

Hitchcock, The Enunciator

Raymond Bellour

0.

The credits have barely started; a body is seized. Twice a name is claimed: the film's title by its director, and a woman's name by a man. Admittedly, this is not an unusual way to sign, to take possession of, a text. This aggression, by means of a displacement, snatches the heroine's name from the two actors ('Tippi' Hedren, Sean Connery, the second and third titles, following 'Universal Presents'), already a couple within the diegesis. Let's try, in theory nothing prevents us, to imagine the contrary, 'Chantal Akerman's *Bobby*.'

Perhaps, this explains the violence of these subdued titles so different from the compressed power of earlier film credits (designed by Saul Bass: *Vertigo*, *North by Northwest*, *Psycho*, *The Birds*). These titles delineate one of the film's characteristics, its affinity with the soap opera ('If we want to reduce *Marnie* to its lowest common denominator, it is the story of the prince and the beggar girl.')

1 But their impact comes from their unique disposition: instead of simply following one another, the titles dissolve like the turning pages of a book: the shadow of the second title is projected on the first, eventually covering it. Thus, they pile up on top of the film's title forming a block, until the last credit: 'Directed by Alfred Hitchcock,' which reiterates, from the point of view of the *mise en scène*, the effect of a symbolic possession which the image must realize.

1.

No photograph can ever reproduce the variable speed by which this body is offered and at the same time taken away from us. This effect is created by the difference between two movements: the progression of the character, and the camera movement. At the very beginning of the shot, the camera is glued to the body which it offers us as the enigma, index of possession. ('The only way to do that is to travel the close-up.' (p.203).) But, almost immediately, the respective speeds of camera and character are no longer evenly matched. From this point on, the camera follows the body only insofar as it dissociates itself from it, revealing its presence through this separation, substituting for the partial body a total, and

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68 thus all the more imaginary, body. But then, almost right away, the camera, progressively, imperceptibly, begins to immobilize itself, sanctioning this separation without detracting from the almost excessive regularity of the walk: the time it takes to end a shot of a long duration, in complete stillness, during which the libido-object eludes us as it moves away, literally, moves into the distance.

Several things. In the first place, the signs of the hermeneutic-work: a yellow handbag, a deserted platform, a woman with her back turned, is this really 'Marnie', the woman-title Hitchcock appropriates for himself and offers us? Secondly, in the body of the text, the work of enunciation. The variation in distance between camera and object serves to inscribe cinema within the regime of the scopic drive through an exaggerated manifestation of its effects. It is the law of 'the succession of shots,' emphasized by Malraux in *Psychologie du Cinéma*.² This law must be understood in terms of three complementary codic systems:

1. from shot to shot, as Malraux has done (the variation in distance is determined by the cut);
2. camera movement (which immediately renders ambiguous the concept of the shot: each photogram becomes a new shot, and therefore distance is the variation between each photogram/shot);
3. movement of the actor within the shot, stationary or moving (with the ensuing multiplication of effects).

Hitchcock (i.e. the director, the man with the movie camera, the kino-eye: the author-enunciator), Hitchcock, exploiting the conflict produced by the articulation of these last two codes, underlines in a single shot that this variation in distance, this tension which erupts as an infinity of shots within the shot,³ defines his place as enunciator by monitoring the modalities of the scopic relationship to the object.

It is this quasi-somatic effect, then, that resists citation and operates simultaneously through the two processes of identification which transfix the spectator: identification with the camera, identification with the object (the perpetual dialectic between being and having: identification and object-choice). In the classic film, this effect establishes itself through the continuous suture in order to begin again—and this is precisely its nature. Here, a segment electrified by the abrupt interruption of the music (which stopped after the sumptuous promise of the credits, with the opening of the first shot). Impression intensified by the eerie exclusion of all noise, except for the sound of Marnie's heels on the pavement Here, the final immobility of camera and character, momentarily in synchrony, changes into this *fascinum* 'where the power of the look exercises itself directly'³ as a lack which is inscribed in the circuit of the drive ('The Look as Little Object *a'*). This fascination is comprehensible only

insofar as it is immediately sutured, catalyzing the dialectic of identificatory desire and the oscillation between these two points: the moment of seeing and the final immobilization, the *fascinum*.⁴ 69

2.

Strutt. Robbed! Cleaned out! Nine thousand nine hundred and sixty seven dollars! Precisely as I told you over the telephone. That girl did it. Marion Holland, that's the girl, Marion Holland.

Cop. Can you describe her Mr. Strutt?

Strutt. Certainly I can describe her. Five feet five, hundred and ten pounds, size eight dress, blue eyes, black . . . wavy . . . hair, even features, good teeth . . .

Cop. Ahem . . .

Strutt. Why, what's so damned funny? There's been a grand larceny committed on these premises.

Cop. Uh, yes sir. You were saying: uh, black hair, wavy, even features, good teeth. She was in your employ four months.

Other Cop. What were her references, sir?

Strutt. Well, as a matter of fact . . . yes . . . she had references, sure . . .

Secretary. Mr. Strutt, don't you remember, she didn't have any references at all.

Strutt: Well, she worked the copying and adding machine. No confidential duties.

Mr. Rutland, I didn't know you were in town. Just had a robbery, almost ten thousand dollars.

Mark Rutland. So I gather . . . by a pretty girl with no references.

Strutt. You remember her—I pointed her out to you last time you were



2



7



21



3



9



24a

70 here. You said something about how I was 'improving the looks of the place.'

Mark. Oh . . . that one, the brunette with the legs . . .

Strutt. Excuse me, gentlemen, Mr. Rutland is a client.

Mark. I don't think we have got time to discuss business today, Mr. Strutt, what with this crime wave on your hands.

Strutt. Oh! no, no . . . always time for Rutland business, you know that . . . How are things in Philadelphia? The little witch! I'll have her put away for twenty years. I knew she was too good to be true. Always so eager to work overtime, never made a mistake, always pulling her skirt down over her knees as though they were a national treasure. She seemed so *nice*, so efficient, so . . .

Mark . . . resourceful?

A classical segment in 24 shots . . . The first 20 shots are controlled through an alternation between Strutt (2,4, etc.) and the various motifs in the position of the reverse shots, established, thus, as implicit subjective shots—the safe (3), the secretary, the two police detectives (5), the two police detectives (7, 11, 13, 15), the secretary (9, 17, 19), up to Mark Rutland's entrance linked to the secretary (21). But in shot 22, a tracking shot following Strutt framed in medium close up (slightly wider than preceding shots) combines the two alternating terms in a final stage of the shot (22, 24a, during which there occurs a slight change in camera angle determined by the eyeline axes). This resolution becomes in turn a pole in a new alternation with the police detectives (23)—alternation immediately broken when the camera, with a slow forward movement, frames the pensive face of Mark Rutland (24a), isolating a focal point centered on a single element of the first alternating term.

The text, the dialogue, speaks about itself, solving the complete enigma in order to reset it around the theft in yet unforeseeable terms. Now, the theft displays itself as the other side of sex: the woman's reply to the aggression, perpetuated through the image, which she experiences as object. All contributes to the production of this image. A floating image in Strutt's fascinated lustful description (here again we need the texture of the voice, excited and vulgar, of this lackey of capital) revived by Mark's knowing irony until the end of the segment. When sexuality is offered through the image (because the woman must correspond to the codes that reveal this sexuality), we see that sexual reticence is the surest means of guaranteeing fascination. We also see that a woman, a 'real' woman, must conform to the image which constitutes her only 'reference' (hence the need for the other secretary as counterpart, just as in the beginning of *Psycho*). She is the essence of decor, 'improving the looks of the place.' But, also, because in English (or rather in American) one says, when de-



25a



25c



25e



25b



25d



26

scribing a woman: 'her looks'; as though her 'looks' were nothing but that image constituted through the looks given her by men.

Furthermore, more importantly, this imaginary image of Marnie comes to fill the image, real but empty, of the first shot ['Is this really "Marnie"?']. It is a full-face description of her that Strutt gives, thus completing an image which the camera offers us only from the back, in that first instant of possession-dispossession with a sort of delayed reverse shot (naturally, for the spectator, the expectation is intensified).

3.

Once the dialogue has ended, when the camera has completed the slow forward tracking shot, isolating Mark's face, he turns towards the spectator with a thoughtful look which obviously indicates that, during this time when the shot becomes stationary, he is daydreaming about this woman whose virtual image he has helped to create. The *real* image that follows (25a) repeats exactly the beginning of shot 1 and occurs as if to materialize his thoughtful look, taking the place of the traditional subjective shot: in fact, this effect associated with the succession of shots and the absence of any demarcatory punctuation sutures, in a way, the transition from segment to segment. Mark, thus, sees that which he cannot see, but which he is in the position of being able to imagine by means of the camera which sees in his place. This repeat-effect which makes Mark see-imagine what Hitchcock-camera sees in shot 1, situates Mark within the trajectory of enunciation defined by the camera-look. Mark's single-minded desire for Marnie is aroused by this relationship between himself and the image—Mark takes on Hitchcock's desire which Hitchcock can only realize through the camera which forbids him to exercise his desire

72 through possession thus permitting him to represent it. The fetishistic operation, thus amplified, is transferred from the director to the character who takes his place, to the extent that thus is accomplished a return to the narrative's initial condition of possibility: the essentially fetishistic position of the cinematographic signifier. ([In answer to Truffaut's question] '... I'd like to know which aspect of this book make you decide to do this film.' Hitchcock answered: 'The fetish idea. A man who wants to go to bed with a thief, just like other men have a yen for a Chinese or a colored woman. Unfortunately, this concept doesn't come across on the screen. It's not as effective as *Vertigo*, where Jimmy Stewart's feeling for Kim Novak was clearly a fetishist love. To put it bluntly, we'd have had to have Sean Connery catching the girl robbing the safe and show that he felt like jumping at her and raping her on the spot' (p. 227).)

Strutt is also inscribed on the trajectory of virtual possession of the object. Mark guarantees this trajectory by mediating between *mise en scène* and the spectator through his double identification with the character and the camera. In segment 2, the closing shot of Mark is almost identical to the opening shot of Strutt⁵ which holds together the entire segment during which Strutt seems, in his turn, to go back to shot 1—as if he were the third element from an imaginary viewpoint in the ternary structure seeing / seen / seeing in which the first element is identical with the camera so that its role can be taken over by Mark's look through displacement.

4.

Shot 25 (the opening of segment 3) repeats shot 1 (segment 1) in order to anchor completely that which is determined by enunciation: its expansion in the narrative as narrative. According to the principle of repetition and regulated difference, now fairly well understood, which is the basis of film-work in the classical cinema (especially in the American cinema), shot 25 uses the same camera inflections (but never quite the same) to call attention to Marnie's forward progression in the hallway.⁶ Here, such major differences are produced by the obvious discrepancy between action and decor [the decor is different but the action is repeated]⁷ by which the difference of narrative is marked under the seal of repetition. We have:

1. Movement—Marnie walks faster than the camera following her and thus enables us to notice the *decor* as different. The moving camera stops before framing her in a medium shot (as in segment 1, on the platform), while she continues toward the back space of the decor, this time without stopping.
2. Music—after expanding during the credits, it is interrupted abruptly with shot 1, reappearing, at the end of the dialogue, with shot 25

which seems to resume the credits ('Directed by Alfred Hitchcock') emerging from Mark Rutland's daydream. 73

And that's not all. On the left, out of one of the hotel rooms, his back turned $3/4$, in the exact axis which permits him to observe Marnie walking away, enter Hitchcock. He then turns toward the spectator staring at the camera which he is, whose inscription he duplicates. The spectator in turn (re)duplicates this inscription through his identification with both Hitchcock and the camera. Then Hitchcock turns again, or rather, he is about to turn towards Marnie (the shot is abruptly cut before he completes his movement). A way of conveying the intelligence of a machine. It tells us that his eye, virtually he himself, could, while Marnie walks away, her yellow handbag under her arm, that he could, if he were that camera lens he becomes by means of the film-work, reframe her as he has just done at the beginning of shot 25, and as he did in shot 1. He formulates, in the full sense of the term, his position of enunciation by inscribing himself in the chain of the look at the exact point which permits him to determine the structuring principle.

By observing Marnie, object of desire, enigma (becoming the one because she is the other), Hitchcock becomes a sort of double of Mark and of Strutt who have just contributed to the creation of his image but who, at the same time, are caught in it. This is possible because they too are nothing but doubles, irregularly distributed on a trajectory at the origin of which there is Hitchcock, the first among all his doubles, a matrix which allows their generation, and his own representation as duplicate image of himself as pure image power—the camera-wish, of which the object-choice is here the woman.

5.

This explains his need to appear almost, as it were, arbitrarily in all his films since *The Lodger*. But it also explains why these appearances occur, more and more frequently, at that point in the chain of events where what could be called the film-wish is condensed. An authorial signature, but expanded, punctuating the logical unfolding of the phantasy originating in the conditions of enunciation. This operation is similar to that of the Freudian pun. There, the whole biography of the subject is drawn towards the point of crystallization constituted by the pun from which this biography can be read—the work of analysis—through the chains of displacement and metaphoricality.

Shadow of a Doubt

In the train going to Santa Rosa (in a later film, *The Birds*, the birds will also hit Santa Rosa), Charlie, the uncle, is invisible. His voice is heard—a brief dialogue with the conductor—behind a black screen. But a few steps from

74 him (one would like to be able to say, in his place), sits Hitchcock, a traveler who joins him on the path to the center of his phantasy (murder-possession of the mother, predicted during the credits by the waltz of the 'Merry Widow'). He is playing cards, dealing the cards of the film. That is why he holds a full hand of spades (emphasized by a close up, almost an insert). He holds all the cards, and those of the strongest house, the cards of death, which show him to be taken in by his own game which he controls only to lose himself in it.

Strangers on a Train

Here again on a train, where the murder exchange takes place, a train which makes the round-trip between Washington and Mulgate (the scene of the murder). Hitchcock gets on the train carrying a double-bass which, by means of a synecdoche, inscribes him within the phantasy. Because, in fact, Miriam (object of the murder) works in a music store. The camera pursues her image as far as her reflection in her own glasses fallen to the ground: thus accentuating the nature of the impossible image, this real-effect of phantasy (Lacan's the phantasy of the real as impossible) which gives the camera the power to film, since it wishes to attain this same phantasy.

An extraordinary reversal in the enunciation: later the glasses of *Patricia Hitchcock* reawaken the phantasy during the Morton's party, pushing Bruno to repeat the act on the elderly society woman (double of the widows in *Shadow of a Doubt*, just as Barbara-Patricia is of Miriam here). Let us go on.

I Confess

Again master at the game [*magister ludi*], Hitchcock passes across the screen, in a now famous image, silhouetted against the sky at the top of the steps (count them, almost thirty-nine!).

Rope (which I have not been able to see for more than ten years: inevitable quandary in the study of cinema). He passes again, either during the credits or after, I don't remember, but before the camera moves towards the window of the apartment building and fixes, as soon as the window is penetrated, on the scene of the murder.

Rear Window

Here, Hitchcock delineates more precisely the mirror effect of seeing and seen, the reversible roles of exhibitionist and voyeur activated by the scopical drive: he includes himself among the tenants of the fragmented apartment house / screen which Jeff structures, divides, and redivides through his camera lens.

Then comes the 'royal road': the four films whose credits, designed by Saul Bass, crystallize the enunciation-work.



Shadow of a Doubt



North by Northwest



Rear Window



Psycho



The Birds



I Confess



Vertigo

Substitution and mimesis of the trajectory by means of segmentation.

Segment 1. Chase across the roof tops, a policeman falls to his death, Scottie, police detective, discovers his acrophobia.

Segment 2. Scottie and Midge (at Midge's): they talk about their former relationship, his acrophobia, a second shock which alone, she says, according to her doctor, could cure him; Scottie reports an unexpected urgent telephone call from an old college friend, Gavin Elster.

Segment 3. Elster's office on the Embarcadero in San Francisco; Elster asks Scottie, a retired police detective, to follow his wife, haunted to the point of madness by an image. Between segment 2 and 3, there is a sub-segment which introduces 3: a long shot of the Embarcadero, during which Hitchcock walks across the screen, during the time and space, the ellipsis, that leads Scottie from one situation, from one decor, from one segment, to another.

Identification which is both subtle and brutal. It refers, on one hand, to the fascinated-fascinating eye in the credits from which the title and names erupt, and on the other hand, to the film which exploits this metaphor by linking the destiny of the subject to a passion for the image (reduplicated: Scottie is fascinated by Madeleine because she is herself fascinated by an image: the recession of the phantasy, particular to the scopical drive, constitutes the scene). A passion which precipitates, almost in a chemical sense, the peculiar affinity in the man's eye between the woman and the death wish (and the woman who repeats the same construct).

North by Northwest

The bus which closes its doors on Hitchcock includes him on the side of the lack, the absence (which the film as object (in turn) returns as its possession: the plenitude of the lure) in the chain called 'paradigm of the means of locomotion', which I have described as a principle of the film as a system and of desire as the logic of the system, by means of the effect of 'blocage symbolique' which insures its textual expansion (cf. *Communications*, no.23, 1975). Here again, a train, or rather two, on which the dual effect of murder-seduction is played out between Eve and Thornhill... so much are the chains, from one film to another, inter-linked from the point of view of this secret paradigm constituted by their admitted moments of enunciation.

We could, thus, from this reduplicated train return to the second train in *Shadow of a Doubt* on which Uncle Charlie tries to kill his niece: a similar logic in both films of filmic repetition/resolution working through the internal opposition between the fulfilled wish of neurosis,

which returns to the law, and the impossible desire of psychosis, gaping, 77
excluded, mortal.

Psycho

We find him on the way from the hotel (where Marion Crane has just made love to Sam) to her office (where she yields to the temptation of stealing, as if to even out the sexual aggression, of which she was metaphorically the object, on the part of the oil man in the Stetson). Hitchcock puts himself on her path (also wearing a cowboy hat) so that, for a brief moment, they figure together in the same image, thus enunciating the object of desire. To be more exact, this meeting takes place at the point where two segments converge by means of a lap-dissolve: the first segment showing her still in the room where she made love to Sam [was the object of his desire] and the second segment in which Hitchcock, through the mediation of money and theft, includes himself in this desire which, later, the camera will maximize in the shower scene, through Norman's desire-delirium.

The Birds

Another crossing of paths. Shot 1 (following the credits, the names shredded to pieces by bird-figures). A street in San Francisco: a bus disappears to make room for Melanie Daniels followed by the camera. Sud-



78 denly she stops, and looks up. Shot 2, a flock of birds swoops through the city sky. Shot 3, Melanie surprised; then, resuming her walk, entering in a shop at the precise moment when Hitchcock comes out of it with two white poodles on a leash.

He leaves the store so that Melanie can enter it. It is Mrs. MacBruber's 'pet store' which, moments later, Mitch Brenner will in his turn also enter to buy a pair of 'love-birds,' neither too demonstrative nor unfriendly, love-birds which he wants to offer to his younger sister as a birthday present. Thus does Hitchcock inscribe himself in the chain of the phantasy of the imaginary body-symbol which engenders the film; a body torn between neurosis and psychosis, between desire and the law. Body-look of the woman that the man captures, that hypnotizes him. And finally he will be forced to recognize himself in this look-as-body in order to dominate it. The pair of poodles which, like the love-birds, symbolizes the couple in the diegesis indicates clearly enough where the film-catharsis, the *mise en scène* as ritual, ordered perverse transgression, will lead them.

Marnie

A new level of intensity is reached in the system of signature, when, from being symbolic, included in the logic of phantasy, it can assume a specific position in the cinematographic apparatus whereby it asserts itself as enunciation: representation in the scene, in the axis of that which gives it substance, i.e. the look and the camera.

6.

Thus, in *Marnie*, what Hitchcock sees [at the end of shot 26] or imagines (in the same way as Mark, or Strutt, but this time as her next door neighbor in a hotel), is what we see: this same woman, still seen from the



25e



26a

back, but wearing a robe, progressive focalization of the voyeuristic impulse. The camera creeps up on the body, takes pleasure in fragmenting it in order to concentrate on that which this sadistic fragmentation adds to the enigma: a division of the object, of its identity in four time-space segments of the same shot [what is virtually only one shot has been deconstructed into four] which makes her hesitate [‘Is this really Marnie?’] between Marion Holland and Margaret Edgar as she flips through the social security cards, passing over Martha Heilbronn and Mary Taylor. This woman has no references because her identity varies. All she can offer is the surface of an image, and this is precisely what is attractive in her. She answers this aggression against herself reduced to image with the theft which in turn increases her power to fascinate, her ‘looks’ (Mark’s, Hitchcock’s, the spectator’s).

Marion—Mary—Martha—Margaret—Marnie and even Peggy, Margaret’s nickname under which name a man thinks he recognized her at the racetrack—and even the nickname of Minnie Mouse which she borrows to tease Mark, even the Maryland licence plate of the taxi which she takes to her mother’s in Baltimore. At that point, another [signifying] chain forms itself through too many films not to have any substance: Miriam (*Strangers on a Train*), Madeleine (*Vertigo*), Melanie (*The Birds*), Margot (*Dial M for Murder*), Marion (*Psycho*).

M, or the letter of the woman-object, inscribing [‘insisting upon’] the relationship between sex and death. In *Dial M for Murder*, the phone call that is a signal to Margot’s murderer is underlined by the close-up of a finger dialing the M digit—hence the impact of the film title, like that of a pun (echo of Dial O for Operator). This minor but profoundly personal film (‘I immediately said I’d take it because that was coasting, playing it



26a



27



29a



26d



28



29d

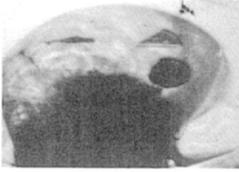
80 safe'.)⁸ could provide the means to articulate the two chains: that of the signature system and that of the woman as emblem of the death wish. We must keep in mind that, in *Dial M for Murder*, we see Hitchcock appearing in a college picture between the two men who intend to murder the woman, her husband and the killer. (In *Suspicion*, Joan Fontaine assembles the letters into the word: MURDER when she imagines that her husband wants to kill her [that she is the object of a death wish on the part of her husband], the image of which she (re)constitutes phantasmatically, at the edge of a precipice, to the point of fainting.)

Hitchcock's motivation for this game of signifiers, made up of women's first names beginning with an M, originates, I believe, in a cultural phantasy provided by the fermentation of Hitchcock's Catholic upbringing. M as in Mary, the Holy Virgin. In the tradition of the Occidental novel [romance], especially beginning with the 19th century, this double image of woman relayed through the American cinema, as whore and virgin, branded by the imminence of death; fatal curse of her sex in the Oedipal triangle which progressively superimposes itself on the double Christian constellation of the Holy Trinity and the Holy Family.⁹ Thus in the 19th century, for numerous historical reasons, love and death become interchangeable by means of a structuring effect resulting from a narcissistic intensification and the phantasy of bisexuality. These two phantasies cause the man to place himself in the position of the desiring subject by means of the transformation of love into death, thus conveying through the image of the body of the woman the unbearable image of his own castration.

7.

Following the segmentation of the name, the segmentation of the body completes Marnie's change of identity. By means of a craftily arranged suspense, her face, heretofore concealed, is at last unveiled in its metamorphosis: assumption of the (Hollywood) feminine archetype.

The ending of shot 31 is ambiguous. After the very slight tilt of the camera when Marnie throws back her head, her eyes shut, delighted with herself, her face turns in our direction to give itself fully to the image. It is at her own image that Marnie looks in her imagined mirror in order to admire the triumphant image of a split identity which answers, with theft and metamorphosis, the sexual aggression which her reality as an image has sealed in her nature. But this is not the camera. The look is sustained, intentionally too high, avoiding the camera axis which would cause to coincide on the one hand, Marnie and the spectator, and on the other, the mirror and the screen. (In fact, for a brief moment, they do coincide, but in a way which is in effect virtual with reference to the *défilement*



30a



31b



31d



31a



31c

when in a single gesture Marnie raises her head and stares at herself in the mirror with an intensity which can only be fully experienced when the film is slowed down on an editing table, thus condensing in one gaze, her image, the camera and the spectator.)

Thus, we see her staring at herself, without her seeing us staring at her. In this way, the divergence increases the voyeurism as such, what might be called the passion for the image aroused by its missing part. This fixed gaze half way turned on itself suggests that Marnie imagines herself in terms of her own image [reflected] in the mirror, just as Mark is stimulated by Strutt's description and his own memories (whence the segment which follows, and which, in a way, she anticipates, in the same way as Mark anticipates that she will walk down the hallway of the hotel, imagines her at the end of shot 24). And this is, in a way, the condition which enables her to see herself and get off on it.

By her absorption in her desire for her own image formed by the threat of the man's look which she counters with her symptoms, Marnie extends to the male spectator (the camera held by Hitchcock, Mark, Strutt) the deferred orgasm of desire for an object; for any woman spectator, who, for all practical purposes is alienated by this structure, she stimulates an identificatory desire.

8.

Once the enunciation is thus organized around this high point (31d), the film resumes its progression, unending, endless, perpetual game of difference and identity: the narrative. This time (32a), shot from a wider angle, the lower part of Marnie's body is framed instead of the truncated torso with which the film began. Marnie is carrying two suitcases instead of one, a light brown purse instead of a large yellow purse. The action

82 takes place in a train station and no longer on the platform. Instead of seeing her body enigmatically move away, the camera stays with it, following it in two distinct movements, finally to reveal her when she turns around facing the camera in medium close up (32c). In this particular instance, shots 1 and 31 are condensed (32). There is also a displacement which this time gets hold of her look as part of the action [the look becomes part of the diegesis], and sees her seeing, no longer with this strange structural glance (31d) which clotured the establishment of the enunciation apparatus, but with one of those glances, at once partial and constant that, in Hitchcock, carve out the real which they define, creating the direction of the action.

Thus, in a strict sense, shot 33 is the first subjective shot of the narrative (notwithstanding the previous subjectivity implied by the reverse shots of Strutt in the second segment). While Marnie is looking, Hitchcock borrows her look, identifying himself with her since he makes her and the spectator identify themselves with the camera according to the process of deferred point of view. Two things: first of all, the simple act of delegating the look, which in Hitchcock's films is insistent and frequent, makes the splitting of vision possible, in which the enunciation is inscribed across the multiplicity of textual systems from a base at once



32a



33



36



32b



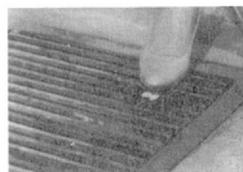
34



40



32c



35

constant and shifting; on the other hand, more precisely, Hitchcock's 83
fundamental need for the intermediary look of the woman creates, in a
mirror structure, the metaphoric possibility of the look as truth (look of the
man—look of the camera). This is also a necessary condition which ef-
fects a return towards her and her repossession as object. But here, it is a
pleasure taken in the return to Marnie's body in its segmentation [moti-
vated by an elaborate montage] (the key dropped, then pushed down
into the air vent by her foot, etc.): to fetishize.

9.

In all classical films, there are moments of inaction. These are undoubt-
edly necessary to the action, but we experience them as slumps. ('We
often run into the problem of the logic of time. You feel you must show a
certain amount of preparation; yet that preparation can become dull.
We're so anxious not to drag it out that we can't fill it with entertaining
details that would make it more interesting' (p. 230).) Thus, the inevit-
able problem of classical film controlled by two contradictory tendencies
(make the film long enough, but never make it really too long).

There is however another reason, economic in the Freudian sense of the
term, which explains these slumps. Extreme tension, it seems to me,
must be avoided. This accumulation is only suited to certain moments of
the film. In the characteristic order of the classical film (a motivated suc-
cession of representations), this tension may well threaten to subvert the
continuity of perception—specifically the systematic nature of its relation-
ships. As if dull or semi-dull moments are necessary to recuperate, reor-
der what has just been seen, to unbind, even unconsciously, condensa-
tions and displacements; in short, these slumps are necessary in order
that the spectator may accomplish for himself a first working through of
the 'film-work' (Thierry Kuntzel). Hence, these dead moments are gener-
ally less visible during a first screening, when all the work is still to be
done, because, from the outset, these films, in shrewd anticipation of
their economic market, had not been conceived for successive viewings.
Furthermore—but this is to say the same thing differently—the classical
film cannot constantly risk creating a density which is too evident without
affecting the verisimilitude which supports the film from beginning to end.
The film must maintain a certain slack in its regime of fiction to avoid the risk
of abstraction, or, simply, a certain absurdity, worst of all: the absurdity
of diegetic improbability. Hitchcock is fully aware of this problem having
pushed to the extreme the classical narrative's capacity for figurative ab-
straction. [Talking about *Strangers on a Train*] 'The great problem with
this type of picture, you see, is that your main characters sometimes tend
to become mere figures' (p. 146). This explains this almost 'useless' seg-

84 ment in which we see Marnie, arriving by car along a tree-lined street, enter into a hotel where she seems to be a regular and ask to be driven immediately to 'Garrod's' before going up to her room to change her clothes.

(Besides, this is the first segment which is defined classically by a lap-dissolve, which stands out since, heretofore, in the beginning of the film straight cuts have been used, accentuating the effect of mass—although it is true that between the shots of the social security cards and of Marnie's hair in the washbowl (30) there is a first lap-dissolve, but so brief that I could only see it on the editing table because I had stopped, accidentally, at that point.)

10.

Man. How do, Miss Edgar. Good to have you back.

Marnie. Hello, Mr. Garrod. Ah, there's my darling.

Man. That big old spoiled baby of yours. Knew something was up, he tried to bite me twice already this morning.

Marnie. Oh, Forio, if you want to bite somebody, bite *me*. (He helps her get on the horse.) Thanks.

Here too, the dialogue speaks explicitly about itself. It structures Marnie's fetishistic love for Forio (logical complement of the theft) and which for her typically takes the place of a man and children. This is the woman's answer to the phallus that she lacks, which she disavows in the man through her frigidity towards men because she was obliged to believe that man, instead of merely having one, was the phallus. The film bases the genealogy of this phantasy on an actual infantile trauma, the logic of which will be progressively constituted by the story until the culminating



42a



42b



42c



43

point in its reconstruction in terms of a combined return to reality and normality (the couple, genital love, social mores, property) which will also be its unfolding and its resolution. 85

Important here is the process whereby this structure, which crystallizes around the desire for the woman, supports the enunciation, the vision: how the symbolic is deployed from the focal point in the imaginary object it incorporates. Here too, Marnie is seen by a man whose structural interference is determined by the fact that he is inscribed in the chain, (from Hitchcock, the enunciator, to Mark, his fictional delegate) that controls the relationship between the camera and its object. Garrod occupies a position similar to that of the fisherman who takes Melanie, in *The Birds*, to the boat and watches her leave, while questioning the eccentric wish of this woman carrying a bird cage. (See, 'Les Oiseaux: analyse d'une séquence,' *Les Cahiers du cinéma*, no.216, Oct. 1969, p.33f.) The fisherman functions as a relay (similarly to Mitch's neighbor earlier in the film) between Hitchcock and Mitch Brenner who reappears during the fragment in the position of the look and desire. Garrod too is a relay between Hitchcock and Mark Rutland. But the look (43) rivets itself on Marnie (44) (what Garrod sees, a classical point of view shot). One could say, in this reverse shot, that his imagination becomes the logical continuation of his vision. This statement is undoubtedly excessive; nonetheless this metonymic effect cannot be neglected. Precisely, the camera's return to Marnie, in shot 44, attains its fullest effect in that which the displaced vision identifies in the film-text—the problem of the scopic drive in relation to its position of enunciation. Since the camera never ceases showing, constituting shot by shot, that unreal real which we call film, the director takes the position of enunciator so that he may delegate the look, the possession of which he never relinquishes.

This return to Marnie is not an accident. In shot 42(a), the camera explores Marnie's pleasure ('Oh Forio, if you want to bite somebody, bite me.') and ties in through shot 31 (jubilation in front of the mirror) all the shots in which she appears. This exploration works on two separate levels. On one level, the pleasure of a signified, almost too evident: the horse, animality, the phallic substitute. On the second level, a pleasure displayed by the signifier which is only meaningful as image. This pleasure is both the materialization and manifestation of the unreal, an effect reinforced by the mechanical movement of the offscreen horse against a rear screen projection. In this image of her own orgasmic excitement, Marnie seems to draw gratification from the image, and she seems to return the question that the camera is trying to explore back to the enunciator. What is orgasmic pleasure for woman? What is the nature of her pleasure? Even: what is pleasure?

86 This question is raised in two movements, the factors of which are welded together like the two sides of a coin, which recur throughout the Occidental novel (especially in the 19th century), classical cinema (the American cinema in particular), and psychoanalysis (Freudian and Lacanian). The first of these movements consists in an activation of an irreducible difference: 'the dark continent of female sexuality' for Freud, the privilege granted to woman with respect to pleasure for Lacan (with its reverse side of ignorance [*méconnaissance*]); in Hollywood cinema, the extreme condensation of sexuality in the woman's body-image. The second movement effects a calculated reduction of this magnified difference based on a single element: of which the woman's sexuality, phallic, symbolic, etc. . . . constitutes, for the man, a visible reversal, the mirror image.

This double movement reveals the function and purpose of a certain kind of cinema of representation which privileges in the enunciation apparatus the object of desire. Exploiting the mechanism of the lure, *cinéma*, through the work of enunciation in the text, becomes the condition of orgasmic pleasure in setting up a mirror construction endlessly refracted, the irreducible gap of the scopic drive. Pleasure is the image that must be assimilated, retrieved, the impossible real, like murder in which we find the sadistic reversal of pleasure. For the man-subject who is behind the camera, this image of fear or pleasure which is delegated to the woman as other, this image is the condition necessary to the constitution of his phantasy. Here, Hitchcock the enunciator.

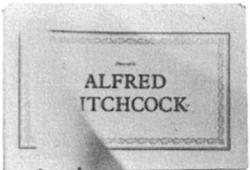
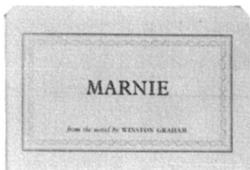
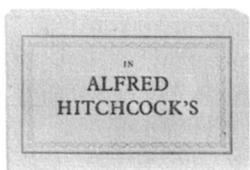
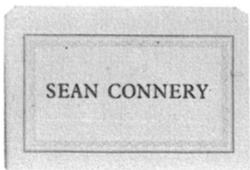
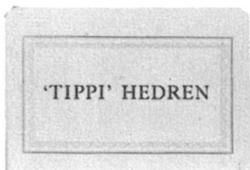
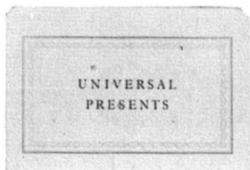
—translated by Bertrand Augst and Hilary Radner.

1. François Truffaut. *Hitchcock*. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1967, p.228. (Throughout this article the numbers in parentheses after citations are references to this book.)
2. André Malraux. *Esquisse d'une psychologie du cinéma*. Paris, Gallimard, 1946.
3. Jacques Lacan. *Le Séminaire, XI*. Paris, Le Seuil, 1973 ; p.107.
4. For more information about the director's working methods, see the special issue of *Take One*, vol.5, no.50, May 1976, "Hitchcock at work."
5. See photogram 2.
6. In addition to the article on *The Birds* available in an English translation from the BFI, see also, 'To Analyze, to Segment,' *Quarterly Review of Film Studies*, vol.1, no.3, Aug., 1976, pp.331-345 ; see also 'Le blocage symbolique,' *Communications*, no.23, 1975, pp.235-350, for a detailed analysis of a large segment of *North by Northwest*.
7. Translator's note. All the inserts between [] have been added to avoid possible misreadings of the text.
8. There is a discrepancy between the text quoted by Bellour in French and the English translation. The French text reads: 'Immédiatement, j'ai dit: 'je prends ça', car je savais que la-dessus je pouvais naviguer' (*Cahiers*, p. 158). The English translation does not suggest that he could take advantage of the script's weaknesses. The French version does imply very strongly that Hitchcock accepted the script based on the play because he could do something with the play *Dial M for Murder*, which was a big hit. This means that, unlike the other script he was working on at the time called 'The Bramble Bush,' the play was better suited for what he wanted to do at that time (Translator's note).
9. On the Holy Trinity, the exclusion of the Holy Virgin whose repressed representation is assumed by the Holy Spirit in the interplay of Oedipal instances, see the remarkable analyses by Ernest Jones (*Essays of Applied Psychoanalysis*; London: The International Psychoanalytical Press, 1923, and in particular 'The Madonna's Conception'). It should be understood that its significance must be seen in the perspective of a history of representations, in which psychoanalysis provides only the principle of an explanation (an interpretation) to the extent that it also is historically, epistemologically, explained, understood.

0.a-0.f

1a-d, 2, 3, 4

5-11



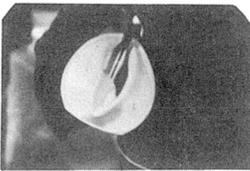
12—18



19—21, 22a-d



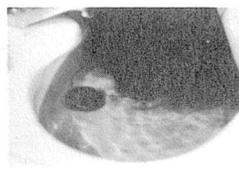
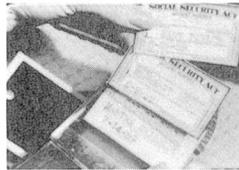
23, 24a-b, 25a-d



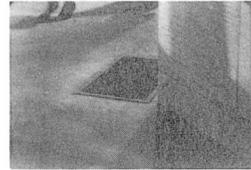
26a-e, 27a, 28



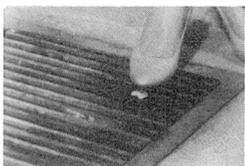
29a-d, 30, 31a-b



31c, 32a-c, 33a-b, 34a



34b, 35a, 36a-b, 37a-b, 38a



38b, 39a-b, 40a-c, 41a



41b-c, 42a-c, 43, 44



