal sense and does not advance in the external sense? I think that this paradox well illustrates Bergsonian idea of experiencing the internal time being in conflict with its external manifestation.

The opening sequence consists of images of an oil refinery in production that shows mechanical movements of the factory machines as well as images of the instrument panel of a fighter jet while it targets positions in Iraq.⁴²⁵ Mechanical repetition, for Bergson, is against the flux of life. Perhaps these opening scenes, more than any others, show that *The Law of Enclosures* is on track with Bergson's interpretation of the significance of war as never-ending technological fatality that disguises reality. These juxtapositions in the opening scenes suggest the ultimate evolution of war as the whole process of mechanization superseding life (spirit). At the very opening scene, we have images of different parts of the oil refinery factory, each with a sign bearing a number, and progressing in a manner of a count-down which starts at ten and goes into six.⁴²⁶ The motif of the countdown that starts at ten but eventually fades out before reaching the zero point (continuous countdown) is repeated throughout the film in different ways. In fact, given that *The Law of Enclosures* is shot and set in the late nineties, it has a further resonance by virtue of its link to the contemporary popular interest in waiting for the zero year (the second millennium). The approaching year 2000, in fact, created a strange confluence between public/symbolic time and internal time, where people felt a teleological significance of genuinely

⁴²⁵ The opening scene also breaks the convention by inserting black and white shots for the present and colour for the past.

⁴²⁶ This may ironically be connected to the SMPTE universal film leader countdown, at the begin of all sound films that goes from 8 to 2 but never reaches 1.

cosmic proportions associated with a symbolic moment. Both *Suspicious River* and *the Law of Enclosures* as time-conscious films were made in the year 2000, where people felt that something dramatic or apocalyptic was going to happen on 31 December 1999. I will argue at the end of this chapter that both films may be seen as a critical reflection of what I would call the culture of waiting in the late nineties.

After this opening sequence of the oil factory, we hear the internal voice of Beatrice, as her teenage self, does a countdown from five to one for no obvious reason. Indeed, the countdown ends without following a conventional course in a sense of concluding with a significant event or act. Bringing in again Bergson's commentary on Zeno's paradox, the act of counting-down should be seen as a useless practice, because there is no possibility of having one isolated moment of climax. The next shot shows Beatrice as an elderly woman and then quickly pans to the teenage one, both of whom are sitting in the waiting room of a pharmacy. Once again, the sound track suggests a rhythmic tick-tock as pills, one by one, are dropped on the table by the pharmacist who was counting them. This scene continues in a confusing way where Beatrice, as little girl, bumps into her elderly self while, at the very same time and not very far away, Beatrice as a teenager is waiting in a line to buy some pills being counted by the pharmacist (the semi-diegetic sound accompanying counting pills is the same as the sound of malfunctioned clock and oil refinery machines).

In the pharmacy scene, the two Beatrices, perceptibly belonging to two different recollections, bump into each other, while the third Beatrice possibly existing in another temporal layer is silently waits for her drugs on the bench. So, recollection-image is not coming from a presupposed present-time point-of- view. In other words, the recollection in this film is

not subject's communication with her past in present time. This freedom of point-of-view from present layer helps the past to be understood in itself not through the present. In short, the past is somehow preserved in memory without any subjective tendency.

In the pharmacy, the old Beatrice watches a TV ad for nail polishing that fades into images of explosions that are scenes from the Gulf war. The voice over of the ad says; "cranberry... blood red nails, from pomegranates ..." while she is looking at the images of the explosion that ultimately fade out as blurred and snowy TV screen. Hence, we have the ironic juxtaposition of the voice-over describing the product in terms with scenes that corresponds with the horror of the war. This intellectual montage is still very much implanted in the memory of the characters in a realistic way. Such techniques of ironic juxtapositions of TV screen images are repeated throughout the film. For example, when the teenage Beatrice goes to hospital to visit Henry, all the monitors of the operating room, instead of showing usual images of the cardiovascular graphs, again show images of the Gulf war. In yet another scene, when the elderly Beatrice and elderly Henry drive to their new house, the windshield turns into a TV screen once again showing the images of explosions. Hence, the effect of this link between moving in space (car) and moving in time (TV screen) may be seen as another way to evoke Zeno's paradox because there is no possibility of passing the image of explosion.

All the monitors of the operating room, instead of showing the usual images of the cardiovascular graphs, show images of the news from the Gulf war.

The first shot that involves the malfunctioning clock motif occurs when the teenage Beatrice, after having first met Henry and becoming infatuated with him (so much so that she ends up stealing his handkerchief,) goes back to her house and lies down on the couch. In fact, the malfunctioning clock merely recalls our attention to Bergson's belief that "the scientific time does not endure."⁴²⁷ The back and forth movement of one of the hands of the clock mimics the mechanical movement of the oil refinery machines shown earlier. A number of simultaneous and interrelated events occur that break with the conventional flow of time and put time on hold: Beatrice puts the handkerchief to her face, touches herself sexually, and looks at the malfunctioning clock that ticks but whose hands do not move forward, while the TV is on with the coverage of the interminable Gulf War. Sexually gratifying oneself has been traditionally condemned as a selfish act with no real accomplishment or meaning. Therefore, as time

⁴²⁷ See J. Alexander Gunn, *Bergson and His Philosophy*, (Liverpool: Aretern Press, 2015) 180. He says that, "Bergson reminds us that if our existence were composed of separate states, with an impassive Ego to unite them, for us there would be no duration, for an ego that does not change, does not endure."

expended, it is time wasted — it is not commodity time. In other words, here we have time, more or less, represented as a non-productive, asocial affair, having no correspondence with time as an item to be measured or in need of being measured.⁴²⁸ The act has no real place in space since there is no past and present ascribed to it (that may also be true of Gulf war). It is in contrast to the later scene in the film when a public countdown in a kissing festival takes place in the town. The social achievement of en mass heterosexual kisses at a specific time makes that moment sellable and advertisable. In fact, as something that town's people celebrate and valorized, this event becomes part of the marketing scheme to promote a town. By contrast, when Beatrice lies on the couch, she employs time in a different way, reflected to say once again, the hands of the clock stuttering and making no progress. When she looks at the clock knowing that the moment has no quantifiable value, the indication of time becomes meaningless. Consequently, the clocks hand does not move from one point to another. In other words, public or external time does not recognize this seemingly aimless act.

The documentary footage in the film from the TV tells us that “this (Gulf war) is the first war that has ever been broadcast live on television.” Later on, Beatrice's friend (Maya), whose fiancé is a soldier who participates in this war, is excited by the fact that she saw his ship as a

⁴²⁸ One might argue that, individually speaking, there is an intended culmination – an end point – a teleology that renders this time quite “instrumental” in producing an outcome – sexual climax. However, at this point, I am dealing with productivity, strictly for the gain of capital. We only need to measure time if there be an external or public recognition of it as a product. More to the point, as Bergson would argue, self is nothing but continuous passage or flow of duration incompatible with the homogeneous understanding of space. So any formless and non-calculable experience of sex is closer to what Bergson would say as the inner experience of self as uninterrupted flow. Thus the experience of fluid inner temporality is linked to the deconstruction of sexual hierarchy. In contrast to kissing marathon scene in that kissing is structured as an interval similar to the announcement of peace, the experience of sex is never durative in public domain.

CNN reportage the night before. Beatrice then asks her friend: “Stan was on TV last night?”

Maya answers: “I know his boat. He is in the first mechanized.” This is again in line with Bergson’s interpretation of the significant of a never-ending war as “world of command mechanically transmitted” that I brought up earlier. In *The Law of Enclosures*, the war is depicted as completely mechanized in that, individual humans are recognized solely by command and control technologies with numbers attached to them (e.g., first, second, or third mechanized).

In the next scene, Beatrice follows Henry to a waste dump site that is full of used oil containers. The imagery of modern warfare and the used oil containers of this site suggest how the war may be part of the broader chemical pollution possibly causing Henry’s brain tumour. More to the point, the end of the millennium (together with the impending computer crisis) was always linked to an ecological apocalypse by environmentalists.⁴²⁹ The next scene shows an image of an oil factory inserted as a sort of intellectual montage reflecting how mechanized warfare may always be caught up with numbers. Indeed, following that, we see Beatrice’s friend working on a billboard encouraging people to sign up for the world’s biggest kiss contest. She corrects the sign by changing the number of days left in the countdown from 32 to 31.

⁴²⁹ For example, Lois Ann Lorentzen notes that for Earth Firsters, the end of human world would not be a bad thing because it is a renewal for the ecological balances in the future of the planet. In Charles B. Strozier, *The Year 2000: Essays on the End*, 145.

The town people are obsessed with countdowns waiting for apparently the most delightful moment.

Later, during the event of the kissing competition, the mayor announces to some members of the crowd: "I know you have been practicing, I have seen you guys practicing." In the previous scene, a documentary footage of a crowd in the Middle East fades in on the image of the crowd waiting to participate in the contest. Thus the screen becomes a fragmented layer of memory that depicts and connects different power relations. For example, it may be interpreted that the countdown to a lengthy moment of kissing in the contest is a similar event as the jubilation of going into war as an ironic counter-part both in terms of emotional and formal register (See the image in page 238-9). Still it is a war fought in the Middle East but localized in this small Canadian town in seeing it as a collective emotional phenomenon. Likewise, the continuation of the war, suggested by the over-layering of the film's time frames, shows that the scene of collective jubilation of going into war is not real and is as banal as the apparently euphoric and triumphant moment of the collective heterosexual kissing. In fact, the crowd does a

huge countdown, at the end of which, a huge number of pink and blue balloons (signifying gender binary) are released into the air at the same time as everyone kisses her/his partner. Henry and Beatrice are the only two people who, instead of following the behaviour of the seemingly jubilant crowd and accepting its gendered hegemony, do no more than staring at each other blankly. As we can see here (and as I will suggest with reference to other scenes later on) is the fact that both these young people (Beatrice in particular) alienated from the public's awareness of and sensitivity to time.

Bergson thinks of Germany in the First World War as a mechanical body.⁴³⁰ In their book on Bergson and war, Alexandre Lefebvre and Melanie White say that “[t]he analysis of the German exception, however, reveals a fundamental character of the state in general; it emphasizes the amorality of state sovereignty in time of war and simultaneously affirms the inevitability of war in the world of economic competition.”⁴³¹ At some point in *The Law of Enclosures*, while the elderly Beatrice watches the war news outside her cottage, we hear the enunciation; “Saddam Hossein is no match for the sophistication of the coalition’s high tech weapons. Superior aerial mapping ensures that US bombers can pinpoint their target with 95% accuracy. This is the first time camera is attached to a bomb to deliver a graphic picture seconds before impact... This is the cleanest war I have ever seen. We can see them perfectly. And they cannot see us at all.” This announcement comes directly after the moment when the elderly

⁴³⁰ Henri Bergson, *The Meaning of War*, (London: T. Fisher Unwin Ltd 1914) 34.

⁴³¹ Alexandre Lefebvre and Melanie White, 43. They also compare Durkheim’s interpretation of war with that of Bergson. Durkheim similarly believes that ‘the monstrous war machine of Germany’ that is launched into the world in an attempt to dominate the world shows the power of the state, he concludes that “without war the state is not conceivable.” 43.

Beatrice remarks about her poor memory with regards to her daily plans by saying that: “I don’t remember. It was all done over the phone. It was Bob or John...”⁴³² However, the recollections of the past that pertain to the war, one that never decays or fades away, are triggered clearly by the TV images of a never-ending conflict. Therefore, there is a real distinction between the private memory of the real day-to-day life (represented by Beatrice’s troubled mind) and public memory (represented by war reporting).

Although Beatrice’s memory is decaying, the past is an integral part of her personality understood from the point-of-view of time (as Bergson would suggest) as being multilayered and in some sense a contemporaneous. When the voice-over says that “this is the cleanest war I have ever seen,” the scenes of targets being bombed fades into fuzzy images of the biggest kissing contest being shown in slow motion. War (what Bergson describes as the most ancient tendency in human affairs) is now furnished and represented with the most modern equipment—not so much as a final solution but as a new problem in and for itself that endangers a vast, never-ending array of conflicts.

Then, for the second time in the movie, the TV screen becomes a viewing of a protest in the Middle East. However this time, the image is finally going staticky and snowy. Media definitely produces its own version of history but there is an ultimate distortion. However,

⁴³² Apparently the elderly Beatrice suffers from Alzheimer disease. Barnard notes that “Bergson argues that in the case of recollection memory, the damage to the brain does not destroy the actual recollection memories themselves (as ‘spiritual’ phenomena, they cannot be affected by physical events. Instead, *as Bergson puts it*, ‘the alleged destruction of memories by an injury to the brain is but a break in the continuous progress by which they [i.e., recollections actualize themselves. ... Recollections, in-and-of themselves, therefore, are not destroyed.” (In Barnard. 188). Here, Beatrice brain is incapable of remembering specific events, however, the recollections of the past is continually present in her perception formed by habit memory.

memory in *The Law of Enclosures* is not represented so much as return to some past war; it is rather shown in its relevance to the past-present relations, or in other words, how the past war is active in our present memory without a sense of priority as an ongoing and continuous impacting on the daily lives of the characters.

In the next sequence, Beatrice does another countdown but this time only from ten to five. Because of a supposedly fatal brain tumor that the young Henry has when he first met Beatrice, she obviously does not expect to have other than a very short-term relationship with him. At some point, Henry's mother asks Beatrice what direction she wants to take in life. Having no specific plans for the future, her response is simply one of wanting to have children and perhaps going back to school. In short, she seems to lack a clear ambition or direction in her life. Worldly ambition, generally speaking, is very much tied up with time as being systematic and structured. Perhaps then Beatrice is not interested in separating different layers of time (past, present, and future). As we see then, she has a tendency to be disconnected from the external time and treat it in a non-schematic way devoid of articulation; consequently, she is not fully conscious of its movement. In another scene, the exact same ticking sound motif is once again comes back when Beatrice, working in a grocery store, uses a sticker gun to put labels on products. These scenes are in contrast with the more symbolic or representative scenes of Henry and Beatrice playing in an abandoned water park with its looped waterslide and the huge map of the solar system on the design of the pool's ground. All of the above suggests time as fluidity and non-linearity as opposed to the chronological experience of time represented by labor and productivity in the grocery store. In another scene, Beatrice is shown staring at one of the

malfunctioning clocks that comes up every so often in the film for a long time in her room. Like other clocks in the film, it too makes a ticking sound but otherwise does not function. The reverse-shot shows the reflection of the clock in the glass table. The camera then tilts up and reveals both the clock and its reflection together. In terms of the normal mirror effect, there are inverted features but not in terms of inverted motion (i.e., the opposite movement in terms of clockwise and counter-clockwise direction). Although always indicating a different time of day, all close shots of clocks in this film show the same feature of hands that refuse to register the progress of time.

With reference to the kissing marathon that I discussed earlier in the film, we can see how, in the character of Beatrice, inner time is alienated from the public time. This is to say that, in contrast to the countdowns that Beatrice does wholly subjectively through her inner voice and leading nowhere, here we see a countdown which is public and which fulfills its public mandate by ending in a “dramatic” or “exceptional” moment. Furthermore, as mentioned before, the symbolic aspect of this alienation is registered in the fact that, of all the couples at this gathering, only Henry and Beatrice do not seal the climactic moment with a kiss. This marathon kissing countdown scene reappears several times in a movie, ironically portraying the public time as waiting for a seemingly heavenly moment. Public time, indeed, is linked to a sort of expectation of something around the corner better than anything that comes before. Prior to this scene, we hear a radio announcement of this event while Beatrice frantically driving around the town’s oil factory. The countdown motif is also shown on the live video broadcasts of bombs falling on

Baghdad. In general, there are two types of countdowns in this film; the internal type that has no resolution, and the external type that ends with the moments of public approbation. In the final scene, we see the elderly Henry about to die after being accidentally shot by a deer hunter, as a dying request, he asks Beatrice, who comes upon to the scene, to use a countdown to his last moments from ten to one. At the same time, we hear the same sound of the clock motif that appears in this movie, but for the first time as a purely non-diegetic tempo. (The other times they were semi-diegetic because the tempo was synced with the sticker gun in the grocery store, counting pills in the pharmacy, movements of mechanical machines in the oil factory, malfunctioning clock, quickly at locksmith workshop when his uncle tests the key, and etc). The movie ends with the image of a red deer that strikingly resembles the one that Beatrice, as a child, took photographs of at the beginning of the movie.

Alienated from the crowd, Beatrice and Henry do not participate in the kissing contest that most people in the town were very enthused about.

The scene wherein Beatrice and Henry do their first love-making before Henry's supposedly fatal operation does not follow the sort of "realism" generally employed in this film. In fact, the visual roughness of the usually pixilated media-related images is in sharp contrast to the style of this dramatic point in the plot which more or less is tied to the idea of the transitory nature of the image. Such attempt in deconstructing realism generates further challenges. Indeed, unlike the news images on TV screen, the private intimacy between the leading characters is sparkled into something that does not last long. Given the characters' assumptions about the outcome of the surgery, the ephemeral aspect of their act, which is tied to the idea of "seizing the day," is more prominent. But here, instead of a direct view (i.e., a hallmark of journalistic imagery) their naked bodies are lensed from behind the matte glass of the bathroom which blurs our view of their bodies making them somewhat abstract, and adds to them an aesthetic quality in opposed to the approach of news journalism. Indeed, earlier in the kissing marathon, the young couple have been shown refraining from joining the crowd in mass kissing, and thereby refusing to be part of the orchestrated "spectacle." The dramatic moment of private intimacy is charged with a strong sense of transience (displayed by means of a different, aestheticised form of imagery). Hence, by virtue of this opposition, it foregrounds the notion of news media's transgression from a time-bound mode of delivery into a timeless and transitory display.

After being cured of his brain tumor, the young Henry goes to work at his uncle's locksmith business. Although prior to this he was mistaken as being gay (and that made him desirable in the eyes of Beatrice), his uncles and his employees start teaching him how he should explore his manhood. In fact, before this, he was not interested in participating in a typical

heterosexual event (i.e., the kissing marathon), but at the workplace, his coworkers start to impose on him their stereotypical attitude towards women. When Henry first shows up at work, his uncle replies: “Rule number one! They call me the old man around here.” Through the use of parallel editing, in the next scene, while an image of an oil refinery is in the background, Beatrice and her coworkers are talking about their relationship. Mayra says: “They (men) all are like dogs. They only do tricks when they are hungry.” Beatrice, in an inconvenient way is asked about her situation with Henry. She says to her inquisitive coworkers that Henry does not employ any seductive trick that he uses against women. “He is different. He does not have any tricks.” she says. Thus Beatrice is shown as very naive for honouring Henry in such way because Henry slowly starts bowing to social pressures around him until he is being drawn into it. In fact, Henry’s uncle and other people at work do have influence on him. As a consequence, Henry moves from being an innocent person to an imitation of the macho, male centric culture around him.

With an interesting image of an oil refinery in the background Beatrice embarrassingly discusses her sexual relationships with her coworkers.

For example, with regard to their illegal plan for deer hunting, one of Henry's male coworkers says: "Maybe we can take baby face, Henry, along with us. He can work it out." His uncle says: "The kid is not queer. Ask his wife?" His coworkers asks: "Oh. Henry! What is your bedroom secret?" Henry uncomfortably replies: "We do OK" His coworkers asks: "tells us about it?" Henry replies: "There is nothing to tell. We just do the usual stuff." His coworkers keeps pestering him with questions about his sex life. Henry finally says: "sometimes she likes to have it doggy style." And they laugh hysterically. All these discussion take places while they are playing table hockey game that Laura U. Marks, in reference to other Greyson's works, identifies as a representation of "privileged signifier of masculinity" in local Canadian context.⁴³³ Each character is composed in a medium close-up at the centre of the frame. The glass cover of the table hockey game resembles the instrument panel in the cockpit of a fighter jet (making Henry a target), while the uncle and his employee standing over this game with their hands on its levers resemble a couple of fighter pilots whose tasks are maintaining the control of the game. (See the images in the next page!) The symbolic imagery of the table Hockey glass to an instrument panel of a fighter jet similar to CNN footages shown earlier on connects a sign of local masculinity to the global one. Becoming a heteronormative man here parallels the whole background issue and imagery of the Gulf war as a continuous development (or evolution) of power-relations. The

⁴³³ See Laura U Marks. "John Greyson's Critique of Masculinity" in *The Perils of Pedagogy: The works of John Greyson*. Edited by Brenda Longfellow, Scott MacKenzie, and Thomas Waugh, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2013) 371-382.

game of war is shown as being connected to the masculine competition Henry is involved at workplace. In a scene near the end of the film, Henry's coworkers even the female one bully him for the way his body is exposed at work. Then in next scene, Henry and this co-worker are sleeping together. Then his uncle instructs him over how to weld a metal plate. At the same time, he warns him about his extra-marital relationship and consequences. He says: "Always tip it away your body. Otherwise you might get burn. Kind of when you got burn when your wife figures out you have been poking Sandy." Even Henry's mother tells Beatrice with regards to their marriage: "He is at the wheel. And you're the passenger."

The table Hockey cover metaphorically resembles fighter jets. It makes Henry a target of his coworkers' masculine aggression while it looks like that his uncle is behind an instrument panel controlling the situation.

The next scene is a flash-forward to forty years later when Henry and Beatrice are building their retirement house. Henry is shown as obsessed with being the decision maker, disapproving and neglecting anything that Beatrice would like to do. "Why can't I have my own staircase?" Beatrice ask. Henry shouts back: "because it does not go anywhere." "It goes up. It goes down" she says. Henry says that: "It does not go with the rest of the house." Earlier in the film, the young Beatrice tells Henry's mother that "she wants him (Henry) to be like the time

before he was cured.” In the next scene, when the elderly couple are in the bedroom of their new retirement home and having difficulty watching the war news on TV, Beatrice says: “Damn all these mail ordered satellite dishes.... [She tries to change the channel] We want to see the fucking war....show us the fucking war... what is the use of all those cameras when all we see is fucking sandstorm.” In a shot/reverses-shot that immediately follows this scene, we see the young Beatrice in a similar situation that is, watching television and being frustrated with the interference that causes the screen to go snowy. She finally turns it off, and at the same time, her face itself changes into a pixilated image reminiscent in texture of war news documentaries on television that ultimately becomes (fades in to) the image of the elderly Beatrice. There is a strong identification between the image of the young Beatrice that is projected into the past and the elderly one through the uses of cinematic effects normally employed for depicting the war news in the background. In short, the past selves of the couple, that is represented along with the war (not the war as war but the war as time—time that is indefinite), is strongly identical to the present layer.

Time is definitely the most important thematic element of this film. Indeed, with regard to the fact that we usually think of time as a forward movement, time, in this film, defies logic. There is also the metaphorical presence of the deer. Deer, like swans in *Suspicious River*, represent return or cyclical time. So there is a kind of linear time with the two narratives, and in addition, there is a Gulf war time, that is not really cyclical because it is identified, and therefore,

historically specific. However, it is not also linear because it impossibly covers two layers of time. So there is something indefinite about this type of time (not linear and not cyclical). It is an indefinite time not being logical in chronological sense and not mythical like cyclic representation of the deer. In other words, the time of war in *The Law of Enclosures* is meant to be unlimited, confusing, and illogical. Still this illogical time, in certain ways, represents the past.

Chapter 9

Performance of Time in *The Law of Enclosures*

There are two ways of considering the event. One consists in going over the course of the event, in recording its effectuation in history, its conditioning and deterioration in history. But the other consists in reassembling the event, installing oneself in it as in a becoming, becoming young again and aging in it, both at the same time, going through all its components or singularities. It may be that nothing changes or seems to change in history, but everything changes, and we change, in the event.⁴³⁴

In this Chapter, I mainly focus on how a conversation between the two timelines is taking place. I will examine the use of surveillance videos, journalistic imagery, and geopolitical situations in reference to how external time has been performed. I will argue that Greysons approach to history is in line with the above quotation by Deleuze and Guattari. The high-speed methods of communication employed in the modern warfare (e.g., The Gulf War) generate a kind of instantaneous experience about what is going on. However, *The Law of Enclosures* shows the irrelevance of the external time when we install ourselves in the events of the history.

⁴³⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* (First Published 1994). Translated by Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 111.

Moreover, in several scenes, it is shown how the structural and measured time is staged in society as a public spectacle against the tendency of the leading characters.

For example, there is a scene where, Henry's uncle, in an embarrassing situation, demands Henry to kiss his "beautiful wife" in public. They reluctantly respond to this request by kissing each other.⁴³⁵ This scene is captured on the three surveillance monitors set up behind them. Interpellation At the same time, the mayor announces that all the participants in the contest have set a record for the longest, simultaneous, en masse kiss. Thus Beatrice and Henry are made to act out in public in a way that makes them the center of attention (contrary to what they earlier on during the actual contest refrained). What Judith Butler's calls "performativity of sex" that is always conditioned on individuals by the normative discourse/power is exemplified in this scene.⁴³⁶ In order to normalize their relationship, the heterosexual act needs to be performed in and recognized by the public. At the same time, it suggests, to some degree, the powerlessness of non-normative individuals who try to resist the public rituals. What we see here is a sort of obligation imposed upon the identity of the subject to act in terms of certain expectations against the transformative nature of the durative self. As Bergson would comment on the process of socialization, it is through "other exteriorised personalities, that our ego generally finds its point of attachment; its solidity lies in this solidarity. But, at the point where it is attached, it is itself socialized. Obligation, which we look upon as a bond between men, first binds us to

⁴³⁵ By applying Judith Butler's view to such a scene, it shows how the subject is interpolated to repeat the hegemonic gendered behaviour; and in contrast to the masturbation scene, it is viewed publicly by three different surveillance cameras. But in terms of the emotional response to such normative obedience we see the experience of what Bergson would call *Hesitation* as an interruption of the movement. View *Matter and Memory*. Chapter 2.

⁴³⁶ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter On the Discursive Limits of Sex*, (New York: Routledge, 1998)

ourselves.”⁴³⁷ This scene contrasts to the one where Beatrice is masturbating with a malfunctioning clock in the background that was discussed earlier. Thus we see that, when sex must be performed and played out in public, it needs the presence of time as counted. Whereas, in private, sex is more often than not a thing in flux, an event that disregards the passage of counted time. Thus in the scene just mentioned, the hands of the malfunctioning clock are purposeless and catatonic in their movement.

Further on, a sort of confusion arises when both the young Henry and Beatrice announce that the war has ended in one scene, and the elderly ones announce it in another. First, the young Beatrice tells the young Henry; “The war is over. He [i.e., Saddam Husein] has surrendered.” And then the elderly Henry says exactly the same words in the next scene. In a shot/reverse-shot, first, the young Henry looks back towards Beatrice, but instead of her appearing in a frame, we get a shot of the elderly Henry announcing the news to the elderly Beatrice. This double announcement of the ending of the Gulf war, separated by forty years of chronological time, shows that the war has in fact not ended. It articulates the view of time as ongoing and never-ending war. (As stated earlier, Bergson formulated the concept of war as an ongoing event and only interrupted with moments of peace). A group of people in this town is shown celebrating this victorious moment while, at the same time, via the superimposed images, they celebrate the end of the kissing marathon. In a series of rapid editing there is a collage of the scenes: troops in Iraq, a herd of fast-running deer in the woods, and different images of the couple in the two time frames. The sound track mixes the voices of the towns-people with various sounds such as the

⁴³⁷ See *Bergson: Key Writings*, 298

sound of deer galloping, steady non-diegetic sound of violin playing, the sound of explosions that comes from aerial bombardment, and what comes from TV. The TV narrator says: “[Their] coming home now... And we will do it. We are America. May God bless this great nation!” In line with what Bergson states with regards to the mechanization of war, the monstrous technological army of the United States supersedes its character as a collection of individuals, thereby, allowing it to dominate the world. When the young Beatrice and the young Henry go out with Myra and her army boyfriend to celebrate his safe return, Myra says to the customs officer, as they try to cross the border, that he (her boyfriend) “was in the first mechanized. He is a war hero.” The concept of hero is usually linked to individualism. In this passage, we can detect (following Bergson’s idea of mechanized war) the identification of the individual as hero does not preclude him from being part of a machine-like social construct. Referring to some of Greyson’s experimental films, Laura U. Marks notes that “[t]he critique of masculinity irresistibly entails critiques of militarism, of universality, and of representation.”⁴³⁸ In fact, *The Law of Enclosures* illustrates how the gradual construction of masculine identity on a local level has been strongly influenced by the rise of militarism in universal terms.

At the end of the movie, a flashback sequence shows the ultimate in Henry’s behaviour towards Beatrice. He is indeed becoming more violent as he starts to drink more and adopts a masculine role under the influence of the older men around him with the so called traditional rights of masculinity. The next sequence flash-forwards to the scene where the elderly Beatrice

⁴³⁸ Laura U Marks, “John Greyson’s Critique of Masculinity” in *The Perils of Pedagogy: The works of John Greyson*. Edited by Brenda Longfellow, Scott MacKenzie, and Thomas Waugh, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2013) 382.

and Henry go to visit an oil factory museum. Like the opening scene, each part of the site comes across as an image with a number that goes down from ten to one. The couple are wearing headphones for information. They stop the tape when it says: “proceed to number six.” Once again like earlier scenes, there is a countdown motif that never reaches a closure. At the same time, a group of teenagers are playing the kissing game. One of them counts down to zero and the others have to kiss. One of the boys refuses to kiss the boy and instead kisses the girl against the rules they have made. Then Beatrice impulsively asks Henry to kiss her. Following that, they kiss each other and the teenagers started to laugh and make fun of them. Numbers in the factory museum may be seen as a symbolic means for quantification of time. In fact, for Bergson, number is the sign of departure from the self into space.⁴³⁹ In externalizing the inner state numbers may be seen useful. The fact that each part of the oil refinery has a number sign attached to (as it was also shown in the opening scene) demonstrates how number works in creating abstract mental images for each unit of time externalized into the space. This scene echoes another scene that I discussed in that a number sign on the board indicates how many days are remaining before the kissing marathon. Each moment is supposed to disappear into the past forever and only leaves its trace in present time. Henry and Beatrice, at this point, realize that the countdown never really happens in time, it rather, happens in space like the stages of the oil refinery’s museum. When time is externalized and ultimately reduced to numbers, it then may be paralyzed and paused.

⁴³⁹ Brann, 30.

On the idea of counting in numbers, Bergson notes: “What leads to misunderstanding on this point seems to be the habit we have fallen into of counting in time rather than in space. In order to imagine the number 50, for example, we repeat all the numbers starting from unity, and when we have arrived at the fiftieth, we believe we have built up the number in duration and in duration only.”⁴⁴⁰ Bergson, however, goes on to say that “yet it is necessary that each of these terms should remain when we pass to the following, and should wait, so to speak, to be added to the others: how could it wait, if it were nothing but an instant of duration ?” He goes on to ask the question “where could it wait if we did not localize it in space? We involuntarily fix at a point in space each of the moments which we count, and it is only on this condition that the abstract units come to form a sum”⁴⁴¹ Here, Bergson implies a kind of paradox on the act of counting, by that, without being attentive of the recollection of the preceding moment (number) the countdown becomes meaningless. On the other hand, without having a memory of it, we will be trapped in a confine of a moment (i.e., Zeno’s paradox).⁴⁴² The clock that ticks but does not move suggests equality of the number signs.

In the next scene, while the elderly Henry is sleeping we hear his heart as a sort of tempo. The beat continues into the next scene when the young Beatrice is in the hospital for her miscarriage. The tempo carries on to yet another scene when, the young Henry with two companion, are driving listening to Mayra’s boyfriend being interviewed on the radio. Unlike

⁴⁴⁰ Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 79.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 82.

⁴⁴² See M. Capek, *Bergson and Modern Physics: A Reinterpretation and Re-evaluation*, (Dr. Reidel Publishing Company 1971) 176-181.

other boys, Henry is very anxious to hear what he says in the Radio. They listen to him talking about his war experiences as a soldier and the problems of first mechanized while complaining that the air force had all the fun (i.e., the lack of recognition) when suddenly their truck runs into the red deer that symbolically has a spiritual presence in the movie. The lack of recognition that, he is complaining about, is strongly linked to technological innovation and its fascination since, as he says, the technology is apparently on the side of the air force in terms of the recognitions of heroic acts. Moreover, with regards to how the news distributors shows the attacks from the air force, the new media's depiction of the war is highly linked to the instrumentalization of our perception.

The super-imposed image of an explosion in Gulf War with an image of the main couple in *The Law of Enclosures*. The historical events surrounding the war have been deterritorialized from its specific geo-political situation to the limited and local representations.

On a few occasions during the film, these journalistic images enable a direct conversation as it were between two timelines. In one instance for example, the director cuts between two scenes with graphic continuity. The first scene is with Beatrice and Maya following the news on a TV set that for some reasons had been placed outside their new place in the yard. The second is

with the young Beatrice and Maya standing in a strikingly similar composition. The forest as a background in the first one is graphically similar to the oil refinery in the second one that together with the packed furniture gives a sense of chaos (View the images below). Moreover, the positions of the characters, the way they dressed and even their facial expressions are strikingly similar. Here the habitual notion of the “present,” as we typically associate it with watching the news footage, transforms itself into a constant, interminable “present”, one which streams through different timelines and bridges what is habitually defined as the past (i.e., time as it is perceived by the elderly Beatrice) and future (i.e., time as it is perceived by the young Beatrice). This durative expansion of “present,” in a subjective non-linear way, simultaneously creates a parallel and bridges over the temporal gaps between two different time-lines. Such a dual treatment is continually enforced through the graphic compatibility of these juxtaposed shots. (See the image below).

Both characters dressed in blue are at the center of the images watching the news on a television outside. The oil factory as a background in one image is replaced with the forest and packed furniture for moving in the other. Both scenes are grimy realistic.

Of course TV news is not the only form of journalism in Greyson's film, even if forming the bulk of it. It also involves the use of newspapers which simultaneously announce and clarify the nature of this eternalised war. Just as TV footages are freed from their real world temporality, the newspapers create a similar confusion of timeline. For example, we have the scene when the young Beatrice picks up the news paper that contains the two timelines of the film; one is represented by the report of her taking of a photograph of a red deer and the other is of the interminable and anachronistic Gulf war. Furthermore, the newspapers (maybe similar to the ongoing reappearance of animal it features—deer) not only transcend the barriers of time, but also their typically assigned function of updating the readership on the “recent” events. In other words, by being framed and installed on the wall in Beatrice's house, the newspaper transfigures into a decorative element, just as TV footages transform into a timeless spectacle.

Throughout the film, the footage of the Gulf War declares its difference through their specific texture and absence of colour. Although on certain occasions, the fictional world of the film (i.e., the world of Beatrice and Henry) suddenly transforms into brief images of a newsreel type of world, the opposite never occurs. Such an austere aspect of the film reinforces the underlying notion of “immediacy,” and in line with this, as something that gives us the unvarnished truth by purportedly remaining objective. Similarly, black and white is a characteristic of a journalistic activity in this film, the newspaper. For example, Greyson uses this idea and its colour properties to obliquely poke fun at the media’s claim to the truth when supposedly making their objective report of the latest developments. As an illustration of this in the early scene at the grocery store, Beatrice, as a small girl, enthusiastically shows the picture of the rare red deer to her incredulous friend. Doubting the significance of this, her friend challenges her by this question: “Why should anyone believe that it is a red deer when [the photo] is in black and white.” Beatrice’s flippant response to dismiss their doubt is: “The headline says it’s a red deer.” Therefore, in this response we may catch a glimpse of a common and widespread naivety, namely, that if something is written up in the newspaper it must be true. In other words, the expectations and anticipations shaped around the media give credibility to their content, despite or maybe exactly because of their imperfections.

Like the swans in *Suspicious River*, the red deer in *The Law of Enclosures* becomes a metaphor of return. In the final scene, the elderly Henry, mortally wounded by a hunter’s stray bullet, asks Beatrice to do a countdown. He tells her: “It is better this way ... We would have just fucked it up again. This way we’re saved.” She starts counting down from ten. However, before

she can reach zero, Henry suddenly notices a red deer and draws her attention towards it. Through parallel editing, the malfunctioning clock reappears and, for some inexplicable reasons, it is shown as suddenly moving forward for the first time when Henry dies. It is not entirely clear, however, why the death puts time on track again. Of course this red deer bears an uncanny resemblance to the one that, at the very beginning of the film, Beatrice, as a young girl, takes a photograph of with her disposable camera. In between these two scenes, a red deer is killed on the road. This motif of the returning red deer, therefore, transcends death, and thereby, depicts time in its cyclical movement as never-ending process rather than as measurable and linear one.

With all its supposedly metaphorical implications, the deer emerges as another major recurrent narrative element that flies in the face of the customary notion of temporality and chronological order. As with the images of war, the deer adds further complexity to the relation between the two main timelines even though the deer-spotting episode is rather negligible in its screen time. Indeed, unlike the almost uniform presentation of the war which is always mediated through the news broadcast on a whole array of ubiquitous screens (with the notable exception of the newspaper headline), the deer crops up in multiple embodiments. One of these is the statue installed in front of the old couple's house. Another reveals itself quite inconspicuously as a figure on a road sign, which the elderly Beatrice and Henry drive by while bickering and insulting one another. A shot of a herd of deer running in droves, which operates as a transitions from the young couple's first lengthy conversation to the above mentioned scene in the car, leaves little doubt that Greyson indented to include this item in the frame. The early scene in the grocery store prefigures the parallel between the war motif and the deer motif as two overarching

visual and narrative elements of the film, jointly weaving together the two timelines into a mixed stream of confused temporality. With respect to the scene in the grocery store, Beatrice as a small girl boastfully opens the newspaper to show her friends the photographs of the red deer which she took herself. At the same time, the cover of this newspaper's headlines announces the outbreak of the first Gulf war (Invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi forces). The parallel deepens further through the film by dint of an editing style which makes extensive use of juxtaposition of various elements to make its point. In the scene showing Beatrice masturbating on the couch, the camera tilts up to the framed newspaper article containing her photograph of the red deer. Thereupon there is a dissolve to an image of war. The paramount example of such parallel is featured in the montage sequence where the termination of the war is announced in both story-timelines.

Notwithstanding its comparable role in the narrative structure, the deer imagery which presumably evokes the regenerating forces of nature in high contrast to the images of war. In the case of the Gulf War, reams of photos have emerged documenting the environmental disaster flared up in the aftermath of this war (some of which recently used in *The Salt of The Earth* (2014), Wim Wenders' documentary on the Brazilian photographer, Sebastião Salgado). Despite levelling the temporal disparity between the two timelines by indiscriminately presenting themselves to the characters in different periods in their lives, images of the war in *The Law of Enclosures* themselves unfold in a linear fashion.⁴⁴³ The narratives of war running in the backdrop of both stories develop in the same fashion. Both begin with the announcement of the

⁴⁴³ For example, in *Matter and Memory*, Bergson notes that "[w]hen psychologists talk of recollection as of a fold in a material, as of an impress graven deeper by repetition, they forget that the immense majority of our memories bear upon events and details of our life of which the essence is to have date, and, consequently, to be incapable of being repeated." 83.

invasion, and then follow with the account of soldiers being recruited, and the liberating operation being launched, and finally the celebration of the war being won. As well it follows in both cases with a sordid reminiscence of a soldier retrospectively speaking on the radio about his experiences at the front. In short, the same linear structure holds true for events comprising each of the two timelines when viewed separate from one another. This linearity however does not apply to the deer as it appears in both timelines. The deer motif seems to belong to a timeless domain that protects it from capitulation to mortality. For this reason, the spectator may easily imagine that the deer in the final scene of the film is one and the same as the one later hit and cloven by the young Henry and his workmates while driving a truck and listening to a war testimony on the radio and the one whose appearance is committed to the picture by the young Beatrice.

Peter Dickinson suggests that, “[i]n their consistently revisionist approach to history and historiography, Greyson’s films and videos adopt a temporality that is both materialist and distinctly queer.”⁴⁴⁴ In other words, in a broader content, Greyson films do not conform to a heteronormative historicism.⁴⁴⁵ In fact, in *The Law of Enclosures*, we experience deterritorialization (in a Deleuzian sense) of the historical events. Hence, historical events are represented only within the limits of a trans-local channel of communication (i.e., a distant community’s reaction to the war as media event), rather than, relying on their specific geopolitical context. Although on the surface, *The Law of Enclosures* may be seen as Greyson’s

⁴⁴⁴ Peter Dickinson, “Counting Time in *The Law of Enclosure*” in *The Perils of Pedagogy: The works of John Greyson*, Edited by Brenda Longfellow, Scott MacKenzie, and Thomas Waugh. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 201) 453.

⁴⁴⁵ - Ibid.

most heterosexually oriented film, the queering of the history in the background that the characters of the film are trapped in is evident. History in *The Law of Enclosures* has not been told in a homogeneous or normative manner because chronological time as its main quantitative and divisional element is not present.

In *Cinema II*, Deleuze notes:

Bergson's major thesis on time is as follows: the past coexists with the present that it has been; the past is preserved in itself, as past in general (non-chronological); at each moment time splits itself into present and past, present that passes and past which is preserved. Bergsonism has often been reduced to the following idea: duration is subjective, and constitutes our internal life. And it is true that Bergson had to express himself in this way, at least at the outset. But, increasingly, he came to say something quite different: the only subjectivity is non-chronological time, grasped in its foundation, and it is we who are internal to time, not the other way round.⁴⁴⁶

The absence of specific points in time in what constitute the historical background of *The Law of Enclosures* (that controls the memory of its characters) fits in with Deleuze's interpretation of Bergson. The past in this film is not reducible to itself rather it is always in the present and constantly appears in the characters' recollection. Hence memory is always linked to involuntarily and disassociated images.

It is worth noting that confusion effect resulting from the omnipresence of war and its images in the background of the stories does not remain confined to temporality. Though temporal confusion probably remains profoundly the centrepiece of style unorthodoxy in Greyson's film, the presentation of space feels to be touched by a brush of the same calibre.

⁴⁴⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema II*, 80.

Barring the scene in which soldiers celebrate the end of the war, there's no other image outside of archival footage from Gulf War that presents the war zone. However, the director seems to have sutured the war zone, as it were, into the main characters daily life landscapes. Hence this is accomplished by a frequently visited landscape that can be suggestive of the war zone's trappings. Whereas in a different narrative context, the emergence of dune hills as part of character's surrounding could be simply viewed as a location diversifying vehicle with some emotional resonance, here a similarity with the stereotypical image of middle-eastern landscape steers one's mind in the direction of an allegorical reading. The metaphorical reading and the feeling of a geographical displacement that it elicits is not merely a work of spectator's imagination. Discussed earlier, somewhere in the film we find Beatrice burying herself in the dunes while she can be heard counting down. The countdown is followed with the noise of soaring up helicopters. Here in the consistently complicated relationship of voice and image, the countdown is accorded with an ambivalent function since the following scene features people putting up ads for the upcoming kissing contest, an event which will be later turned out to have its own countdown. Nonetheless the audio-visual juxtaposition of helicopter noise with the dry landscape, preceded by the countdown, establishes an association and a visual analogy between the characters' surrounding and the landscape of ongoing war that literally engulfs them through the media. At another point the young Beatrice and Henry are shown embracing for the first time in a vehicle parked in the same sandy landscape. As if motivated by this visual similarity, an Arabic non-diegetic sound uninterruptedly takes over the sound of the scene to the following image showing a Middle-Eastern looking crowd, presumably an item taken from the Gulf War

archived news. Once more the syntactic combination of audio-visual elements results in a feeling of geographical ambiguity.

The analogy reaches its height in the scene showing cheerful soldiers hurling one of their comrades to the air in celebration of the end of war. Not only is the scene filmed in the same style of images as the rest of the fictional material of the film, it veritably takes place in the same landscape where earlier on we saw Beatrice and Henry in. To make the matters further complicated, the war fought by those young combatants must have been taken place in a geographical area other than the Middle East. Yet the memory of the Gulf War that takes place during Beatrice and Henry's old days seems to have dominated and taken control of the background story. Greyson not only complicates the notion of temporality but also further disturbs the geographical distinction with a sense of uncertainty.

The foremost aspect of Greyson's idiosyncratic presentation of time lies in blending different time layers through enacting temporally-confused scenes and then creating a dialogue between the timelines through juxtaposition. Yet indeed there is another unusual element in his treatment of time. Traditionally the appearance of images from the past has a narrative motivation; either the story is presented in a chronological order and hence the events of the past emerge as a prelude to the main story, or some events in the story triggers memories of the past to come flooding back in form of flashbacks. Alternatively in a story narrated from an omniscient narrator's point of view, the narrator (maybe even present as a voiceover) can reveal to spectators some facts, of which characters might not be even aware. In *The Law of Enclosures*, however, the story of the young couple is not motivated by the narrative system, or at least it is

not very apparently so. There is almost no indication in the film of any of the couples trying to remember their past, or implying that the scenes from the past are clearly corresponding to the experience of either of them. Given the unfamiliarity of the viewer with the transformation of the time in the film and the appearance of the young and the old Beatrice together in the same shot, it certainly even takes some time for the viewers to realise that both stories are dealing with the same people.

Considering the often odd behaviour of the elderly Beatrice and the mistakes she makes in contacting the moving company, one might get the vague feeling that Beatrice has been developing some sorts of memory problems. But even if it is the case, nowhere in the film has it been expressly indicated. The spectator does not even have any clear idea about the medication Beatrice has to take. Therefore, in contrast to the chronological order of events in the adaptation source – Dale Peck’s novel- and its linearity, in the film incidents of two timelines enter into a relation of coequality (or as Bergson puts it coexistence of the past and present without a sense of priority) as a result of the similarity in the all-enclosing images of the war. This is a visual strategy that sounds more cinematic in comparison with the traditional uses of flashback which can be similarly deployed in a literary text. By playing the crucial role of transforming the temporal timeframes into coequality, and therefore, forming the fulcrum of narrative structure, the agency of war, and simultaneously its independence from the conventional past and present, is further emphasised.

In addition to the above mentioned evocative natural landscape, one’s attention might be drawn to the industrial complex serving as the curtain-raiser and literally constituting the

backdrop of certain scenes in Beatrice's young days (e.g., she is shown chatting with the colleagues from the workplace). As with many other details with respects to geography and timeline of the story, it is never clearly stated what is the main function or product of this industrial set-up or, for that matter, what is the major industry of this region. This manufacturing industry is always shown with number signs (or symbolic time) attached to it, while it seems that it produces more hazardous wastes in the town rather than anything productive. At any rate, it is not difficult to figure out a direct connection between this structure and what is constantly claimed to be the main motive behind any intervention of Western countries in the Middle East in the recent history, (i.e. the black gold). What further pushes us towards this interpretation is the opening credit scene of the film in that, the images of this industrial complex are intercut with shots showing an oil refinery museum which later on turns out to be visited by the aged couple.

The mere existence of an oil museum in the area inhabited by the main characters might lead us to believe that some resources of oil exist there. Following that, we might even assume that the background structure is a refinery indeed. From all angles, such landscapes that belong to the film's diegetic world reinforce a proximity of one kind or another between Beatrice's and Henry's whereabouts and the conflict zone, even though this unifying factor means blessing to citizens of one area and a curse to the other nation. Moreover, as I discussed earlier, somewhere in the film, there is a shot in the style of a TV news images, showing the beginning of the kissing contest. As the crowd let the balloons fly up in exultation, the director resorts to a graphic match to cut to an image apparently showing residents of the war-zone area. Once again, the ideas of

proximity and distance contradictorily meld together to further complicate the already problematized notion of space.

Greyson's decision to use the images of the Gulf War in a metaphorical capacity itself has a subversive implication inasmuch as it dissociates these footages from their prime function, itself pivoting on their relation with the time. As Yuriko Furahata has argued in a piece examining the notion of the "remediation" of media images in Koji Wakamatsu's works, the

newsreel footage and other actuality material are primarily produced for immediate consumption by the spectators.⁴⁴⁷ In fact, it is precisely such sense of “immediacy”⁴⁴⁸ that sets them apart from what she defines as cinematic image. The latter, on the other hand, requires a slower, delayed intake. The images of Gulf war, broadcast live from the battlefield, exemplify the immediacy informing the journalistic media. Even though eventually destined to join the infinite mass of archived material, they are foremost meant to give the spectators a first-hand and immediate experience of war and what is unfolding at the same moment moves away from their peaceful surrounding. In doing so, they defeat the barrier of space, enabling ordinary civilians peek into a spectacle of warfare without putting their lives in peril to the degree of merging into another crowd in a different geographical situation. Aerial views of bombardment, for instance, inspire fearfulness and excitement in the viewers, letting them get an illusion of sharing the experience of the jet crew, without being able to get into the latter’s mind and their authentic human feeling experiences.

With regards to a camera’s position that now can even assume the weaponry’s point-of-view, the spectators may experience the war in the style of a virtual game, though without being afforded the liberty of changing its course. As with a virtual game, the thirst for the excitement

⁴⁴⁷ See “The Actuality of Wakamatsu: Repetition, Citation, Media Event,” in *The Pink Film*. ed. Abé Markus Nornes. (Kinema Club, 2014) 149-180.

⁴⁴⁸ For Bergson, Immediacy or immediate perception of an object is related to our practical when for example we only recognize one or two one or two features of such objects. By immediate recognition of the useful elements the object of perception is reduced to a straightforward reality. See Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 70-77 and 44-45. In *Matter and Memory*, Bergson uses the term *instantaneous recognition* by which (unlike *attentive recognition*) we do not need any help from memory-image. In other words, it is related to moments when we usually act our recognition before we even think of it in our daily life. 92-95.

stirred by these images can develop into a sort of addiction, one that exacerbates with continuous presence of TV screens. Consequently, Maya's disgruntled crying for more war-related stuff on TV illustrates this addictive dependency (in a rather superficial fashion). In *The Law of Enclosures*, however, such trademark immediacy undergoes a drastic transformation, even within its diegetic world. Although the images meant for immediate consumption of the people in the early 90s, the fact elderly Beatrice and Henry reappear in a different, preceding timelines gives the impression of being looped ad infinitum. As such, they lose their exclusive relationship with the later timeline, where the couple are aged and the actual Gulf War has taken place. In fact, the war is becoming a visual component of the characters' past.

In the next chapter, I will elaborate on why it is important to discuss the deconstruction of temporality in these two films with regards to the time period that they were made, namely, the first year of the new millennium. The irreducibility of memory to a specific moment in history shown in these films creates a tension that works against popular culture's tendency in freezing a moment. The durational becoming in this territory turns out to be a very political becoming in rejecting human's tendency in making a symmetry between chronological history and local memory.

Chapter 10

Canadian Endism: Canadian Cinema's (Dis)engagement with Time over the Turn of the Century

William Brown, in his article “Bringing the Past into the Present,” notes that “cinema demonstrates the way in which different people and different groups of people move at different speeds; that is, while chronometric time might be regular and ongoing (days follow hours follow seconds), the *experience* of time is not; in fact different people move at different speeds and might even try to go backwards or skip forwards in time by immersing themselves in memories of the past and/or dreams of the future.”⁴⁴⁹ In short, Brown argues that certain historical ruptures urge certain groups of people (or generations) to experience time in different ways than before. Cinema may document generational concerns, obsessions, and anxieties over these historical ruptures. The beginning of the new millennium (or perhaps the end of the old one) reinforced the

⁴⁴⁹ William Brown, “Bringing the Past into the Present: *WEST OF THE TRACKS* AS A DELEUZIAN TIME-IMAGE” in *Cinema Journal* 6. 2014. 73-93. Brown’s article is focused on Chinese cinema and how the Western theoretical paradigms in the era of global capitalism is in contact with Chinese documentary film practices. But it is noteworthy that Brown makes connection between Deleuzian concept of the time-image and the official history of a nation.

culture of waiting for a special moment among Canadians in the late 1990s. In the previous Chapter, I have argued how such issues are played out in *The Law of Enclosures*. Both *The Law of Enclosures* and *Suspicious River* focus on characters who, unlike the rest of the community, have given up their trust in waiting for significant moments of change. I will argue that it is in line with certain tendencies in Canadian cinema that, unlike in American films, the end of the millennium does not generate a sense of anxiety about this so called end-point as apocalyptic event.

Brown goes on to say that, “[h]istorical rupture not only exposes these different rhythms, or temporalities, of existence, but these different temporalities arguably bring about historical rupture: one person or a group of people cannot (or decides that they do not want to) live life at the same rhythm as everyone else, and so a rupture happens — they separate from the rest, and that person forges forward at a faster rate through time, or falls behind, moving at a slower rate.”⁴⁵⁰ This is evident in both films that I have discussed so far, since they focus on characters who do not want to move on in accordance with external time.

In line with Bergson’s theory, the concept of the ending point is part of the fantasy or illusion of a linear history. In reaction to the awaiting culture in the late 90s, Jean Baudrillard, in an article published in 1998, notes:

We are jumping into the abyss of a regressing history, falling for the nostalgia of a revised and resubmitted past, and, in so doing, we are losing the imagination of the future. That’s why several years ago I came up with the notion that the Year

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

2000 would not take place. It would not take place simply because this century's history has already ended and we are in the process of constantly reliving it.⁴⁵¹

It would be instructive to bring Zeno's paradox in again. Zeno shows that there is no possibility to get to the end of time if we think of time in a linear fashion because the end repeatedly becomes the point of deferral. Baudrillard, however, says that the end of the millennium was already reached before the year 2000. It is noteworthy that he brings up the subject of the Gulf War:

As you know, I had announced that "the Gulf War did not take place." Contrary to traditional prophets who always predict that something will happen, I had announced that something would not happen. I am the opposite type of prophet. In any case, prophecies are always wrong. What the prophets announce never takes place. So, when I say that something will not take place, it will then take place. The Gulf War did take place. And the Year 2000 will in all likelihood take place too. But a prophecy does not talk about reality, just as a promise is never intended to be kept. The prophecy calls for the end; it talks about what is beyond the end. It incants the advent of the end at the very moment that things take place.⁴⁵²

Bergson does not distinguish between the virtual and chronological past.⁴⁵³ "Bergson's points is that this historical past cannot be 'forever done with,' since it forms a continuum of duration that reaches towards and joins with the present in order to make it 'thick.'"⁴⁵⁴ The illusion is that the symbolic breakdown in chronological history would bring in a totally new historical era disconnected from its past. However, *The Law of Enclosures* reveals the false impressions of

⁴⁵¹ Jean Baudrillard. *A l'Ombre du Millenaire ou le Suspens de l'An 2000* (Paris: Sens & Tonka, April 1998).

Translated in Miami, September 1998. (Translated by Francois Debrix.)

⁴⁵² Jean Baudrillard, *A l'Ombre du Millenaire ou le Suspens de l'An 2000*.

⁴⁵³ Craig Lundy. *History and Becoming: Deleuze's Philosophy of Creativity*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2012) 112.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

linear historicism. The unbroken historical background in the film shows that there is no future after the year 2000 disconnected from what happened before. Bergson notes that “if there is nothing unforeseen, no invention or creation in the universe, *time is useless again*.”⁴⁵⁵ Likewise, Baudrillard argues:

In a countdown, the time that’s left until the end has already been counted. So, we are living time and history in a sort of past-comatose state. This causes an endless crisis. It’s no longer the future that is ahead of us, but the impossibility to end it all and to see beyond the end. As the memory of the future, prediction vanishes in exactly the same amount as past memory does. When everything can be seen, nothing else can be foreseen.⁴⁵⁶

Accordingly, we cannot rewind our history like a tape. The symbolic moment of the year 2000, therefore, does not come to introduce a totally new temporal era cleansed from the negative memories of the past. In fact, this is what Bergson’s alludes to war— it will definitely come back.⁴⁵⁷

In the two chapters on *The Law of Enclosures*, I discussed that although always indicating a different time of day, all close shots of clocks in this film show the same feature of hands that never register the progress or movement of time. Moreover, with reference to the kissing marathon we can see how, in the character of Beatrice, her inner sense of time becomes more and more alienated from the public time. Unlike public’s enthusiasm with the countdown to the moment of zero (a moment to have a heterosexual kiss), Beatrice experiences what Jean Baudrillard calls “the impossibility to end.”

⁴⁵⁵ *Matter and Memory*, 39.

⁴⁵⁶ Jean Baudrillard. *A l'Ombre du Millenaire ou le Suspens de l'An 2000*.

⁴⁵⁷ Laurent de Sutter and Kyle McGee, *Deleuze and Law*. 65.

Both films I used as examples of having similar and highly unusual approaches to time are critically neglected Canadian films made at turn of the millennium. As such, they coincided with a sort of global anticipation which could be associated with a hope for new beginning. One could argue that, in contrast to the apocalyptic American cinema, Canadian films focus on the uneventfulness of this moment of transition. As Andre Loiselle notes, “[v]ery much unlike its American ‘equivalent’ Francis Ford Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now* (1979), [the Canadian film,] *Roadkill* does not deal with significant events or powerful characters.”⁴⁵⁸ The majority of Canadian apocalyptic films do not feature a dramatic scene or spectacle (e.g., *Chaos and Desire* (2002), *Last Night* (2000), and not strictly apocalyptic *Dead Zone* (1983)). Similarly, *The Law of Enclosures* repeatedly features countdowns that lead to no specific event and so closure or climax. At the same time, the same historical setting is fixed, limited, and unmoving in the background. *Last Night* (Don McKellar, 1998) is another Canadian film dealing with this culture of waiting for the turn of the century or the end of the world. However, contrary to what one might expect, the characters, throughout most of this film, treat this last night as just another ordinary night and nothing exceptional. With the absence of any definite and explicitly identifiable moments in such films, indulging in countdowns leading to some great happening becomes banal. This might have something to do with what Peter Harcourt once identified as a quite essential feature of Canadian cinema: “suspended judgment.” It is an attitude whereby Canadian film characters remain thoughtfully detached and disengaged from the urgency of

⁴⁵⁸ Andre Loiselle, “The Radically Moderate Canadian: Don McKellar’s Cinematic Persona” in William Beard and Jerry White, *North of everything: English Canadian Cinema since 1980*, (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press. 2002) 257.

timely reactions and consequently resist falling prey to the controlled temporal structure of consumerism.⁴⁵⁹

For example, NFB documentary *Universe* (1960), which Harcourt uses as an example of this Canadian attitude, begins by introducing mathematical tools for understanding universe. The effect of the mechanical movement and the sound of the precise measurement tools of the observatory's machinery is similar to certain scenes in *The Law of Enclosure*. Moreover, the voice-over keeps giving us numbers about the space. Towards the end, however, space is depicted as a world of dust, gas, and chaos. In one specific shot that features three clocks, the voice over says: "astronomers now fill in detail of the patterns so vast that everyday idea of distance and time cannot incommensurate." The documentary gradually deals with the immensity of the universe and its timeless boundaries. Rather than conquering the universe with the use of precise measurement and science and the end, the character goes back to his day-to-day life experiences, or as Peter Harcourt suggests this experience becomes "a gradual modulation back to our terrestrial life as we habitually experience it."⁴⁶⁰

In their book, *The Time Paradox: The New Psychology of Time That Will Change Your Life*, Philip Zimbardo and John Boyd introduce it as a paradox that "[i]ndividual attitudes toward time are learned through personal experience, yet collectively attitudes toward time influence national destinies."⁴⁶¹ Charles B. Strozier also notes that the American culture has always been

⁴⁵⁹ See Peter Harcourt, "The Innocent Eye: An [aspect of the Work of the National Film Board Of Canada]," *The Canadian Film Reader*, eds Seth Feldman and Joyce Nelson (Toronto: Peter Martin & Associates, 1977): 67-77.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, 67-77.

⁴⁶¹ Philip Zimbardo and John Boyd, *The Time Paradox: The New Psychology of Time That Will Change Your Life*. (New York: First Free Press.1999) 300.

obsessed with apocalyptic anxieties.⁴⁶² This anxiety, I think is due, to the fact that the end of the world would ruin the capitalistic assumption of infinite progress. On the notion of finalism Bergson notes that, “if the universe as a whole is the carrying out of a plan, this cannot be demonstrated empirically, and that even of the organized world alone it is hardly easier to prove all harmonious: facts would equally well testify to the contrary.”⁴⁶³ The history of evolution, accordingly, does not have a predetermined end-point. The doctrine of teleology, Bergson argues “implies that things and beings merely realize a programme previously arranged. But if there is nothing unforeseen, no invention or creation in the universe, time is useless again. As in the mechanistic hypothesis, here again it is supposed that *all is given*. Finalism thus understood is only inverted mechanism.”⁴⁶⁴ In other words, there is no point of departure from the past; and pure history does not conform itself to any sort of external finality.

Moreover, the idea of moral superiority to which Americans subscribe, urges their apocalyptic films to feature a warrior or a hero whose mission is to save the human race. Canadian apocalyptic films lack this sort of urgency and anxiety. The characters of *Last Night* (Don McKellerare, 1999) remarkably calm in experiencing the last few minutes of time. Paul Huebener in thesis written on time and Canadian culture and literature argues that Canadian novels engender a sort of peculiar conflict between the social experiences of time and individuals. For example he says: “Just as The Traveller’s encounter with Livingstone in *Looking for Livingstone* takes place at the end of time but simultaneously opens up new articulations of temporality, Snowman’s ‘Zero hour’ may be the end of a countdown, or the starting point for a

⁴⁶² Charles B. Strozier, 66.

⁴⁶³ *Creative Evolution*, 44.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid. 39.

reborn narrative of time. It is the beginning of something new, or the end of everything.”⁴⁶⁵

Karen Jeahne notes that “Canada is possibly synonymous with our universal instincts to conform and simultaneously resist conformity in a radical way.”⁴⁶⁶ In short, although films that are obsessed with time appear in Canadian cinema around the year 2000, they all lack any sense of destiny towards some final end to history. As comedian Mike Myers states, “Canada is the essence of not being. Not English, not American. It is a mathematic of not being.”⁴⁶⁷ Perhaps this is the reason that in approaching the year 2000, Canadian films reject the idea of external finality and move towards a kind of becoming similar to how Deleuze theorizes an alternative, non-linear, circular history.⁴⁶⁸ Deleuze and Guattari were against teleological history.⁴⁶⁹ Instead they believed in a durational history, a kind of history that is based on the notion of becoming and “the multiplicity of fusion.”⁴⁷⁰

David L. Pike argues that “the history of Canadian national cinema is singular one. A presence from near the beginning of the industry, it does not match the model of early success followed by periodic appearances of world class film-makers of commercial hits observable in Scandinavia, Germany, Australia, or Britain.” Canadian cinema, unlike Hollywood, is not divided into pre-war and post-war. In the previous chapter, I brought up Bergson’s idea of war as being a continuous and his rejection of paying attention to specific disruptive intervals in reading history. Similarly, Canadian film history rarely analyzes Canadian films according to different

⁴⁶⁵ Paul Huebener, “The Cultural and Literary Construction of Time in Canada.” PhD. Thesis. York University. 2012. 283.

⁴⁶⁶ Quoted in David L. Pike. *Canadian Cinema Since the 1980s*. (University of Toronto Press. Toronto. 2012) 17.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ See Chapter Two of Craig Lundy. *History and Becoming: Deleuze’s Philosophy of Creativity*.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 26.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., 27.

periods.⁴⁷¹ And as it has been argued, a film such as *The Law of Enclosures* is in line with the above mentioned ideas about war's continuity in that, peace interrupts war rather than war interrupting peace.

The standard anti-climactic nature of Canadian films is a focus on the act of waiting without any foreseeable reason or outcome at the end. For example, this is evident in the films of one of Canada's most renowned cineastes, Denys Arcand. In *The Decline of the American Empire* (Denys Arcand, 1986), the supper party that the characters are waiting for as special event becomes in the end merely the continuation of their earlier discussions about their past affairs. More to the point, in *The Decline of the American Empire*, there is a reference to a potential nuclear war. But in a maybe typically Canadian way, it is not seen as a particularly important topic (certainly not more important than sex anecdotes and a conversation about a fish pie recipe). The characters just talk about the pleasant spectacle of a potential nuclear war that they might be able to observe from their quint country-house veranda. (Similarly, in *The Law of Enclosures*, the experience of war is filtered through how the people in a small Canadian town are related to it.) In *Jesus of Montreal* (Denys Arcand, 1988), the idea of waiting for the return of Messiah (which could be seen as the mythological bases of Hollywood's obsession with apocalyptic films), ends up having no profound effects on society. It is recast in a way which makes its effects on society both subtle and secular. Finally, the video of the 9/11 attacks in *The Barbarian Invasions* (Denys Arcand, 2003) ironically undermines the periodic history of

⁴⁷¹ One might argue, however, that there are a number of Canadian film history books, like Pike's, that periodize contemporary Canadian cinema as starting in the 1980s. What is remarkable is that periodization in Canadian film exists but it is *peculiar* – not based on huge significant events like wars. Unlike American film historicism, Canadian film histories seem to be based on government policies. (For example, the Creation of Telefilm, the creation of the CFDC, the creation of the NFB, etc.)

American culture, (so much in evidence in their cinema, since the event significantly has changed the national narrative). Once again, friends and family members from Rémy's past are shown waiting for the termination of his life. His death is shown as no solution; the cultural and political gap between the young and old generations remains untouched. In *L'Age des Tenebres* (Denys Arcand, 2007), the idea of moving away from ordinary life to fantasy life, unlike what takes place in a Hollywood movie such *American Beauty* (Sam Mendes, 2000), does not end in a tragedy (e.g., a gun-shot); rather it ends with peeling apples in a secluded country home for the elderly. In short, Canadian films emphasize the notion of waiting, which has been overlooked in other film industries; on the act of waiting in itself against the external time rather than as a goal-oriented task or calculation.

Suspicious River and *The Law of Enclosures* re-evaluate our experience of time exactly at the point that, in certain historical and cultural context, anxiety about the end of time is evident. The leading characters of these films, do not fully obey a relation with external time that is dictated by the movement of the clock. As Bergson explains, the objective homogeneous division of time by clocks is only an artificial representation that society needs for practical purposes. Time for these characters in the two Canadian films mentioned, however, becomes an internal dimension in their day-to-day lives.

Further Analysis on Other Films

In a less significant way, such ideas are detectable in some other films made in the last ten years. For example, *Borderline* (Lyne Charlebois, 2008) is another Canadian film that fluidly navigates between different temporal layers. Kiki, the lead character, suffers from a borderline personality disorder and re-experiences some events that happened in her childhood within the same time frame. However, the clinical condition of the lead character, together with the Brechtian use of direct address that creates a sense of alienation, does not create a fully authentic experience of nonlinearity. It may very well be that after a detailed analysis of multi-temporality in a film such as *Suspicious River* one is capable of isolating some scenes and view them in the same fashion.

A recent application of the same idea of the crosscutting between the stories without expressly stating that they share the same timeframes evident in *The Law of Enclosures* also forms the narrative backbone of a recent Canadian film, *Patterson's Wager* (O. Corbin Saleken-2015). In this newer film, however only one character is present in both timelines and the director as well saves it for the last minutes of the film to elucidate the connection between parallel narratives.

Several recent non-Canadian horror films also include moments when the past becomes an integral part of the present in a way that blurs dialectic temporal distinctions. This tendency is not surprising given that, by definition, horror cinema tends to indulge in the unsettling return of the repressed)⁴⁷². In the aptly titled *The Return* (Asif Kapadia , 2006), the heroine is anxious about her mysterious involuntary visions of the murder of a woman in the past. Although the

⁴⁷² See Robin Wood, *The American Nightmare: Essays on the Horror Films*, 1979.

overall structure of the plot is about revelations and her struggle to uncover the origin of her condition, the situations also prompts her to return to her own past. As such, there are many scenes that reconstruct a sense of déjà vu, as well as other scenes that feature superimposed reflections in the mirror showing her carrying multiple identities.

The Silent House (Gustavo Fernandez, 2010) is a horror film that is shot entirely in one take. However, there are diegetic flashbacks that gradually revealed themselves to be about the heroine's repressed childhood. Unlike contemporary found footage films that maintain a subjective point-of-view, Fernandez's camera is sometimes positioned to represent the heroine's point-of-view and sometimes behaves like the ghost of father who abused her in the past. In other words, the camera, at certain moments, embodies the past and at others is firmly grounded in the present. Although the entire film consists of a long take, the camera's identity is not fixed. It thus adds to the confusion that occurs over the fusion of temporal layers.

Oculus (2013, Mike Flanagan) is another recent horror film in which layers of time are superimposed as a result of the internalization of traumatic childhood events being re-enacted in a succession of fluid transitions between past and present. Kelly (Karen Gillan) and her brother Tim (Brenton Thwaites), return home to confront a malevolent old mirror that Kelly holds responsible for the tragic death of their parents eleven years earlier. As the narrative unfolds, the mirror's influence blurs the boundary between reality and nightmare and, more importantly for our purposes, between past and present. The adult siblings encounter their younger selves, they cross paths, catch a glimpse of each other, and simultaneously seek to understand the psychosis

that overwhelmed their parents. Unlike in *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosure*, the overlap of past and present in *Oculus* does not occur throughout the film, being limited to relatively short segments. But at those moments when young Tim perceives his older self, or 23 year-old Kelly encounters the 12-year-old girl she once was, an experience of Bergsonian cinema occurs, as the spectator becomes immersed in the confusion of the two/four main characters as they seek to escape the cesspool of abject domestic violence.

Just as *Suspicious River* was the least critically acclaimed film of Stopkewich's works, so was *The Law of Enclosures* with respect to John Greyson's films. In fact, the small numbers of reviews on *The Law of Enclosures* are very negative. The review of the film on *Variety* runs as follows: "The film's real problems lie in its basic conception. The device of young/old characters co-existing in the same time frame piques interest, but finally seems pointless gimmickry as played out in cinema's literal visual terms."⁴⁷³ Likewise, *Suspicious River* never achieved the critical attention that Stopkewich's first feature film, *Kissed*, received. Both filmmakers deal with relatively predictable subject matter in comparison to the more controversial subject matter of their other films. *The Law of Enclosures* is seen as the only straight film of a queer filmmaker. It is quite likely then, that for that reason its complex relation with time has been dismissed. Similarly, *Suspicious River* does not deal with extreme forms of sexual perversion, which is the case in *Kissed*. Consequently, it has been labelled as a simple minor film dealing with a minor subject. I think the type of close analysis that I have offered in this dissertation may undo this sort of neglect, and moreover, provide a less hostile critical

⁴⁷³ Dennis Harvey, "Review: The Law of Enclosures" in *Variety*. OCT 2. 2000.

environment for discussing these films. More importantly, I hope to have provided a model to analyze other small realist films that seem, on the surface, to focus exclusively on the uneventful, everyday life of ordinary characters, but in fact indirectly comment on a complex experience of temporality as non-progressive, non-linear, fluid and all-encompassing

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have adopted an unusual approach in applying Bergson's idea of multiplicity of duration to two underrated Canadian film, namely, *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*. While doing my research, I discovered that few scholarly articles have been written on these films. Moreover, in general, the majority of cinematic analyses of marginal films such as *Suspicious River* have been limited to grouping this film with other films having similar historical contexts. For example, *Suspicious River* has been discussed to some extent along with Canadian films directed by women in articles and books dealing with the subject of Canadian women filmmakers.⁴⁷⁴ Another area in which this film has been brought up pertains to

⁴⁷⁴ An example of this is *The Gendered Screen: Canadian Women Filmmakers* edited by George Melnyk, Brenda Austin-Smith, and published in 2010. A small chapter in this book entitled, Feminist Ambiguity in the Film Adaptations of Lynn Stopkewich, written by Lee Parpart, is dedicated to this filmmaker. The author discusses the issue of feminist ambiguity only in relation with the industrial conditions of film production English-Canadian cinema. Thus she never narrows her textual analysis of a film such as *Suspicious River*. Another example is: Key Armatage. *Gendering the Nation: Canadian Women's Cinema*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto. 1999.

the topic of cinematic adaptations of contemporary North-American novels.⁴⁷⁵ Thus this film has never exclusively been analyzed in depth in relation to certain purely theoretical concepts. David L. Pike, in his book, *Canadian Cinema Since the 1980s: At the Heart of the World*, only mention *Suspicious River* once to call it a “disappointing second feature.”⁴⁷⁶ I tried in this thesis, however, to separate such a film from its contemporaries and apply, in a more abstract form, the philosophical concept of duration to the film’s central logic.

Similarly, *The Law of Enclosures*, has rarely been discussed in books and articles written on John Greyson. One reason is that Grayson films were largely discussed in relation with their queer contents, and on those terms, *The Law of Enclosures* is seen as not fitting. Moreover, *The Law of Enclosures* has never been released on DVD and the VHS copy is available only in few libraries.

This study set out to explore the concept of multilayered experience of time with regards to the peculiar structural arrangements of *Suspicious River* and *The Law of Enclosures*. I have discussed in the introductory chapters that for Bergson, heterogeneous, multilayered temporality is usually suppressed by representational time—a schematic mistake that denaturalizes time in favour of the homogeneous scientific quantification. In this dissertation, I tried to analyze these two seemingly simple art films in terms of their resistance to the latter error. It has been done so from many different angles: the experience of déjà vu, the alienation of characters regarding

⁴⁷⁵ Books such as *Dreaming in the Rain: How Vancouver Became Hollywood North by Northwest* (2003) by David Spaner exemplifies such approaches.

⁴⁷⁶ David L Pike, *Canadian Cinema Since the 1980s: At the Heart of the World*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003) 126.

clock-time, and the diffusion of recollection-images with the so-called present-time diegesis. All these different analytical approaches support the idea that the leading character's experience of time resists a purely quantitative mode of temporality. In other words, both the symbolic motifs in the films (e.g., the swans, red deer, the clocks, the calendar, the river, and the water bed) and the constant feeling of confusion, as we receive it through the leading characters mindset, surrounding the experience of the unconventional and unfixed arrangement of the fabula, prompts the overall feeling of disengagement with quantitative time. The study has also sought to explore how the overall mood of these films, as the central character inhabits the flow of time, eventually makes measured time almost insupportable. In *Suspicious River*, for example, without offering any fixed linguistic explanations or symbolic suggestions, the movie explores how the main character eventually arrives at the state of internalizing and accepting the permanence of the past. This permanence of the past is not treated analytically and never mapped out as a narrative logic, that is, as a means by which to understand the present action. Rather than a causal structure, the experience of the present-past becomes a homogeneous and qualitative passage. She finally turns it off, and at the same time, her face itself changes into a pixelated image reminiscent in texture of war news documentaries on television that ultimately becomes (fades in to) the image of the elderly Beatrice. In *The Law of Enclosures* the memory of the past is performed along with the memory war, as I mentioned before, not the war as war but the war as time—time that is of course indefinite.

The limitations of my analytical approach in this dissertation are tightly bound to the limitations of the medium of cinema. Of course, Bergson's criticism of cinematic technology should not be oversimplified. It has been noted earlier that, for Bergson, cinema (and perhaps art in general) is incapable of creating an inner experience of time. By rendering the "world" into an assemblage of fixed and immobile matter, cinema is essentially incapable of manipulating temporal layers. Hence there is no way to experience pure duration and flux of thoughts within the limits of absolute cinematic forms. Even a fragmentarily structured movie such as *Je t'aime Je t'aime* can eventually be mapped out. Our perception can manage the task of solidifying the real movements. Likewise, there is a cinematic tendency in how we sometimes remember our life stories. In a cinematic experience, the image is always timed rather than purely becoming a form of time-image.

On the other hand, radical tendencies of filmmakers to overcome such fixed quantitative frameworks should not be easily dismissed. Gilles Deleuze himself tried to redeem art-cinema from the overtly successive chronological characteristic of mainstream cinema. Accordingly to his theoretical views, there is a potential for creating confusion between the interior mindset of the character and the perceptions of the character's situation as given to us by the camera. In this study, I tried to go further by analyzing a film that, as far as I can perceive, is devoid of any predetermined intellectual approach. Hence my attempt in this dissertation has been to open up the possibility of discovering how other marginalized films may have an impact on how we perceive duration.

It is my hope that this study may be seen as a framework for other types of movies that engender peculiar approaches in depicting temporal layers. Some other contemporary low budget films, such as *The Silent House* (Gustavo Hernandez, 2010) and *The Return* (Asif Kapadia, 2006), base the survival of the past as the source of their horror. Although these movies do not fit generically in the same category with *Suspicious River*, syntactically they deal with the idea of merging the past into the present. Likewise, the survival of the past is not represented symbolically but experienced gradually. Both films engender diegetic flashbacks that are unknown to the audience. Moreover, I examined in the last chapter how another underrated Canadian film, *The Law of Enclosures*, that was released in the same year shares with *Suspicious River* an unusually approach in fusion of temporal layers. This thesis shows that all sorts of films can possibly intrigue a philosophical concept in us. Moreover, these philosophical concepts can be analyzed in detail from different angles. Nobody can and will say the last words about time. Our problem with time is never-ending, and therefore, it will continually keep its place in movies. Hence, the concept of time needs to be discussed in detail in relation to different philosophical dilemmas.

This thesis could also be viewed as an argument to show that Canadian cinema is capable of a critical and political awareness of the openness of time to which American cinema tends to remain blinkered. As I have discussed in the introductory chapter, sadly enough, many critics see the absence of linear time in Canadian films as symptomatic of Canada's dull and boring social order. Indeed, they fail to see its potential to transcend typically discursive allegorical representations of time in mainstream cinema. We may argue that Canadian cinema is not a cinema of representation, but a visionary cinema. In fact, filmic imagery in Canadian cinema

heavily relies on its temporality. The latter is different from the examples of the allegorical representation of time to be found in films discussed in chapter three such as *Irreversible* and *Caché* both of which of course work only on the moral discursive level. The awareness of the flow of time in Canadian films also works on the level of what Rodowick calls *the Horizon of Perception*⁴⁷⁷; they operate low enough to allow their temporal experiment to work below the discursive radar. Bruce Elder notes: “This is a concept of time shared by most Canadian Idealist philosophers. Unlike the British Idealists who tended to deny the reality of time and things in time, they argued for a reconciliation of time and the eternal which denied the reality of neither.”⁴⁷⁸ In short, Canadian cinema’s “stiff realism” urges towards a potentially radical experience of *durée* engendered by a masochistic undermining of sovereign subjectivity and the opening of the self to the outside. Masochistic desire, in a world where normative temporality and spatiality has been lifted, upsets the stability of masculine law.

Stopkewich’s career was reduced to minor TV production after *Suspicious River*. Without any further research on this matter, I do not believe that we can say with certainty that this downturn in her career is related to the failure of *Suspicious River* (both economically and critically). Moreover, academic writings do not necessarily have direct impacts on film industry. On the other hand, I will contend that this failure itself can in some sense be redeemed or mitigated by developing certain sensitivity among academics to its exploration of new cinematic territory as multilayered consciousness of time. Such has been my attempt in this study. I can only hope that further academic research with respect to young filmmakers such as Stopkewich

⁴⁷⁷ Rodowick, 8.

⁴⁷⁸ Bruce Elder, 205.

will result in their being integrated into the canon of respected Canadian films with greater facility and opportunity in the future.

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