Notes on the Work of Alfred Hitchcock and Orson Welles from the Perspectives of Slavoj Zizek and Gilles Deleuze

- Gary Zabel

These are notes that I distributed to students in a class I taught at the University of Massachusetts at Boston during Spring, 2017. The class was titled Philosophy of Film: The Work of Alfred Hitchcock and Orson Welles. We approached the films of these two auteurs through the philosophical reflections on film of Slavoj Zizek and Gilles Deleuze. I'm including the course description from my syllabus and the midterm and final paper assignments.

Course Description

In the period immediately following the Second World War, it was common to contrast the "entertainment" films of Hollywood with the "serious," or "art-house" films of Europe. The contrast captured the distinction between most American movies made for a mass audience and the more serious, thoughtful and experimental films made in Europe at the time. But it was never an accurate way of characterizing the difference between the best films of Europe and the United States. To begin with, the most radical, experimental school of cinema prior to World War II was that of the Soviet avant-garde (including the internationally recognized work of the director, Sergei Eisenstein). But Soviet avant-garde film was profoundly influenced by the films, "Intolerance" and "Birth of a Nation," both creations of the Hollywood director, D.W. Griffith. It is certainly true that Hollywood made itself master of the easily understood, high-grossing, mass entertainment movie. But even in the period immediately following the Second World War, great visual, musical, and narrative advances could be found beneath the surface of more than a few Hollywood films.

Writers for the famous French avant-garde journal, *Cahiers du cinema*, such as Francois Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard (soon to become movie directors themselves), made this point in the mid-1950s, re-baptizing a number of Hollywood filmmakers as *auteurs* (major creative directors). There was widespread agreement that the among the greatest of these were the two figures we will be studying in this course: Alfred Hitchcock and Orson Welles. Hitchcock and Welles undeniably changed the course of film history – including that of European film – with their cinematic innovations, even though they did so with mass distribution movies made in Hollywood studios and staring popular actors and actresses.

Film historians and theorists have written a great deal about the nature of these innovations, a topic that will also concern us in this course. But our principal purpose is to analyze and discuss the philosophical meaning of the films of Hitchcock and Welles. In his book, *Cinema*, the French philosopher, Gilles Deleuze claims that great philosophers and filmmakers think about much the

same themes, but that philosophers think in concepts while filmmakers think in images. What exactly are these themes? It is the job of this course to find that out in some detail. But as a preliminary indication, we can say that they include the relationship between good and evil; the role of sexuality in human experience; the nature of personal identity; the relation between consciousness and the unconscious; the distinction between truth and falsity; and the eruption of chaos in an apparently ordered world.

We will approach these and other topics through the work of two philosophers who wrote extensively about film. Deleuze is one of them, and the other is the well-known contemporary Slovenian philosopher, Slavoj Zizek.

Since his death in 1995, Gilles Deleuze's reputation as one of the greatest philosophers of postwar Europe has grown by leaps and bounds. While it is impossible to describe Deleuze's philosophy in a few words, we can point to the thread he follows in trying to make sense of cinema in his two-volume work of the same name. That thread is the nature of time in its multiple aspects. *Cinema* develops a detailed analysis of time in an attempt to account for the major developments in filmmaking since the movie camera and projector were invented around 1895. In his two-volume work, Deleuze develops powerful interpretations of the films of Alfred Hitchcock and of Orson Welles, both of which, he argues, are turning points in the history of cinematic art.

Slovak Zizek is one of the most famous and controversial intellectuals alive today. He has been called "the Elvis of cultural theory" as well as "the most dangerous living philosopher." A psychoanalyst as well as a philosopher, Zizek has written over sixty books based on a fusion of the theories of the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan; the great 19th century German philosopher, GWF Hegel; and the most important figure in the history of socialist and communist thought, Karl Marx. One of the secrets of Zizek's immense popularity is that he often employs this three-pronged theoretical framework to analyze popular culture, especially film. Hitchcock is his favorite director and a frequent topic in Zizek's work.
We will be reading Zizek's texts, *How to Read Lacan* and
Looking Awry.

We will view and discuss six films by Hitchcock and five by Welles.

Hitchcock:

Shadow of a Doubt (1943)
Strangers on a Train (1951)
Rear Window (1954)
Vertigo (1958)
Psycho (1960)

The Birds (1963)

Welles:

Citizen Kane (1941)
The Lady from Shanghai (1947)
Touch of Evil (1958)
The Trial (1962)
'F' for Fake (1974)

1.

This week we will be viewing Alfred Hitchcock's favorite Hitchcock movie, *Shadow of a Doubt*. He directed the film shortly after moving from London to Hollywood. It demonstrates his ongoing concern with a number of themes, including the nature of madness, the character of personal identity, and the eruption of evil in an ordinary, everyday environment. The theme of the double, which will also appear in *Strangers on a Train* (the film we will watch the following week) is developed in the relationship between the girl Charlie and the uncle of the same name whom she adores, but who is secretly a serial murderer. In your discussion, I would like you to apply Lacan's theory of the Mirror Phase to that relationship. To what extent are the two Charlies images of one another based on a mutual misrecognition? What is the relation between misrecognition, the Ego, and what Lacan calls "The Imaginary?" What are the moral implications of the mirror relationship between uncle and niece in *Shadow of a Doubt*?

In order to help you consider these and other questions pertaining to Zizek's philosophical approach to film, I have sent you a "Lacan-Zizek Lexicon." I wrote the Lexicon to help you understand the important - and difficult - concepts I've mentioned above, as well as other ideas we will be using to interpret Hitchcock's films. Later on, we will read material by Zizek in which he directly analyzes Hitchcock movies. But in our readings for the next couple of weeks, Zizek does not explicitly discuss the directors work. So we will attempt to develop film interpretations of our own, based on the ideas of Lacan and Zizek. The "Lexicon" should be useful for that purpose.

2.

There are two topics I would like to discuss today. The first is a question that we have already been grappling with in the course, namely: What does Zizek mean when he says that reality is structured by fantasy?

In your own discussion contributions, most of you interpreted Zizek as saying something like there are fantasy elements in reality (advertisements or TV programs, perhaps), or that people

fantasize in the course of their daily lives. But Zizek's point is much more radical than that. Following Lacan, he challenges the basic distinction between fantasy and reality. One way of putting this is to say that, if we eliminate fantasy from our experience, we are not left with pure reality; rather, we are left with nothing at all. Let me give an example. Take Donald Trump's Wall. We all know that this is a fantasy. A Wall that stretches across the continental United States entirely separating the country from Mexico, a Wall that reaches high enough and sinks far enough into the ground to block any possibility of crossing it without permission by the immigration authorities, a Wall that is not going to cost American taxpayers anything because Mexico will pay for it all – that Wall is never going to exist. It's a fantasy, but nevertheless it's one that got Trump elected to the presidency. It motivated enough voters to cast their votes for him in the general election so that the fantasy took on reality. If we subtract the fantasy of the Wall from Trump's presidency, we are not left with his "real" presidency, because Trump would never have become president without the fantasy. In this case, fantasy and reality are inextricably intertwined. But this does not only apply to Trump's Wall. There would no university without students, and students would never attend a university if they did not entertain fantasies about their future. No one would get married without a fantasy of what married life is like. Even in something as seemingly objective as physics, there would never be any experiments if physicists did not have fantasies about the consequences of successful experimentation. If we examine any "real" situation carefully enough, we will discover the fantasy elements upon which its reality depends.

The second topic I want to discuss is what Alfred Hitchcock called the "McGuffin." In a famous interview with the French director, Francois Truffaut, Hitchcock explained the nature of the McGuffin with a story. A man is sitting in a compartment on a train, and another man enters. The second man sees that the first has a large box resting on a shelf above his head. "What's in the box?" the second man says. "It's a McGuffin" the first man replies. "What's a McGuffin?" man number two asks. The first man answers, "It's a contraption for trapping lions in the Scottish highlands." "But there are no lions in the Scottish highlands," man number two tells him. The first man says, "Well then, I guess that's not a McGuffin." The joke of course is that whatever is in the box does not fail to be a McGuffin because it possesses different characteristics. Rather, there is no such thing as a McGuffin, and therefore no object that what is in the box fails to be. In Hitchcock's films, the McGuffin is an object that is insignificant in itself; it has no other purpose than to move the plot of the film forward. The McGuffin can be an abstract object, such as an espionage conspiracy. But in Hitchcock's movies it is usually a physical thing.

We have already encountered McGuffins in *Shadow of a Doubt* and *Strangers on a Train*. In *Shadow of a Doubt*, the McGuffin is the emerald ring that Uncle Charlie gives to his niece Charlie.

3.

Some general comments.

I think it's important to bear in mind that Lacan and Zizek are psychoanalysts, and that their method of interpretation works with the key psychoanalytic concepts I discuss in the Lacan-Zizek Lexicon. Some of these concepts are unique to L-Z's particular version of psychoanalysis, but others are present in all forms of the discipline. Most important among the latter is the concept of the unconscious (note: NOT the "subconscious"). The reason Freud calls it unconscious (*unbewusst*) and not subconscious is in order to emphasize the fact that the unconscious mind and its contents never come to the surface, at least in original form. What belongs to the unconscious mind stays in the unconscious except in 1) the distorted form of symptoms, dreams, jokes, and failed actions or slips of the tongue; and 2) the modified form of the interpretations of the psychoanalyst, which depend on unraveling intellectually the hidden meaning of symptoms, dreams, etc.

This has important implications for film analysis. A psychoanalytic interpretation of film never occurs on the surface level of the conscious motivations of characters that drive the film plot, but rather on the deeper level of how these motivations express, in a distorted way, unconscious drives, demands, and desires. An example: as many of you recognized, a psychoanalytic interpretation of *Strangers on a Train* does not accept the surface distinction between Guy's good motivations (to protect Bruno's father, for example) and Bruno's bad motivations to arrange his father's murder. Instead it sees in Guy's attempt to demonstrate his innocence, by warning Bruno's father of his son's murder plot, a disavowal (denial) of his (Guy's) own unconscious desire to murder his wife.

The difficult point that made it impossible for many people to accept Freud's discoveries is that in, our unconscious mental lives, we are all murderers and incestuous perverts. We are all Bruno - who is obviously living out, in psychotic form, the Oedipal drama of killing his father so he can fully possess his mother. Equally disturbing is that, in our unconscious, we continue to have the minds of infants. This of course means and that infants are not innocents. They (we) are the original murderers, perverts, and incestuous monsters. Lack of power, however, makes it impossible for the infant to act on these impulses. And the threat of punishment (in the fantasized form of castration) is what causes the developing child to repress such desires, thereby driving them into the unconscious).

The agency that represses unconscious drives, demands, and desires is what Freud calls "the superego," one expression of which is the inner voice of conscience (Freud believed that the superego is the internalized version of the father's prohibitions). Repression is necessary in the interest of civilization – if we acted on our deepest, most disreputable desires, social life would be impossible -, but what is repressed remains active in the unconscious. Understanding unconscious wishes and mechanisms of repression is critical to curing neurosis (in which the conflict between the two is expressed in symptoms), and psychosis (in which the failure of repression leaves the psychotic in a world of hallucinatory wish-fulfillment).

Although Hitchcock makes it obvious in *Rear Window* that Jeff is a voyeur, he is not clinically disturbed (although his voyeurism is part of what prevents him from engaging in the sexual act

with the woman who loves him). The situation is different with the male leads in Vertigo and Psycho. Here Hitchcock works with the theme of neurosis in the first case, and psychosis in the second. I will limit my comments to *Vertigo*.

Let's consider the character Scottie, the retired police lieutenant played by Jimmy Stewart. *Vertigo* opens with the scene of a trauma – the rooftop chase and near fall of the hero to his death, and the resulting symptom of vertigo (extreme fear of heights) that plagues him throughout the film. In itself, there is nothing psychoanalytic about this.
Everything we've described is on the level of consciousness. A psychoanalyst, on the other hand, would try to uncover the unconscious, fantasized infantile trauma that presumably attached itself to the rooftop event and resulted in the debilitating symptom. He or she would bring this out through free association, dream interpretation, analysis of the patient's resistance in the form of pauses or gaps in memory, etc.

But that is not the direction Hitchcock takes. His interest, rather, is in a different dimension of the hero's neurosis, namely his love of a woman who can exist only as a fantasy. He is unable to enter into an amorous relationship with a real woman, and is capable of being excited only by the fantasy construction that is Madeleine. What this indicates is a neurotic failure to resolve the Oedipal conflict. Remember that such resolution occurs when the male child renounces his original desire for his mother while redirecting his sexual interest to other women from adolescence on. Scottie however is stuck in his desire for an unattainable fantasy object. That of course is the reason for his bizarre and driven make-over of Judy.

What Lacan-Zizek adds to Freud is the idea that we are all similarly stuck. The *objet petit a* – object small a (other) is the unattainable "object-cause" of desire. Instead of being the thing that satisfies desire once we attain it, it is the mere shadow of the "hole in our being" that is desire itself. For L-Z, desire perpetually circles around the *objet petit a*, forever feeding on and renewing itself. This is the role Madeleine plays in the movie. I will leave it to you to connect this idea with the theme of the "second death" in Zizek's interpretation of the film.

4.

Interpreting films

It's important for the midterm and final essays to develop a sophisticated and informed approach to interpreting the films we are viewing. The readings by Zizek and my Lexicon are the guides to understanding the work of Hitchcock . When you write about his films, be sure to consult those materials and develop your interpretation on that basis. In other words, for example, what does Zizek and the Lexicon say that is relevant to understanding, say, the film Psycho? The point of a philosophy of film class is to make philosophical sense of film, not simply to register your own reactions.

Since the midterm essays are 3 pages each in length (total of six pages) and the final essay between ten and fifteen pages, you will have to develop interpretations of films that go deeper and are more sustained treatments than those in your discussion contributions. How do you do that? First, by discussing the philosophical readings at sufficient length to develop your framework of interpretation, and second, by focusing in greater depth on the details of the films.

Let me give you an example.

Let's say you are writing on *Rear Window*. First, consult and analyze in some detail the readings appropriate to understanding the film - in this case, those that discuss the concept of the gaze in Zizek and the L-Z Lexicon. Second, apply those results to an analysis of the film itself that is sufficiently detailed given the length of your essay. So, if you write a final essay about *Rear Window*, your task would be, not merely to discuss Jeff's voyeurism, but to analyze the specific way in which he lingers over the bodies of the women in the building opposite his. He observes the Torso Girl in a way that indicates sexual excitement, while his observations of Miss Lonely Hearts dwells on the consequences of a failure in sexual relations. His way of viewing the newlywed couple focuses on the young bride's insatiable sexual appetite and her husband's exhaustion in trying to satisfy her. Even his interest in the murder is focused on the body of the murderer's wife. Has it been cut to pieces? Where did that happen? Where are the pieces of the body now? Are some buried under the flower bed? Etc. Now what does this have to do with Jeff's own situation, beyond the fact that he is confined to his chair because of his leg injury? Jeff has a beautiful girlfriend – played by Grace Kelly, who would soon become Princess of Monaco. But he is intimidated by her success as a model, the money she makes, the elite circles she runs in, and, it seems, by her beauty itself. The result is that he has been incapable of consummating the sexual relation with her, even though she clearly desires it. Now connect that failure to the scenes in the opposing building. Jeff derives a voyeuristic satisfaction by gawking at the voluptuous body of Miss Torso, something that does not provoke his anxiety because there is no necessity for him to perform sexually, as there is in the case of his girlfriend. The insatiable sexually appetite of the new bride illustrates what worries him in his actual life, namely that he might not be able to satisfy his beautiful and accomplished girlfriend. Now consider the two remaining cases - Miss Lonely Hearts and the murdered woman. These are images of the failure of the sexual relation. In one case, we have a woman who longs for a mate, and who is suicidally depressed because of her failure to acquire one. In the other, we have the case of a love relation that has been transformed into hatred (as can happen very easily as any divorced couple will tell you). There are four female bodies - the enticing body of Miss Torso, the exhausting body of the new bride, the isolated body of Miss Lonely Hearts, and the murdered body of the salesman's wife. Each object of the gaze is one of Jeff's fantasies about the body of his actual girlfriend given a certain development of their sexual relation. Although the murderer (played by Raymond Burr) seems to be the main object of Jeff's concern, this is what a psychoanalyst would call a case of "displacement," a ruse by the unconscious to distract from Jeff's real conflict. Now we know that Lacan and Zizek stress the aspect of the gaze which makes the viewer himself into an object. Who does this to Jeff in the film? Obviously the murderer, when he sees Jeff looking at him, and comes to his apartment to kill him. But also, and more importantly, Jeff's girlfriend.

Consider the final scene. Both of Jeff's legs are now broken. He will be convalescent for months. He is asleep, almost curled up like a child. Grace Kelly is sitting nearby smiling at helpless Jeff while he sleeps. There is now indeed a relationship between Jeff and his girlfriend. But it is not a sexual relation. She is not his lover, but his mother. And he has been freed of sexual anxiety at the price of being infantilized. This is a particular example of what L-Z call "the impossibility of the sexual relation." That doesn't mean, of course, that sex never happens. It means that sex is always problematic.

Remember that the psychoanalytic approach to film interpretation is never obvious. It tries to penetrate the surface of the film in order to uncover its unconscious meaning. And that meaning always bears on the sexuality of the main characters.

Hope this helps you.

5.

Some comments on *Vertigo* and *Psycho*. This may help guide you in writing longer essays on Hitchcock's films.

As I mentioned in a previous message, in the films, *Vertigo* and *Psycho*, Hitchcock addresses the issue of psychopathology head on. The villains in *Shadow of a Doubt* and *Strangers on a Train* seem mentally unbalanced, but their lack of balance does not become a subject of psychological reflection by characters in the films (their criminality is a different matter). By contrast, *Vertigo* and *Psycho* are psychological movies in the sense that the mental status of the lead character in each– Scottie (John Ferguson) and Norman Bates – is a question posed within the relevant film; by the psychiatrist at the end of Psycho, and by Scottie, Midge, the off-screen doctors at the psychiatric hospital where Scottie is treated after his breakdown, and the members of the inquest panel concerning Madeleine's "death" in *Vertigo*. As early as the opening credits of the film – with hypnotic, swirling images emerging from an ultra close up shot of an eye – Hitchcock attempts to convey symbolically the internal experience of someone plagued by vertigo. And in the inner monologue by Norman's "mother" at the end of *Psycho*, he attempts to convey the inner experience of Norman's pathology.

As I also mentioned in a previous message, the kinds of pathology treated in the two films differ significantly. Scottie is suffering from a neurosis – specifically hysteria, which involves somatic (bodily) symptoms (in this case, extreme dizziness at heights) of traumatic origin. On the other hand, Norman is clearly psychotic. He is suffering from a severe case of mental "dissociation" in which his ego has split into two entirely separate personalities. Dissociation occurs when an experience or fantasy is too painful or otherwise harmful for the person in question to tolerate, so that he/she divides and isolates it from his/her ordinary mental life. The dissociated content remains active, normally expressing itself in the form of symptoms – in the most dramatic case as separate identities – but is no longer available to the conscious mind of the person in question.

In spite of the difference between Scottie's neurosis and Norman's psychosis, the films have two important characteristics in common. Both embed the question of psychopathology in a suspense film, more specifically, a crime drama. And in both the theme of the double that we encountered in *Shadow of a Doubt* and *Strangers on a Train* appears once again, this time in the form of a split identity. In Vertigo, the split runs between the three elements of the Carlotta-Madeleine-Judy character, while in *Psycho* it concerns the two members of the Norman-Norman's Mother dyad. In each film, understanding the nature of the split is the key to understanding the murder at the center of the story.

In *Vertigo*, Scottie's neurosis, apparent in the symptom of dizziness that indicates trauma-induced hysteria, is almost a red herring. That is, it distracts us from the "pathology" that is relevant to the murder, which is "Madeleine's" condition of dissociation in which the personality of Carlotta takes over. Of course, that condition is merely feigned by Judy, who is playing the role of Madeleine-Carlotta as part of a plot to murder the real Madeleine Elster. For the sake of keeping all of this straight, let's distinguish between the real actress, Judy, the real Madeleine, and her real, but long dead great grandmother, Carlotta. Judy plays the role of Madeleine periodically dissociating as Carlotta, although Scottie, of course, is unaware of the deception until the end of the film (the audience finds this out before Scottie). So he accepts Judy's portrayal of Madeleine as the real Madeline, and her portrayal of Carlotta as the real Carlotta possessing her great granddaughter from beyond the grave, or perhaps as evidence the Madeleine suffers from a dissociative disorder.

The situation is quite different in *Psycho*. First, there are only two personalities involved, not three. And second, the dissociation is not feigned, but "real" in the sense that Norman's identity really does split when he becomes his "mother." It is not a deception. He is not faking it because he has no control over when his mother emerges, and no memory of his transformation into his mother after he returns to being Norman. (Incidentally, as a matter of law, this means that Norman is not guilty of murder because he is insane).

In both films, sexuality is implicated in the crime. In *Vertigo*, Scottie is in love with Madeleine as played by Judy, which is to say that he is in love with a woman who does not exist. In other words, he is enthralled by a fantasy. But nevertheless, his love of the fantasy Madeleine blinds him to the murder plot concocted by his friend, Gavin Elster, the real Madeleine's husband. In Psycho, the fact that the hotel guest, Marion Crane, excites Norman sexually when he spies on her through the hole in the wall her room shares with the motel office, triggering the dissociative state in which he "becomes" his mother, who then murders the woman who has excited her son. In both cases, there is a kind of fusion between sex and death, an alliance between what Freud called Eros (the sex drive) and Thanatos (the death drive). Lacan locates this fusion in *jouissance*, which is an erotic pleasure so intense that it is also painful or destructive. In this respect, there is a common expression in French referring to orgasm as *la petite mort*, "the little death."

Psycho is an unusual film because the audience does not discover the identity of the murderer

until its end. Hitchcock normally insists that the audience be given full information about the murderer, spy, or whatnot before the point at which the plot reaches its high point. He tells us that this is the only way to create a suspense movie. A suspense film is different than a mystery – also known as a "who done it?" – in which the task of the audience is to discover who the murderer is. In a suspense film, the audience knows the identity of the murderer, and waits anxiously on the edge of their seats in anticipation of the future harm the murderer may cause. *Psycho* does remain a suspense movie because, thinking that we know the murderer's identity – Norman's mother – we are anxious when Lila Crane, Marion's sister, goes down to the cellar, expecting that she may be murdered as well. But it is not until Lila turns Norman's mother in her swivel chair that the mother's mummy-face is revealed, and we realize the real identity of the killer. That moment of shock is quite different than Hitchcock's use of suspense.

In interpreting *Vertigo*, *Psycho*, or any other Hitchcock film, there are two levels on which we must operate – that of the narrative, or plot, and that of the explicitly cinematic techniques employed – lens size (wide angle, telephoto, or normal), camera angle, direction of camera motion, nature of the moving shot (tracking, dolly shot, etc.), use of light and shadow, use of color, selection of sounds for the sound track, character of the musical score, and so on. Innovations on both narrative and formal-cinematic levels are what make Hitchcock a great director.

Take the famous shower scene in *Psycho*. Marion Crane is taking a shower in her motel room, when Norman's mother enters and stabs her to death. That is a narrative description of the murder that moves the entire plot along. But how, precisely, does Hitchcock handle the scene in cinematic terms? He cuts the film footage into segments in the editing studio, and combines the segments in such a way that there are abrupt, discontinuous transitions between them.

The scene begins with a shot of Marion's feet and lower legs stepping into the shower, cuts to a close up frontal shot of her head and shoulders, then to a close up of the shower head spraying water, back to the frontal head and shoulders shot, then to shot of her head and shoulders from the side, then a shot from the same angle of the shower head, and then a shot of Marion's head and shoulders from the perspective of the shower wall facing toward the translucent curtain. From that vantage point, we can see the silhouetted image of Norman's "mother" as she enters the room and reaches for the curtain in order to open it. The camera then moves to a close up of the upper body of the mother, including the hand in which she holds the carving knife. There follows the actual scene of the stabbing, which consists in numerous abrupt transitions between shots, including a soft focus shot from above of Marion's naked body, followed by discontinuous close ups of the stabbing motion of the knife, mixed with additional elevated shots of her body, although there is no explicit shot of the knife penetrating her skin. We see a close up of her lower legs and thighs, and of the water at the base of the shower mixing with Marion's blood. Then Hitchcock cuts to a close up of her hand pressed against and sliding down the the shower wall as Marion's body collapses. We see her reach for the shower curtain, followed by an extreme close up of her fingers curling around its edge, then a shot of her crouching body as it falls forward out of the shower and onto the bathroom floor, while ripping the curtain from its rod. There is

another close up of the shower head emitting water, then one of Marion's blood moving toward the drain and then down it with a circular motion, followed by a fade from the open drain to a close up of Marion's open but lifeless eye. Finally Hitchcock has the camera rotate so that the resulting motion of the eye parallels the rotary motion of the water and blood swirling down the drain.

The relatively short scene of the murder is extraordinarily complex, with Hitchcock choosing each segment of film and each transition between segments with meticulous care. However, his decision to shoot the scene in this way has a significance that goes beyond formal technique. The rapid intercutting between segments of film suggests both the cutting by knife of Marion's body, and the fragmentation of Norman's ego, i.e., the splitting of his self into separate, disconnected parts. The stabbing penetration of Marion's body also has obvious phallic implications; it is a kind of murderous equivalent of the sexual act that Norman's guilt and fear of his mother will not allow him to perform. In interpreting Hitchcock's films, it's necessary to sensitive to way in which narrative content and cinematic technique reflect one another.

6.

The Birds follows *Psycho* in highlighting the relationship between a mother and son. According to Zizek, what is at stake in both films is the "maternal superego." The concept is an unusual one since Freud's analysis of the superego identifies it as an internalization of paternal authority. In the Oedipal conflict, the little boy wishes to murder his father in order to gain exclusive access to his mother. But the price the boy pays for the fantasy-murder is the incorporation of his father into his (the boy's) own psychic structure. (It's as though he were fated to be haunted forever by the ghost of his victim). In general, the superego works in the same way paternal authority operates: it prohibits and assigns blame, but it does so as an inner voice rather an outer one. The superego expresses itself in the form of conscience and guilt, but also as the inner torment associated with depression or suicide.

Freud emphasized the unreasonable character of the superego, which holds us to standards we cannot possibly meet (to renounce sexual desire or love of self, for example). But, in his analysis of Psycho, Zizek goes a step further than Freud by claiming that the superego is "obscene."

Remember that psychoanalysis has a three-level conception of subjectivity. There is the id – the largely unconscious reservoir of erotic and aggressive drives -, the superego, and the ego. The ego is caught between the demands of the id for instinctual gratification, the prohibitions of the superego, and the constraints of what Freud called "the reality principle" – i.e., the obstructions of the external world. According to Zizek, the superego draws energy from the id (including both its erotic and aggressive drives), and derives pleasure from the pain it inflicts on the ego (hence its "obscenity"). For Zizek as well as Freud, the paternal superego is vital to the character-structure of the typical individual in "bourgeois" (i.e., capitalist) society – say the businessman who must postpone his own gratification in order to invest money in his company and accumulate capital, or the worker who must forgo pleasure in order to work to support a family.

However, Zizek makes the point that we are no longer in the classical bourgeois era of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Since the end of the Second World War, we have lived under a form of consumer capitalism. Because mass consumption is necessary to the postwar capitalist economy, the individual is faced with the demand to consume – in other words, the demand to enjoy.

Let me give an example that Zizek does not mention. Shortly after the destruction of the World Trade Towers on 9/11, president Bush appeared on television in order to ask something of the American people. It was not to make sacrifices (e.g., to enlist in the military, buy war bonds, or accept rationing) such as were asked of the generations that lived through WWI and WWII. It was to travel by air, to go on vacations, and in general to consume. Bush's message was more or less, "Don't let the terrorists stop you from having fun." The duty to enjoy replaced the tradition bourgeois duty to forgo satisfaction.

When the demand to enjoy becomes dominant, the repressive authority of the father wanes. In a permissive society, the father is no longer needed to inculcate habits of instinctual repression and self-denial. For Zizek, this means that the paternal superego tends to be progressively (though never fully) replaced by a maternal one. The maternal superego operates very differently than its paternal counterpart. It does not demand repression, but tries to preserve the original form of satisfaction by blocking the separation of mother and child. The maternal superego is pre-Oedipal. It hails from a period of psychological development prior to the infant's emergence as a distinct individual, a period close to the prenatal fusion of the body of the fetus with that of the mother.

To repeat, according to Zizek, the theme of the maternal superego is at the center of both *Psycho* and *The Birds*. In both films, it expresses itself in the form of murderous rage at the prospect that a son will be lost to another woman. In *Psycho*, Norman's sexual attraction to Marion triggers the emergence of his mother-persona, who proceeds to kill Marion with a carving knife. In *The Birds*, Mitch does not have a split personality, of course. His real mother is still living in the island home she shares with her son and daughter. But Mitch's mother is no less threatened by her son's attraction to Melanie Daniels than Norman's "mother" was to Norman's attraction to Marion. Finally, the murderous rage of the maternal superego, which takes the form of the stabbing of Marion in *Psycho*, takes the form of the bird attacks in *The Birds*, which, we should note, leaves Melanie in a state of catatonia at the end of the film.

Briefly I would like to consider a question that I'm sure has occurred to you. In the films by Hitchcock that we've studied, did the director really intend to explore the psychoanalytic themes developed by Freud, Lacan, and Zizek? The answer is that it doesn't matter much. First of all because psychoanalysis is an approach to uncovering unconscious meaning. We can treat the film the same way clinical psychoanalysts treat a dream, a slip of the tongue, or a symptom – namely as an attempt to both express (in a distorted way) and therefore to hide an underlying significance. But more generally, it is not necessary for any interpretive approach – not only psychoanalysis – to proceed by trying to reconstruct the director's own thoughts about their

work. Art works always say more than their creators can express in ordinary language. The artist is not in a much better than anyone else to convey the meaning of her/his work. That said, however, Hitchcock was clearly interested in psychoanalysis – his movie *Spellbound* treats the theme explicitly. While he did not have a sophistic understanding of psychoanalytic concepts, he was fascinated by the extreme and often pathological behaviors that also interest Freud, Lacan, and Zizek.

7.

This week is devoted to Orson Welles' famous film, *Citizen Kane*. It is one of the great landmarks in the history of film, a turning point after which film-making was fundamentally changed. This is all the more remarkable because Welles was only 26 when he made the movie. Miraculously, he succeeded in getting full directorial control of the film from a studio system that was notorious for movie executives running roughshod over directors. Undoubtedly Welles' fame from his *War of the Worlds* radio broadcast - which had people who tuned in after the beginning of the broadcast running for cover from the fictional invading aliens - helped him pull off this coup.

The movie is about the rise and fall of Charles Foster Kane, a character patterned in part after the press mogul, William Randolph Hearst. It opens with a shot of the locked gate of Xanadu, the palatial estate Kane never quite finished building. After a series of images depicting the decaying state of this "eighth wonder of the world," the camera enters through the window of a building into a room where we find Kane on his deathbed. Then there is a closeup of Kane, his lips uttering the word "Rosebud," while he gives up the ghost. In his hand, he is holding one of those water-filled globes with a three-dimensional winter scene and flakes of fake snow so that, when the globe is turned upside down and then righted, it appears to snow. Upon dying, Kane's arm drops over the side of the bed and his hand releases the globe, which shatters, releasing some of the fake snow, which, by means of a special effect, seems to permeate the room. The camera comes into an extreme close up of the biggest fragment of the shattered globe, in which we see the reflection of Kane's private nurse entering the room. The nurse lifts the bed sheet so that it covers the face of the deceased, while the camera switches to an exterior shot of the room's window in which we see the light turned off. It's a remarkable scene that sets the stage for the film's narrative, which is built around the attempt by an investigative reporter to discover the meaning of the last word Kane ever uttered.

The rest of the film is packed with other cinematic innovations, including a reprise of Kane's life in the form of a newsreel. The reporter interviews key figures in Kane's life in his attempt to solve the mystery of Rosebud. Each interview introduces a flashback from the period in life when Kane was in contact with the interviewee, one of which in particular is handled in an unprecedented fashion, initially showing the flashback in spatial recession, the present up front and the past in a distant plane of the shot. There are many other innovations in the way in which Welles handles the cinematic presentation of the past while linking it to an investigation taking place in the present and to the future condition of knowing the meaning of the word Rosebud.

The interviewer never discovers that meaning, although the film audience does in an unforgettable final scene.

Deleuze's analysis of *Citizen Kane* rests on his interpretation of the film as the first direct presentation of what he calls the "time-image" in the post- World War II period. We will discuss the specifics of Deleuze's interpretation of *Citizen Kane* and other Welles films when we get to them in the reading, starting next week. For now, I've given you the task of writing on the general discussion topic of the way in which Welles' handles the representation of time in *Citizen Kane*.

8.

In reading Deleuze on Hitchcock and Welles, the most important thing to keep in mind is the division of Deleuze's work, *Cinema*, into two volumes. The theme of time dominates his treatment of film, but he distinguishes between two ways in which film-makers present time: indirectly, through the medium of motion, and directly. The indirect "time-image" is the topic of volume one of Cinema, while the direct time-image is the topic of volume 2. Deleuze associates the indirect time-image with classical Hollywood movies, and the direct time-image with post-World War II European film. Within this framework, Hitchcock and Welles are transitional filmmakers. They bridge the gap between the indirect and the direct time-image, and therefore between Hollywood and European film. Accordingly, Deleuze discusses Hitchcock at the end of volume 1 and Welles toward the beginning of volume 2.

Classical Hollywood cinema is one of action. The characters in the film confront problematic situations that they must master in order to achieve their ends. The Western, the crime drama, the horror film, even the romance are all examples of this. Post-war European cinema, on the other hand, is a cinema of thought. The defining characteristic of thought is that it concerns relations between things. In this sense it is abstract. Hitchcock is the first Hollywood director to bring relations to the center of attention.

Consider the way in which Deleuze's interpretation of *Rear Window* differs from that of Zizek. Deleuze is not interested in the sexual content of Hitchcock's film. The important thing is not that Jeffries is a voyeur, but rather that his leg injury detaches him from the possibility of action. In spying on his neighbors, he becomes a pure spectator whose concern is the abstract relations between things. What is the relation between Miss Lonely Hearts, her suitor, and the pill bottle on her table? Between Miss Torso and the men who visit her? Between the bedridden wife, her husband, his suitcase, the flower bed, and the dog that digs at it? Deleuze stresses the point that relations become central only when the "action-image" breaks down. And he thinks that there was a massive breakdown of the action-image – and therefore of the indirect time-image - at the end of the Second World War for a variety of reasons, including the development of nuclear weapons, the decline of U.S. power, memory of the Holocaust, etc. Human action no longer seemed capable of affecting the world that emerged from WW II.

Hitchcock's cinema of relations, however, does not make a definitive break with the action-image. According to Deleuze, this is because he remains wedded to the conventions of Hollywood cinema in which there is a narrative plot driven by characters, their motivations, and their actions. Orson Welles is already beyond this in his first film, Citizen Kane. There is an account of the life of Charles Foster Kane, but no plot in the ordinary sense. The task the newsman sets himself is that of understanding the meaning of Kane's life by discovering what "Rosebud" means. But even this is a task he is unable to fulfill.

The film is structured around a series of interviews that introduce flashbacks to the time in Kane's life when he was in contact with the interviewee. Each presents a slice of time, or in an image that Deleuze gets from Henri Bergson, a section of the cone of time that extends at its wide end into the indefinite past, and at its narrow end to an intersection with the plane of the actual present. Each horizontal section of the cone represents a "past present." The problem is to discover the section of Kane's time-cone where Rosebud is located. The question the reporter poses to himself is purely intellectual in character. It is a question about the relation between Kane and the last word he utters. In the process of seeking an answer, the reporter opens up the depth dimension of time. The result is the first direct time-image properly so called. Consider for example, the interview in which the reporter speaks to Kane's old friend and fellow founder of the Chronicle who is now confined to a wheel chair in a nursing home. The friend's account of the time in which he knew Kane intimately is first visible in the form of past events projected onto a plane in the background of the one that the reporter and interviewee occupy. For a few seconds, past and present coexist. But this is true about time in general. We are never without the past that trials behind us like a comet's tail. This visual representation of the coexistence of past and present is a direct image of time, an image independent of the medium of action.

9.

Instead of commenting on individual contributions, I've decided to respond in a general way to last week's discussion of Deleuze on *Citizen Kane* and *The Lady from Shanghai* in his chapter titled "The Crystals of Time." In general, I thought that your contributions to the discussion were quite good. But, since the topic is both important and very difficult, I want to try to shed a little more light on it.

First, we need to keep in mind Deleuze's thesis that, like philosophers, film-makers "think." However, while philosophers think in concepts, film-makers think in moving images. Because the moving image changes internally and transitions into other images, it is an especially good vehicle for thinking about time. In developing a general conception of time, Deleuze relies on the work of the early 20th century philosopher, Henri Bergson, especially his book, Matter and Memory. It was there that Bergson developed the theory that time continually splits into two divergent streams. Let me quote from paragraph 41 of my article: "Some Themes from Deleuze's *Cinema*":

“The moment that we are currently living through is present, but it is also in the process of passing, of slipping into the past. And this does not mean that, while it is here now, it will have later slipped into the past. Rather, the present moment has always already slipped into the past, since it would be impossible to understand how it could subsequently acquire the ability to give up its hold on actuality. The moment that we are currently living through is present and past, actual and virtual at one and the same time. It is a double moment, a living process of doubling. Two streams of time diverge from the wellspring of the current moment: in one stream the present is something actual - the actual process of passage – and in the other stream, it is something that has always already passed, and so is not actual but virtual. The doubling of the faces of a crystal in cinematic imagery has its model in this doubling of the streams of time. It is for this reason that the direct time-image of the new cinema has a fundamentally crystalline structure.”

If you find the idea strange that the present “has always already slipped into the past,” then try to try to grasp a part of your experience that is present, pure and simple. With a little reflection, it’s easy to see that, as soon as you say or think “THIS is present,” what what you mean by THIS has already passed. For example, suppose I type the sentence, “Right now I am typing the letter “a.” But that can’t be right, since, by the time I complete this sentence, I am no longer typing the letter “a.” In other words, I fail to grasp the typing of “a” as something purely present. I can grasp it only as a present that has already slipped into the past.

Bergson/Deleuze (B/D) uses the word “actual” for whatever is purely present, while he uses the word “virtual” for whatever fails to meet this description. What this means is that the present moment is inescapably virtual because it is always slipping into the past. Is there nothing about the present, then, that is truly actual? B/D claims that there is. The process of passage itself is actual. As something that passes, the present is virtual, but as the process of passing, it is actual.

We have to be careful here to resist the idea that the present as the process of passing is real because it is actual, while the present as already past is unreal because it is virtual. According to B/D, the virtual and the actual are both real. After all, there could be no (actual) process of passing – of slipping away into the past – unless there were a (virtual) past into which the present can slip away. More generally, everything actual has a virtual dimension, while everything virtual has an actual one. This recognition is the basis of Deleuze’s idea that time has a “crystalline” structure, since crystals have multiple faces, or facets.

It is a challenge to understand the complex ways actuality and virtuality combine in our experience of the world. For example, while the past does not change – since we cannot undo what has already happened – the (actual) meaning the (virtual) past has for us is constantly changing. Try this experiment. Call up the memory of some significant event, say the memory of your first day in high school. Is the way you remember it now the same as the way you remembered it a year ago? Two years ago? Three? What happened on that day may remain constant each time you remember it. But doesn’t the “flavor,” the emotional tone, the meaning of the memory change? Say that you met someone that day who was to become a close friend. Wouldn’t your memory of the day differ depending on whether you called it to mind before or

after your friendship developed? Before or after you had a painful fight with your friend? Before or after your friend died in a road accident? The remembered event doesn't change. But each time you remember it, you see it through additional layers of memory. The remembered event recedes further into the past as time moves on, and new memories accumulate between it and your actual present. This accumulation of new memories – of new "past presents" filters your experience of the earlier ones. It's like looking at a mountain through a blue-tinged pane of glass, then through the blue one plus a red one, then by adding a green-tinged plane. According to B/D we are not capable of acting in the virtual realm. Nothing we do now can change what happened that first day of high school. Nevertheless, that virtual event has a certain dynamic character, one that varies depending on its recession into an ever-expanding past, and on the material that continues to accumulate between it and our actual present.

In his film analyses, Deleuze is not only interested in the continual splitting of time into two streams, one actual and one virtual. He also focuses on the reversible roles actuality and virtuality can play. A simple example: While awake, our waking experience is actual and our dreams are virtual. But when dreaming, our dreams are actual and our waking experience virtual. Another example: From my point of view, my experience of myself is actual, while your experience of me is virtual. However, from your point of view, your experience of me is actual, while my self-experience is virtual. According to Deleuze, such reversibility makes the mirror image the most simple and also the most useful form of the crystalline image in film. (Think about this in relation to the theme of the double, which we have already examined in Hitchcock's films, *Shadow of a Doubt*, *Strangers on a Train*, and *Vertigo*).

In your discussion contributions, you have already analyzed the mirror scenes in *Citizen Kane* and *The Lady from Shanghai*. So let me refer to a Marx Brothers movie with a famous mirror scene. The film is *Duck Soup*, and the scene involves Groucho and his "mute" brother, Harpo, dressed as Groucho. Harpo has already run into and smashed a mirror that served as a barrier between two areas, so that there is now an empty space where the mirror once was. Harpo-as-Groucho (call him "Virtual Groucho") is on one side of the now empty space, while Actual Groucho approaches the space from the other side. Every move that Actual Groucho makes on his side of the "mirror" is precisely mimicked by Virtual Groucho on the opposite side. Actual Groucho, though, suspects that something is amiss, so he tries to trick Virtual Groucho into making a mistake in the mirror-relationship. Actual Groucho moves off to the side of the mirror so that Virtual Groucho cannot see him, and enters by making a face that Virtual Groucho somehow imitates. Actual Groucho moves of to the side again, and this time enters while down on his knees, only to find Virtual Groucho in exactly the same position. Actual Groucho moves off to the side once more, this time entering the mirror-space with various hopping motions that Virtual Groucho is able to mimic with precision. In a moment of high comedy, Actual Groucho spins in place, spreading his arms when he stops. However, Virtual Chico doesn't spin, since actual Groucho cannot see him while spinning, so virtual Groucho simply spreads his arms triumphantly at the exact moment actual Groucho does, thereby preserving the mirror relationship. Actual Groucho enters from side again, this time with a hat in his hand. Virtual Groucho does the same. Actual Groucho then drops his hat, while Virtual Groucho picks it up

and hands it to his actual counterpart, instead of acting on the event that has confirmed his suspicions. In the shot that most directly illustrates Deleuze's thesis of "reversibility," Actual Groucho and Virtual Groucho circle each other while changing the sides of the "mirror" they originally occupied, as though they were two Alices stepping through opposite sides of the looking glass. Finally, the illusion of the mirror is destroyed when a the third Marx brother, Chico also dressed as Groucho, enters the scene. As a Second Virtual Groucho, he upsets the symmetry of the mirroring relationship. In a sense, the crystal shatters when it grows a new face that cannot find its counterpart.

You can watch the scene on YouTube with this link:

https://youtu.be/VKTT-sy0aLg

10.

Let's take a look at the remarkable fifth chapter of *Cinema*, volume 2: "Peaks of Present, Sheets of Past." Here Deleuze builds upon the results of his previous discussion of the crystalline time-image. Remember that he follows Bergson in regarding the present as something that has always already slipped into the past. But then the problem occurs of how to distinguish the present from other past moments. In what way does the present I am currently living through differ from the past I lived through yesterday, or the one I lived through ten years ago? Bergson answers this question with the image of an inverted cone bisected along its length at various points by horizontal planes.

The tip of the cone is the present I am currently living through. But the tip is what it is precisely because it lies at the inverted apex of the entire cone (the accumulated mass of the past). In Bergson's formulation, the present (S) is the most contracted degree of the past. It gathers into its punctual actuality the whole of its experienced but now virtual past (the entire cone). What makes the present I currently live through different than the one I lived through yesterday is that my current present contracts within it everything my former present contracted, along with the now-past experiences of the following day (thus A'-B' contains within it a contracted version of the cross section A-B). Although it is true that my present is always already past, it is also true that my present change as the past that it concentrates continually swells. The contracted content of the apex of the cone alters as the mass of the cone grows with a progressively accumulating past.

The bisections that occur along the length of the cone are different regions, segments, or sheets of past. (A-B, A'-B', A''- B''). When I try to recall something in an act of reproductive memory, I must first direct my attention to the past in general. But secondly I must locate the particular sheet of past in which the event I am seeking lies (did it happen my senior year of high school, during summer vacation, or my freshman year of college?) These are real "locations," just as independent of me as the spatial locations and material objects I experience in sense perception. If I am successful in finding the sheet, or region where the event lies, then I am able to express the event in a memory-image. The memory-image is actual – it belongs to my living present –

though the remembered event does not. The event remains where it always was, in the specific region of the "pure past" where I have found it. Thus there is a difference between the memory-image as a mental construct that calls up the "pure past," presenting it to my actual, conscious awareness, and the pure past that exists independently of my mind and its acts. (So, for example, I may not be able to recall what I was doing the day after my grandfather died – i.e., form a memory-image of the event – but what I was doing that day really happened, whether I can recall it or not. It continues to exist in the depths of the pure past).

Since there are two divergent streams of time - the present in the act of passing and the accumulated mass of presents that have passed - there are two basic varieties of the direct image of time based on these streams. In the first type of direct time-image, I attempt to place myself in the sheet of the past where the memory I am seeking resides. In the second type of direct time-image, I immerse myself in the past event, reliving it as a past series of once-present moments. Now imagine that I am reminiscing with a friend. There are two different ways in which we may have discrepant memories of an event. On the one hand, we may disagree about the sheet of past where the event resides: did we stay in that hotel on our vacation to Canada or on our vacation to Maine? On the other hand, we may disagree about the succession of present moments that occurred while we were staying in the hotel: did we check out before or after we went to dinner? In the first case we differ about sheets of past, in the second case about peaks of present.

Let's look a little closer at what happens when we immerse ourselves in recollection of an event that has past. The event is comprised of many moments, many "past presents." In relation to any past present we happen to focus on, there is a moment that preceded it and one that followed in the concrete duration that constitutes the whole of the past event. Therefore every past moment is, at one and the same time, a past present, a past past, and a past future, when regarded from the vantage-point of itself, the moment that comes after it, or the moment that comes before it. Another way of saying this is that, in the act of recollection, every moment is happening, has already happened, and is about to happen, all at the same time (the total elapsed time of the recollected event.) Regarding the event that has passed as a set of peaks of present therefore creates the paradoxical situation in which every past present has all three characteristics of time - past, present, and future - not as successive moments but as simultaneous ones. It is as though the whole of time wer tightly curled up in each of its moments. Filmmakers are able to explore the events they depict in their films as sheets of past, or peaks of present, or both. In *Citizen Kane*, Welles adopts both approaches, although his emphasis is clearly on the first.

An example of focusing on peaks of present: in Welles' depiction of the disintegration of Kane's first marriage, the director shows us successive scenes at the Kane's breakfast table, i.e. each scene occurs at a time before the one that succeeds it, but each also consists in the succession of a past present, present present, and future present of its own. Each starts with Kane absorbed in his newspaper, proceeds to his wife asking a question, and ends with Kane's response. Changing tones of voice and facial expressions mark the progressive deterioration of the marriage from one scene (sheet of past) to the next. But if we "install ourselves" in only one of the scenes, we can

see that each element – absorption in the newspaper, question, and response – is at one and the same time a past present, a present present, and a future present from some point of view (e.g., from the point of view of the wife's question, Kane's immersion in the paper is a past present, his response a future present, and her question a present present). But the variable character of these peaks of present is possible only because the three inhabit a single sheet of past, in other words, an entire time sequence that already lies in the past.

First and foremost, however, ***Citizen Kane*** is a movie about sheets of past. The investigative reporter interviews each person who knew Kane about the sheet of past that he or she shared with him, in an attempt to locate the object that Kane refers to with his dying breath, "Rosebud." Was it in the sheet of past he shared with the banker who became his guardian, with the drunken singer, with his treasurer, with the friend he broke with?

According to Deleuze, the primary method Welles uses in shooting sheets of past is the shot with complete depth of field. This is usually achieved by using a fast film and small lens aperture that brings all visible points in the shot into simultaneously sharp focus. This is easiest to see in a famous scene that I've already commented on in earlier posts: the scene in which Kane's estranged friend, now confined to a wheelchair in a nursing home, recalls the sheets of past the two once shared. In the scene, the memory-image of a sheet of past is projected onto a distant plane in the deep focus shot, while the wheel-chair-bound friend remains in his actual present in a forward plane of the shot.

Although this is the clearest example of the use of the deep field shot in evoking a sheet of past, it is by no means the only one in ***Citizen Kane***. So, when the singer, Susan Alexander attempts suicide, her unconscious body lies in the frontal plane, while Kane enters at the rear of the image. For Alexander, the attempted suicide has already happened. Kane, however, is on a journey from his actual present (in which he is unaware of the suicide attempt) to the sheet of past where Alexander has already tried to kill herself.

In some ways, the most dramatic sheet of past shot is the opening of ***Citizen Kane*** in which the camera roams over the different areas of Kane's estate, Xanadu. In each area or region, we discover images of unfinished or abandoned projects – forlorn monkeys staring between the bars of an isolated cage; a lone palm tree; gondola prows framed against a dock supporting stray pieces of wood; the broken sign for one of the holes of a golf course lying against a dilapidated wooden bench. In other words, what we see in the film's opening shot are memory-images of the many sheets of past in which Xanadu was under construction but never completed, or in which finished objects have since deteriorated – so many signs of Kane's tragic and ultimately inconsequential past.

Deleuze does not limit the sheets of past theme to ***Citizen Kane***. On the contrary, he tries to demonstrate the techniques the director uses in evoking sheets of past in such films as *The Lady from Shanghai*, *Touch of Evil*, and *The Trial*. I leave most of that for you to explore. But I would like to say a word about Welles' filmed version of the novel by Franz Kafka titled, *The Trial*.

Kafka's novel is one of the great works of modern literature. Its theme is rather obvious, namely, the fate of the individual in a world of anonymous bureaucracy that includes both the workplace and the state. But Kafka's genius lies in the nearly hallucinatory way he treats this theme, and Welles' genius lies in his ability to convey this hallucinatory quality in the medium of film. In general, according to Deleuze, memories, dreams, and hallucinations are all intertwined. For example, the memory image through which we recall something past is a kind of hallucination, i.e., the image of something that is not really there. Dreams are sleeping hallucinations, but they draw upon ordinary memory-images of the people, events, and places we know from waking life. Also there are times when we are unable to distinguish waking memories from dreams – "did that really happen, or did I only dream it?" Through the use of long shots, close-ups, shots from below, and deep field shots, Welles captures this delirium of memory, dream, and hallucination by opening sheets of Herr K's past that contain, variously, books, women, girls, buildings, walkways, etc. These are presented in memory images, but memory images that are indistinguishable from dreams and hallucinations. Lost among them, Herr K. has no reliable signposts to guide him in discovering the sheet of past in which the unknown crime he is accused of lies.

11.

The final reading for this course is difficult (surprise!). It's titled "Powers of the False" and involves not only an analysis of films, but references to the so-called "new novel" and, most importantly, the work of the heretical 19th century philosopher, Fredrick Nietzsche. For our purposes, the significant connection is between Nietzsche's philosophy and the films of Orson Welles. Nietzsche was a revolutionary thinker who challenged the philosophical, religious, moral, and aesthetic presuppositions, not only of his own day, but of the entire history of Western culture going back to the Greeks. That history, he claims, is the history of nihilism, which is the progressive evacuation of meaning and purpose from human existence – the great No to life. Nietzsche traces the roots of nihilism to the founding figures of Western culture: Socrates, Plato, and Christ. He sees in them a hidden condemnation of existence in the name of such values as the Good and the True. Goodness and Truth are what human life is supposed to lack. But this means that the pursuit of these values involves the devaluation of real life. In the name of morality, religion, philosophy, and even science, life is judged wanting in relation to another world – a world of goodness, truth, etc. – that does not exist. The result is a sapping of the will to live, a Great No to life as failing to live up to an otherworldly standard. In Plato, this takes the form of a True World of eternal and unchanging reality (the realm of Forms); in Christianity the form of the Justice and Goodness of the saved in Heaven; and in science and philosophy in general, the condemnation of human life as based on error and ignorance – i.e., as something lacking Truth. The person who elevates Truth as an otherworldly value, or a value that can be attained only through a kind of rarefied reason and enlightened thought, is a secret nihilist in Nietzsche's view.

How then do we get beyond the nihilism of our culture? Nietzsche wrestles with this question in all of his work, but the common thread he continually returns to is that we must affirm life, not as Good or True, but as the sheer power to live and to overcome obstacles to living. This realm is not one of True Reality, but one of "appearances," and the person who affirms it is neither the philosopher nor the moralist, but rather the genuine artist. When Deleuze writes about "the powers of the false," he is referring to the will of the artist to remain within the realm of appearances – of the sheer affirmation of life - without seeking a good or true world that lies beneath or beyond them. For Deleuze, Orson Welles is an example of such an artist.

What does this have to do with the central theme of time in the two volumes of Cinema? Deleuze says that time undermines the idea of Truth. He refers to a paradox in ancient Greek philosophy. Let's say we are at war, and anticipating a possible battle at sea tomorrow. So today, we make the judgment, "Tomorrow there may or may not be a sea battle." Today gives way to tomorrow, and either a sea battle occurs or it doesn't. How does this affect the truth of the judgment we made yesterday? That claim cannot be true since, if the sea battle occurs, then it was not possible yesterday for it to fail to occur in the future, and if it does not occur, then it was not possible yesterday for it to occur on the following day. Thus what we regarded as an irrefutably true statement – "Tomorrow there may or may not be a sea battle,"turns out to be false. The progression of time throws the concept of truth into question.

From his first film, *Citizen Kane*, to his final film, *'F' for Fake*, Orson Welles undermines the idea that there is truth about things independent of what transpires in the process of living.

Take the search for Rosebud in *Citizen Kane*, as the key to the Truth of Kane's life. The investigating reporter questions at the end of the film whether anything can serve as the key to the truth of a person's life. Shortly after saying this, we see workman who are sorting through the clutter of Kane's estate throw the sled named "Rosebud" into a fire. What was supposed to have given us the secret Truth of Kane burns up in a fire that no one notices or cares about.

Or consider the conclusion of *A Touch of Evil*. Quinlin is now dead. What was the Truth about his life? The prostitute who was Quinlin's friend puts to rest the idea that Vargas has that he can figure out who Quinlin really was.

Or take the film, *The Trial*. Herr K is convicted of a crime that is never identified, and finally executed for a reason neither he nor anyone else understands.

'F' for Fake brings this theme to a conclusion when Welles tells the story of a forgery that never happened as though it were true. Not only do we have the reported forgery of a Picasso painting, but we have Welles' forgery of this forgery. Where is truth to be found in this proliferating play of illusions? The forger – i.e., the artist, emerges as the real "hero" of Welles' films. He or she is the one who creates out of sheer exuberance without worrying about such supposedly transcendent standards as Goodness or Truth.