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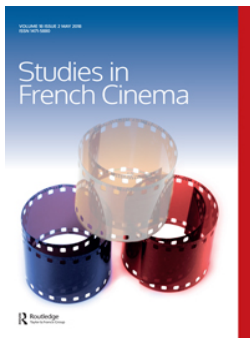
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'Prochainement: Arizona Jim contre Cagoulard': framing the future of the Front populaire in Jean Renoir's *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (1936)

Barry Nevin[‡]

Discipline of French, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland

ABSTRACT

Gilles Deleuze remarks that Jean Renoir's entire œuvre displays the most fundamental operation of time, constantly holding the embodied past and the potential creation of a genuinely new future in tension. Although he fails to address *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*, the film that cemented Renoir's association with the Front populaire, Deleuze tantalisingly remarks that this dialectic stems partly from Renoir's attitude towards the Front populaire. How Deleuze's framework allows spectators to interpret this film as an expression of Renoir's own ambivalence regarding the future of the Front populaire has yet to be sufficiently addressed. Drawing on *Ida*, an unfiled screenplay written by Renoir during the making of *Lange*, this article argues that Renoir mobilises his signature techniques and proto-fascist iconography to reflexively criticise local attempts to implement socialist ideals in contemporary Paris.

KEYWORDS

Temporality; social space; cracked crystal; Deleuze; fascism

'Notre grand Jean, s'il a eu le cœur à gauche, n'avait pas la tête politique.'¹ – Roger Leenhardt (cited in Gauteur 2005, 43)

Introduction: re-framing Renoir and the Front populaire

Over eighty years after the inevitable close of the *entre-deux-guerres*, Jean Renoir's short-lived relationship with the Front populaire continues to defy any easy summarisation. What once stood as a popularly accepted myth of humanistic commitment now subsists as a notoriously vexing question: what do Renoir's films teach us about his own attitude towards the Front populaire? Of all the directors associated with French popular cinema of this period, Renoir was undoubtedly the Left's closest public collaborator. Although not an official member of any political party, Renoir publicly supported Secretary General Maurice Thorez at the Eighth Congress of the Parti communiste français in 1936 (Marie 2013, 328). Renoir served on the administrative council of Ciné-Liberté, a production company that helmed a number of films (including Renoir's own *La Marseillaise*, 1937) in association with the Parti communiste français's Maison de la Culture, and was also a member of the editorial board of the company's

CONTACT Barry Nevin  barbarianjay@gmail.com

[‡]School of Languages, Law and Social Sciences, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin, Ireland; Department of Film, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland.

journal, *Ciné-Liberté* (Andrew 1995, 217). When *Commune*, the journal of the Association des écrivains et artistes révolutionnaires, published a letter of support to the Soviet Union in November 1936, Renoir was the only filmmaker among the signatories, who included André Gide, Le Corbusier and Picasso (Buchsbaum 1988, 161). Renoir was later offered carte blanche by Louis Aragon to write for the Communist newspaper *Ce Soir* (Marie 2013, 331), to which he contributed articles from 4 March 1937 to 7 October 1938 (reprinted in Renoir 2006, 132–244). As late as July 1938, Renoir was giving speeches on Soviet cinema in France, including discussions on the image of Lenin in Soviet film (Gauteur 1980, 35). It is no surprise that by February 1937, Roger Leenhardt had baptised Renoir ‘[l]e metteur en scène de génie des gauches’² (cited in Gauteur 2005, 59). A chapter entitled ‘Le Front Populaire’ in Renoir’s autobiography depicts a nation enlightened by a blissful glimmer of hope: ‘Il fut un moment où les Français crurent vraiment qu’ils allaient s’aimer les uns les autres. On se sentait porté par une vague de générosité’³ (Renoir 2005, 114).

Renoir’s left-wing sympathies were already manifest in *Toni* (1935), a film treating a group of exploited Italian immigrants based in Martigues. Considering the narrative’s clear engagement with the tribulations of the proletariat, issues concerning the rights of women and the value of international solidarity, Keith Reader suggests that the film is, if only in part, ‘a precursor of, and of a piece with the director’s work of the Popular Front years’ (2013, 452). Renoir presented the film during February–March 1935 with Marguerite Houllé, Claude Renoir and Georges d’Arnoux (Mérigeau 2012, 238–239) before commencing pre-production of his next film, *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange/The Crime of Monsieur Lange* (1936). *Lange* was produced in collaboration with le groupe Octobre, whose members included the film’s screenwriter, Jacques Prévert, and premiered at the Aubert Palace in Paris on 24 January 1936 (date provided by Mérigeau 2012, 253). The production and distribution of *Lange* (September 1935–April 1936) coincided with the Front populaire’s campaign preparations for the May 1936 legislative elections and, as Brett Bowles notes, the film ‘in its time [...] appeared as militant and unconcealed support for the left’ (Bowles 2013, 406). Indeed, the critics of *Premier Plan* even asked: ‘Faudra-t-il décidément rétablir le générique : *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* – un film du Groupe Octobre – assistant technique Jean Renoir’⁴ (Chardère 1962, 166). Renoir later produced the fervently propagandist *La Vie est à nous/Life Belongs to Us* (1936), which he later claimed to have envisaged in response to the anti-Semitism he had witnessed in Nazi Germany (Gauteur 2005, 60–61). Produced shortly after the Radicals, Socialists and Communists had endorsed the common programme of the Front populaire, the film ‘transformed Left filmmaking activity from a hope to a reality’ (Buchsbaum 1988, 185). *Les Bas-fonds/The Lower Depths* (1936), co-adapted by Renoir and Charles Spaak from Maxim Gorki’s source text, once more orchestrated the fall of the oppressive capitalist structures, this time embodied by an exploitative landlord. According to Spaak, the development of the script was monitored by the Parti communiste, and Renoir ‘qui à ce moment-là flirtait beaucoup avec les communistes, a reçu des observations : il n’était pas question de prendre des libertés avec Gorki’⁵ (cited in Courtade 1978, 137). After *Les Bas-fonds* had been awarded the first Prix Louis Delluc, Jacques Duclos further underscored the film’s association with the Left by congratulating ‘au nom du Parti communiste, le grand metteur en scène dont le talent magnifique a donné des œuvres qui resteront’⁶ and ‘le grand ami du peuple qui nous a donné le beau film *La Vie est à nous*’⁷ (cited in Courtade 1978, 137). *La Grande Illusion/The Great Illusion* (1937), as Martin O’Shaughnessy remarks, ‘is an attempt to make productive sense of the First World War within the French republican and revolutionary traditions while at the same time responding to the challenges of the 1930s, not least the Spanish Civil War

(17 July 1936–1 April 1939), the rise of fascism and the Front populaire's own attempts to eradicate indigenous racism and anti-Semitism (O'Shaughnessy 2009, 25). Renoir subsequently directed *La Marseillaise*, which recounts the early events of the French Revolution through the eyes of the French aristocracy and the popular classes. Originally funded through a popular subscription system in association with Ciné-Liberté and the Confédération générale du travail (then France's dominant trade union), the film was regarded from its inception as 'le film du Front Populaire'⁸ (Ory 1975, 163, original emphasis) and was launched by Renoir as 'a film by the people and for the people' (Andrew and Ungar 2005, 154).⁹ However, this programme was ultimately aborted when funding fell short and the film ultimately became, in Renoir's words, 'an absolutely normal enterprise', thus ending his public association with the Front populaire (Sesonske 1980, 323–325). Yet the production of the film, whose Frontist message 'barely seeks to hide behind the historical period it purports to represent' (O'Shaughnessy 2000, 234), nonetheless suggests that Renoir's apparent commitment even seems to have outlasted the Front itself: Jean-Pierre Jeancolas (2005, 116) and Edward Ousselin (2006, 956) both argue that *La Marseillaise* already bore a posthumous quality at the time of its release in February 1938, at which point Renoir was still contributing articles to *Ce Soir*.

Despite Renoir's apparent devotion to the Front populaire's political project, it would be misguided to unreservedly conclude that he believed in what Reader calls 'the imaginary resolution of political contradictions' (1986, 40). At its peak, the Front populaire introduced collective contracts, salary increases averaging 12%, a 40-hour working week and paid annual holidays. However, it is worth reminding ourselves that the Front populaire was weakened from the outset by national political and economic instability. In the wake of Léon Blum's notorious refusal to intervene on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War, his government collapsed, having held power for only 380 days. A second government, established under Blum in March 1938, lasted barely a month. Furthermore, scholars have convincingly suggested that Renoir's commitment from 1936 to 1938 was essentially provisional in nature. The very fact that Renoir did not obtain membership of any political party during this period hints at his own reservations regarding the true (un)feasibility of Blum's agenda. Elizabeth Grottle Strebel (1981, 76) cautiously labels Renoir 'a humanist socialist', and even Claude Gauteur, who criticises those who are sceptical of Renoir's brief commitment, admits that 'Saint Renoir n'existe pas, ni n'a jamais existé. [...] Jean Renoir fut un homme, avec toute la force et les faiblesses qu'implique l'humaine condition'¹⁰ (2005, 9). François Poulle is less forgiving, and although he understands that 'il y avait plusieurs couleurs politiques chez Renoir'¹¹ (1969, 18), criticises the director for not declaring his true sympathies in public. Some of Renoir's own associates were more scathing. Pierre Braunberger (producer of Renoir's *Tire au flanc/The Sad Sack* [1928], *La Chienne/The Bitch* [1931] and *Partie de campagne/A Day in the Country* [1936]) aligned Renoir's Front populaire output with the director's opportunistic search for a target audience: 'Sur l'échiquier politique, il se situait plutôt à droite. [...] Il était social sans être socialiste. [...] Je l'encourage vivement à accepter [la proposition des communistes] comme une tâche ingrate, lui expliquant qu'il a l'opportunité de trouver, enfin, un vrai public'¹² (Mérigeau 2012, 257). Spaak, co-writer of *Les Bas-fonds* and *La Grande Illusion*, claimed Renoir 'oubliait que marxisme et nazisme n'étaient pas synonymes'¹³ and was 'le traître intégral'¹⁴ (257). All of these interpretations of Renoir's attitude towards the Left, whether sympathetic in nature or not, only leave his motives and the political messages of his Front populaire output open to further speculation.

Furthermore, Renoir's career from 1938 to 1940 provides enough grounds in itself to question his previous public commitment to the Front populaire. Renoir followed *La Marseillaise* with the dark naturalism of *La Bête Humaine* (1938) and, the following year, delivered the scathing satire of *La Règle du jeu/The Rules of the Game* (1939). Moreover, the very Renoir who had claimed that '[e]n tournant à l'étranger, on trahit à la fois la France et le cinéma'¹⁵ (Gauteur 2005, 49), and had allegedly condemned Marcel Carné's *Le Quai des brumes/Port of Shadows* (1938) as a fascist film (Carné 1996, 102) was, by 1939, planning an adaptation of *La Tosca* in fascist Italy and, in 1940, accepted Mussolini's invitation to offer a master class at the Centro sperimentale di cinematografia, a move for which many of Renoir's former Communist allies never forgave him (Bowles 2013, 399). Renoir claimed that he was simply following the French government's orders as part of his country's broader aim to dissuade Mussolini from forming an alliance with Hitler (Sesonske 1980, 441–442). However, Mérigeau (2012, 440) remarks that the contract for *La Tosca* dispatched by Scalera studios is dated 12 July 1939 whilst Renoir's orders from the army are dated 2 September, and concludes that Renoir 'choisira par la suite de taire, préférant situer sa décision de filmer *Tosca* après que la guerre avec l'Allemagne eut été déclarée.'¹⁶ This does not necessarily imply that Renoir, in private, was anything less than a committed anti-fascist. However, his geographical trajectory and the shift in his ideological outlook demand that we reassess the extent of Renoir's reservations regarding the Front populaire's agenda both before and during his association with the Left.

Because Renoir himself wrote relatively little on his public affiliation with the Left following the outbreak of war, O'Shaughnessy's lament that Renoir pre-1936 'is largely unavailable to us except through the films' (2000, 16) still remains true over fifteen years later. Assessing Renoir's attitude towards the Front populaire, and the extent to which this outlook is evidenced by Renoir's *mise en scène*, demands that we examine the limited documents detailing Renoir's personal sentiments prior to the May 1936 elections, from which point inadequate documentation and Renoir's public involvement with the Front populaire largely efface any personal misgivings which he may have harboured. One noteworthy instalment in Renoir's Front populaire output has yet to be sufficiently examined. After the release of *Toni* and prior to the production of *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*, Renoir penned *Ida*, an ultimately unfiled screenplay. Two drafts of *Ida* survive, each of which was written during the pre-production stages of *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*: the first written on 8 August, the second on 26 August 1935. *Ida* recounts the tensions between two factions – the woods people and village people – living in La Cordelière, a fictional town located near Paris. The first draft centres on the ill-fated relationship between the titular protagonist and her suitor, Pierre, who respectively live in the forest and the village, and whose fathers forbid their union. This aspect of *Ida* has been situated by Gauteur within the development of Renoir's ultimately unfiled *Roméo et Juliette* (Renoir 1981, 66). The second draft develops the political contours of both fathers through the addition of a critical omniscient narrator who relates the two figures to the screenplay's contemporary context in striking ways that demand further elaboration.

The leader of the woods people, Taillefer, is commonly addressed by the characters and the narrator as 'le roi de Prusse' (the King of Prussia), directly relating him to Kaiser Wilhelm II, the last king of Prussia, whose aggressive *Weltpolitik* and personal relations with Archduke Franz Ferdinand laid a foundation for the July crisis. Taillefer thus provides a direct link between the memories of the Franco-Prussian War and the outbreak of the First World War, during which Renoir himself fought in the French cavalry and air force. The narrative further

suggests that such volatile political figures are still active, not only within the fictional world of La Cordelière but also in contemporary Europe. The script notes that Taillefer was once unconstitutionally granted jurisdiction by the local mayor and that 'en quelques années son autorité n'était plus discutée et on pouvait dire que c'était une espèce de Mussolini ou de Hitler de la forêt'¹⁷ (Renoir 1935, 10). The possibility of historical repetition is also embodied by Vandeuvres, the most prominent member of the village people, who works as a butcher in the village centre. His enterprise is described as 'la plus vilaine maison en pierres meulières que l'on puisse imaginer',¹⁸ and contrasts with the 'mentalité simple et harmonieuse'¹⁹ exhibited by the small church located opposite it (18). Most alarmingly, the narrator proceeds to locate the building within the screenplay's contemporary national context: 'Cette maison du boucher m'entraîne bien loin mais il faut qu'on en parle. Ce sont ces horreurs qui ont déshonoré la banlieue de Paris et aussi les alentours de toute grande ville'²⁰ (19). As in the case of Taillefer, the narrator directly equates Vandeuvres with the two rising fascists of the interwar period: 'En Allemagne on fait HITLER, en Italie on fait MUSSOLINI, en France la même catégorie de petit bourgeois arrogants fait des maisons en pierres meulières et c'est presque aussi dangereux'²¹ The fact that Vandeuvres ranks no higher than the petite bourgeoisie serves as a distinct reminder of the right-wing sentiment and authoritarian ambitions that proliferated within French society, even among middle-class ranks, before Renoir began filming *Lange*. In an introduction to the setting, the narrator even remarks that the salient parallels between the fictional narrative and contemporary society risk provocation:

Cette minuscule agglomération de deux cents habitants sera le centre de l'histoire que je vais essayer de transcrire. Naturellement je change le nom du pays et des indigènes. Quelqu'un pourrait se reconnaître et se vexer. Mais, mes noms de remplacement ne sont pas faux. Ils sont empruntés à des gens et à des lieux réels qui auraient très bien pu être les acteurs et former le cadre d'un drame analogue.²² (Renoir 1935, 1)

Drawing on *Ida*, this article argues that *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*, rather than representing a shift in Renoir's ideological outlook towards a more optimistic view of French society, betrays Renoir's radical anxiety regarding the rise of fascism and the unfeasibility of the hope inspired by the Front populaire. Of all the films directed by Renoir during the 1930s, *Lange* provides a key case study: on the one hand, it was received as Renoir's first unabashedly public admission of pro-Left sympathies during Blum's rise to power. With the benefit of a brief plot summary, it is easy to see why. The film recounts the efforts of the eponymous protagonist (René Lefèvre) and his fellow employees at a publication house to establish a socialist cooperative following the apparent death of their exploitative boss, Batala (Jules Berry). Aided by the workers of the adjoining *blanchisserie* owned by Valentine (Florelle) and Meunier *filis* (Henri Guisol), an enthusiastic capitalist backer, the community markets Lange's *Arizona Jim* comics. At the peak of the cooperative's financial success, Batala returns unscathed but is shot by Lange. Aided by Valentine, Lange is escorted across the Belgian border by a group of men who deem the murder a necessary one.

On the other hand, as shall become clear over the course of this analysis, the precise political outlook expressed by the film's complex narrative style now ranks among the most hotly contested of Renoir's oeuvre, partly because of difficulties hitherto incurred in attempts to elucidate Renoir's own political sentiments during this period. By considering Renoir's private perspective on contemporary France, this article does not aim to dismiss any of these conflicting interpretations, but to further enrich our understanding of the range of ideological stances embedded within Renoir's *mise en scène* by situating *Lange* within a broader textual context.

Deleuze on Renoir: framing the rhizomatic space of the *cristal fêlé*

Given the attention lent to Renoir's affiliation with the Front populaire, it is no surprise that his political sympathies even inform Gilles Deleuze's analysis of Renoir's *mise en scène* of temporality in *Cinéma 2: l'image-temps*. Deleuze conceptualises crystals of time that are constituted by 'l'opération la plus fondamentale du temps'²³ (Deleuze 1985, 108). For Deleuze, time is split into two dissymmetrical jets, one of which is oriented towards the future, the other of which falls ceaselessly into the past. According to Deleuze, a perfect crystal of time eternally juxtaposes the actual image (the present image) with the virtual (a potentially coexisting image located in the past). This irreducible circuit produces a vision of the world as a concatenation of interpenetrating reflections: Deleuze remarks that Renoir's *La Règle du jeu* frames correspondences between servant and their masters, living beings and automata, theatricality and reality, which collectively juxtapose the actual and the virtual (105–111, 113–114).

Deleuze remarks the visible inextricability of the actual and the virtual also has the effect of conditioning the spectator's vision of the passage of time, specifically the tension between the embodied past and the ongoing present, and their joint influence on the openness of the future: by virtue of the crystal's ability to depict the scission of time, the present is portrayed as an ongoing construction, but one that is invariably dictated by the past, and a perfectly crafted crystal precludes the emergence of a new future within the world viewed (105–111, 113–117). Deleuze likens Renoir's entire oeuvre to a single metaphorical crystal, but observes that Renoir's crystal 'n'est jamais pur et parfait, il y a une faille, un point de fuite, un "crapaud"' (113).²⁴ Because the crystal is 'toujours fêlé'²⁵ (113), time can escape and, in doing so, 'gives itself a future' (117). Thus, on the one hand, Deleuze describes Renoir's crystal as a theatre of 'rôles gelés, figés, tout faits, trop conformes'²⁶ (116), referring to *La Colinière* (a rural château that houses the *haute bourgeoisie*'s murderous antics on the eve of war in *La Règle du jeu*) and *Wintersborn* (where the European aristocracy's antiquated officers serve the remainder of their military careers during World War I in *La Grande Illusion*), each of which imposes roles that are 'déjà voués au souvenir'²⁷ (117). On the other hand, he asserts that one role among these may allow a character to enter 'une réalité décafé'²⁸ (114). Central to Renoir's ability to frame this fissuring of time is deep staging – a hallmark of Renoir's visual style – which 'rend évident que le cristal est là pour que quelque chose en fuie, dans le fond, par le fond'²⁹ (113–114). Asserting that Renoir is the director who came closest to understanding time 'en fonction d'une dimension d'avenir'³⁰ (117), Deleuze proceeds to relate temporal texture of Renoir's *mise en scène* to the director's own engagement with the Front populaire during the 1930s:

C'est Renoir qui avait une vive conscience de l'identité de la liberté avec un avenir, collectif ou individuel, avec un élan vers l'avenir, une ouverture d'avenir. C'est même la conscience politique de Renoir, la manière dont il conçoit la Révolution française ou le Front Populaire.³¹ (Deleuze 1985, 117)

Deleuze's flawed methodological approach, particularly his neglect of key works by Renoir and his reductive view of the director's varied arsenal of techniques, has been rightly criticised by Colin Davis (2010, 76–78), O'Shaughnessy (2013, 23–24) and my own Deleuzian analysis of Renoir's *La Chienne* (2016, 58–60). To this list, one could add Deleuze's unquestioning simplification of Renoir's involvement with the Front populaire and the impact of this *engagement politique* on the films directed by Renoir throughout the

remainder of his career. However, Deleuze's comments valuably suggest a direct link between Renoir's personal political outlook and his ability to inscribe tensions between the embodied past and the range of futures projected by his characters. Furthermore, Deleuze's indirect discussion of the relationship between Renoir's political affiliation and shooting style is surprising within the context of a philosophical study that generally depoliticises Renoir's *mise en scène*.

Because questions regarding Renoir's confidence in the Front populaire necessarily concern the tension between his country's past and the range of potential futures that it faced, Deleuze's film philosophy undoubtedly provides a valuable framework of analysis. However, any attempt to discern the relationship between the spatial politics of *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* and Renoir's anxiety regarding the looming threat of fascism must look beyond the crack in the metaphorical crystal. In particular, it is important to remark that trajectory of characters pursuing new circumstances beyond the *point de fuite* is not guaranteed to conform to their projected future. Rather, the propulsive force of the characters' determination to implement a new project is subject to spatio-temporal forces beyond their control. It is well worth distinguishing further between the *point de fuite* conceptualised by Deleuze within *Cinéma 2*, and the *ligne de fuite* ('line of flight') which he discusses in collaboration with Félix Guattari in *Mille Plateaux* (Deleuze and Guattari 1980). Deleuze and Guattari open their work by distinguishing between molar tree-like structures that striate space and molecular rhizomes that subvert them, creating a smooth space within which new projects may be implemented. This contrast is particularly pertinent in the case of *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*, in which a subjugated community endeavours to consolidate a collective project that offers it a *ligne de fuite* from oppressive circumstances. Building on this distinction, Deleuze and Guattari assert that although '[o]n fait une rupture, on trace une *ligne de fuite*'³² the fact remains that '[l]es groupes et les individus contiennent des micro-fascismes qui ne demandent qu'à *crystalliser*'³³ and therefore, 'on risque toujours de retrouver sur elle des organisations qui restructifient l'ensemble'³⁴ (16, my italics). Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis on the forces existing beyond any *point de fuite* not only allow us to relate Deleuze's conceptualisation of Renoir's cracked crystal to spatial on-screen spatial tensions, but also signals the potential futility of implementing a new future by those who exploit a 'ligne de chance, ligne de hanche, ligne de fuite'³⁵ (36).

Yet the way in which Renoir frames crystallisation demands further elaboration. The importance of temporality and political projects to the production of space is specifically addressed in detail by Doreen Massey. Conceptualising space as both a social and a physical construct, Massey determines that the restructuring of cartographies of power (what Deleuze and Guattari call molar lines) can only be achieved through 'the construction of (temporary, provisional) stabilisations' (Massey 2005, 95) that inevitably vie against one another within a 'sphere of dynamic simultaneity' (107). Crucially, the multiplicities hosted by space are themselves 'a precondition for the temporal' and 'the multiplicities of the two together [space and time] can be a condition for the openness of the future' (89). Massey's emphasis on the relationship between social space and temporality indirectly implies that this ongoing process of crystallisation – a keystone of Renoir's *image-temps* within Deleuze's analysis – may be registered by the director's framing of hierarchised society. Given Renoir's own ambivalence regarding the rise of the Front populaire, this spatio-temporal tension should provide a crucial avenue of enquiry towards our analysis of *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*.

Les Éditions Batala: staging 'the necessity for the political' in depth

Unsurprisingly, Renoir himself regarded *Lange* as 'un essai de lien des fonds et du premier plan, par le même plan'³⁶ (Narboni, Bazin, and Gauteur 2005, 324). During the first third of the narrative, the deep space that provides a lynchpin of Deleuze's conceptualisation of Renoir's *mise en scène* conveys the workers' vacillating vitality as they work at Les Éditions Batala, and circulate within an adjoining courtyard in an urban area recognised by Reader as the Marais district of Paris (Reader 2000, 289). On the morning of work portrayed in the opening sequence, deep staging and lateral movement offer what Lyall Bush calls 'frequent excesses of information that are irrelevant except that they suggest a film world as semiotically rich and as seamlessly detailed and unpredictable as the world in which the audience lives' (1989, 58). As the workers arrive, Lange's eyes follow Édith's (Sylvia Bataille) legs as she quickly ascends the stairs to Batala's office. The camera cuts to a frontal view of Lange and, after we hear a voice call 'Lange!' off-screen, the camera pans to the left to reveal Valentine. As she playfully mocks Lange, we realise that she occupied this formerly off-screen space as Lange was ogling Édith's legs. As Valentine walks back to her deeply staged laundry area, Lange looks up towards off-screen space once more before an inspector intrudes on the left-hand side of the image and asks him where Batala may be found.

Throughout this sequence, Renoir's camera depicts the social relations as the 'sphere of dynamic simultaneity' theorised by Massey's treatise on space, 'constantly disconnected by new arrivals, constantly waiting to be determined (and always undetermined) by the construction of new relations' (Massey 2005, 107). The physical proximity and social interaction between each of these businesses establishes a precondition for the horizontal merger later effected through the consolidation of the cooperative: Valentine effects a significant degree of mobility in both the launderette and the workers' quarters of Les Éditions Batala, imbricating each enterprise in the other by supplying linen to Batala and his employees, and occasionally walking around Batala's publishing house. Although these sequences lend credence to Sesonksé's assertion that the characters share an 'essentially topographical relation' (1974, 8), he is incorrect to assume that the cooperative enterprise 'simply becomes one through the interpenetration of the areas around the court' (8–9). These early moments in the narrative portray the elements required for the creation of politics rather than the future potentially invoked by these politics. The camera's framing of the fleeting passages of workers in the buildings displays the very lack of a cohesive political agenda that could implement a new future.

The workers remain socially gridlocked within the exploitative workplace, where Batala refuses to allow his workers to exercise their own creative liberty. Furthermore, he has accumulated multiple debts that he does not intend to repay, placing not only his own future but that of his unwitting workers at risk. The photography of two spaces – Lange's room and Batala's office – demonstrates the social imprisonment imposed by Batala's regime within the world of the courtyard. Lange's room, although laden with items that fuel his imagination, insulates him and his ideas from mainstream society, and its only window looks out onto the opposite side of the courtyard. This social gridlock is also visible in Batala's office, located within Les Éditions Batala. When Batala presents Lange's ideas to Baigneur, a representative of one of the publishing house's many creditors, in an effort to prolong his own solvency, deep space registers the tensions between capitalist production and artistic creativity: in the foreground, Lange, Batala and the debt collector agree to write off Batala's soaring debts

through the publication of *Arizona Jim*. The unceasing pace of work in the background conveys the assimilation of the workers within the rapid pace of the capitalist workplace and its sheer drive to produce within the hierarchical structure of Batala's company. Clearly, neither Lange nor any other worker can strive to secure their own reputations as artists or a better quality of living within their stratified workplace.

The obscurity of any *point de fuite* from the gridlocked social space of Les Éditions Batala even remains when the camera frames an aperture leading from the courtyard to mainstream society: an archway breaches the apparent insulation provided by the wall, permitting the constant ebb and flow of people, values and ideas to and from the courtyard. After Batala finds a letter from a creditor and angrily expels Lange from the office, Lange recounts the incident to two fellow employees while the window behind them frames the archway in deep space. On another occasion, Valentine plays with a dog in front of the archway. The camera subsequently pans to the left, revealing that Valentine is being watched by Lange from an upstairs window of the publishing house. The camera pans further left until we are granted a clear view of the door to Batala's office, located in the background, thus contrasting the liberty of the courtyard and its connection with mainstream society with the stultifying capacity of Batala's workplace. Later, as Lange speaks to Valentine in the courtyard, they are both pitted against the archway whilst people walk through it, to and from the courtyard. On all of these occasions, the oppression of the workplace is contrasted with the potential opportunities existing beyond the courtyard. Because the employees of the *blanchisserie* and the publishing house lack any cohesive political agenda, they are incapable of creating a revolutionary social project, and no future can be guaranteed, let alone plotted.

Each of the above cases, be it in the courtyard, Lange's room or the publishing house, lends credence to Christopher Faulkner's assertion that 'there may be an argument for saying that Renoir's moving camera and shooting in depth have the effect of leaving the visual field continually open to the play of difference' (2000, 31). Crucially however, the camera's framing of the social and physical space of Les Éditions Batala underscores the absence of a collective project that could liberate any of the characters from the stultifying inadequacies of their professional lives. Whereas Massey emphasises 'the necessity for the political' (2005, 162) in any attempt to harness 'a space of loose ends and missing links' (12), only Batala's exploitative brand of capitalism striates the space within the publishing house. Yet the circulation of people between the courtyard and the city through the archway presents the courtyard as a socially open milieu that accommodates new configurations. However, to clarify their circumstances through Deleuze's own terminology, the lack of any rhizomatic 'ligne de hanche' that could carry characters through the spatio-temporal *point de fuite* merely renders such a prospect opaque.

Arizona Jim contre Cagoulard as doomed ligne de fuite

The framing of the courtyard and the archway repeatedly signals the cooperative's inability to comprehensively implement their socialist project. Moreover, Renoir's *mise en scène* demonstrates that the cooperative is leaving itself open to assault from external social forces. Before proceeding with this analysis, it is worth noting that scholars other than Deleuze have interpreted Renoir's *mise en scène* as a positive conception of socialist projects. O'Shaughnessy's Deleuzian analysis of the historical moment in *Lange* particularly lauds the removal of the billboard from Charles's room (the concierge's son, played by Maurice Baquet [O'Shaughnessy



Figure 1. Consolidating the cooperative (Warner Bros-Studiocanal).



Figure 2. The cooperative photographs Cagoulard for the pages of *Arizona Jim* (Warner Bros-Studiocanal).

2013, 25–28, 31–32]). The camera first frames the advertising panel placed over the window of Charles's room. After Lange begins to remove the panel, the camera cranes upwards diagonally, revealing groups of workers leaning out of the first-floor windows of Les Éditions Batala, who all watch Lange. Tracking left, the camera reveals another group of workers looking out of a window. The camera cranes downwards, as Meunier *films* prevents the concierge from interfering with Lange's efforts. More and more workers gather at the window. The camera switches to Charles's room, as we view the panel being removed by the workers, opening the physical space of the bedroom to the exterior courtyard. Discussing the political and temporal implications of this sequence, O'Shaughnessy writes that 'the frame itself is no longer immutable in either its physical or its symbolic dimensions but, becoming an object of dispute between the workers and their boss, it is opened up to collective intervention' (2013, 26).³⁷ Although O'Shaughnessy's formal analysis is entirely accurate, he overestimates the import of this local landmark towards a genuinely new future within the narrative's overall context, primarily because he fails to remark that the significance of this historical moment is limited to the space of the courtyard, and consequently neglects the forces ranged against the budding cooperative during Batala's absence.

Much like Deleuze's confidence in the apparent devotion motivating Renoir's public affiliation with the Front populaire, O'Shaughnessy's optimism regarding the creation of a genuinely new society is understandable. The archway, of little political import earlier in the narrative, acquires a completely new social significance following the apparent death of Batala and the arrival of Meunier *films*, the jovial son of one of Batala's creditors. Following the decision of the employees to consolidate a cooperative, Meunier *films* shakes hands with one of Batala's ex-employees at the window of the publishing house (Figure 1). The window behind them frames the archway located in the background, as well as the space enclosed by the courtyard walls. The camera does not merely frame the archway and an employee, as in many of the previous cases, but the establishment of a new relationship between a capitalist investor, a member of the cooperative and the off-screen space evoked by the archway. The manifest amenability of the smooth space beyond the window to the cooperative's venture renders the potential creation of a new future limp. In short, the camera frames the possibility of a *ligne de fuite*.

The 'élan vers l'avenir' articulated by this scene is challenged later within the narrative. Having consolidated the cooperative and discarded the embodied memories of Batala's regime, the workers are in a position to produce the *Arizona Jim* comics conceived by Lange in the privacy of his bedroom. Reflecting the ongoing circulation of ideas from the space beyond the courtyard to the interior space of the courtyard, within which the comic covers are shot, a cover announcing the upcoming battle between Arizona Jim and Cagoulard ('Prochainement: Arizona Jim contre Cagoulard'³⁸) appears on the screen. The corresponding cover image, which the members of the cooperative are later shooting, depicts Arizona Jim (portrayed by Lange himself) standing victoriously above the titular black-hooded villain (Figure 2). This as-of-yet unpublished cover image immediately signals the limits of the cooperative's impetus. 'Cagoule', the French word for hood from which 'Cagoulard' is derived, was the press name given to the Organisation secrète d'action révolutionnaire in recognition of the hoods its members allegedly wore during secret meetings (Parry 2003, 161). Led by decorated bourgeois Great War veteran Eugène Deloncle, la Cagoule emerged from l'Action française, a reactionary organisation that suffered severe losses during the riots of 6 February 1934. Catalysed by the rise of the Front populaire during 1935, the year in which *Lange* was

filmed, la Cagoule made an attempt on the life of French Prime Minister Blum the following year.³⁹ The presence of la Cagoule in the *Arizona Jim* comics is reminiscent of Renoir's own memories of his stay in Berlin during Hitler's election as chancellor (30 January 1933), where he was shocked that

ce vieux Berlin était une ville paisible avec de bons bourgeois qui fumaient leur pipe et qui discutaient des élections comme on aurait discuté d'élections normales [...] et voilà que le lendemain de l'élection, une autre partie de la population – à moins que ce ne soit la même – était déchainée.⁴⁰ (Gauteur 2005, 60)

The image of la Cagoule, exploited by the cooperative for its financial viability within the pages of *Arizona Jim*, is forebodingly indicative of the very real social threat posed by fascist movements beyond the insulated enthusiasm of the cooperative, and testifies to Dudley Andrew and Steven Ungar's vision of contemporary France as 'an internally riven nation' (2005, 339).

Crucially, at the peak of the cooperative's success, a wooden door is shut across the archway for the first time. In fact, none of the workers is even seen outside the courtyard following the consolidation of the cooperative with the notable exceptions of Charles, who exultantly delivers *Arizona Jim* to the kiosks, and Meunier *films*, before he announces his news of the *Arizona Jim* film. Despite the active collaboration of the cooperative, Renoir's framing of the closed archway obscures the likelihood of any change in mainstream society: the emphatic shallowness of the foreground enters into dialectic with the off-screen space beyond the archway, invoking a tension between the cooperative and the world that it exteriorises. O'Shaughnessy optimistically remarks on 'the positive transformation that the co-operative can bring about in a space from which conflict has been removed' (2015, 54). However, the appropriation of la Cagoule within the insulated setting alarmingly implies that the decidedly myopic cooperative risks immanent subjugation to an unduly trivialised social menace that potentially impedes the growth of the cooperative, constituting what Deleuze and Guattari term 'des micro-fascismes qui ne demandent qu'à cristalliser'⁴¹ (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 16).

The members of the cooperative superficially suspend the past, blinding themselves to potential threats to the space of the courtyard, and whitewashing their projection of a new future. They also transform their world within the courtyard into a new Arizona: during Lange's final conversation with Batala, the map of Arizona that was once pinned in Lange's room now features in Batala's former office. Much like the billboard removed from Charles's window, the movement of the poster to Batala's former office suggests that the workers have redefined their past through their present successes, effacing their original motivations and misinterpreting the requirements of the future. If the film holds the weight of the past and the potential creation of a genuinely new future in tension, it does so by pitting the determination of the cooperative against the public beyond the courtyard. Although *Arizona Jim* has amassed major income for the cooperative, the threat of domestic fascist movements operating at a local level threatens the existence of the cooperative's hopes and dreams long before the extrusion of Valentine and Lange.

Although Deleuze does not discuss *Lange*, he is right to emphasise the stultifying influence of the 'rôles morts ou de la mort'⁴² (Deleuze 1985, 116) available within Renoir's theatres: this scene portrays the courtyard as a theatrical space within which the new roles acquired ensure entrapment rather than the liberty that the community of workers aims to secure. As in *La Colinière*, the 'ligne de hanche' has ceased marching and has solidified in the form

of a centralised socio-economic structure that remains open to contest by 'des organisations qui restratifient l'ensemble' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 16). Such is the cooperative's effort to preserve the spatio-temporal 'closure and stasis' spurned by Massey (2005, 19) that their world constitutes a synthetic realm of the kind recognised by Deleuze in Luchino Visconti's later works (Deleuze 1985, 124–125).

It is worth outlining the four parallels evoked by Deleuze's analysis of Visconti's work. Firstly, the ritualised formal dances and family dinners of Visconti's aristocratic realms in films such as *Il Gattopardo/The Leopard* (1963) constitute a synthetic crystal that is 'hors de l'Histoire et de la Nature, hors de la création divine'⁴³ (Deleuze 1985, 124). Secondly, despite the sumptuous interior design of such environments, they are 'inséparables d'un processus de décomposition qui les mine du dedans'⁴⁴ (125). The aristocracy embodies 'un passé disparu'⁴⁵ (125) and the very settings that ensure their survival also become the sites of their demise. Thirdly, Visconti's worlds are only deceptively isolated from the force of history, such as the rise of the nouveaux riches and the Franco-Prussian War (*Ludwig*, 1972) which only hasten the decay that already permeates these realms. Fourthly, Deleuze detects the motif of a potential for salvation that invariably arrives too late within Visconti's work. Deleuze specifically notes that Visconti's crystal, unlike that of Renoir, contains no *point de fuite*, and that Visconti's characters cannot draw on times past to stall the decline of the present. Although devoid of the opulent settings that inform Deleuze's analysis of Visconti's settings, all four of these aspects clearly intersect with the scenes depicting the cooperative's success in *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*: despite the apparent promise embodied by the cooperative's collective venture, its prospects remain subject to the incoherence of its own members (note the problematic inclusion of the reluctant concierge) and the force of history from the outset. Indeed, much like the *haute bourgeoisie* of *La Règle du jeu*, their inability to either subjugate the inherent imbrication of space in time or to synchronise with the broader spatial politics of Paris dooms them to extinction.

The view across the courtyard: suspending the past, obscuring the future

The futility of implementing a new future on a limited, geographically circumscribed local level is underscored by the eventual return of Batala, who withdraws a gun from his former desk, only further emphasising the superficiality of the cooperative's attempted expunction of the past. The ensuing murder sequence simultaneously marks the definitive fracture not only between Lange and the cooperative but also between Lange and the Parisian public. The staging of the murder sequence begins with an exterior shot of Lange holding Batala's pistol in the latter's former office and culminates in a 270° pan that sweeps laterally across the circumference of the courtyard. Two particular interpretations of the pan are significant within the context of this study.⁴⁶ A sceptical Colin Davis remarks on 'the striking absence of 'the community that is supposedly encompassed by [the pan]'. Central to Davis's interrogation is 'the contrast between the *visual* absence of the community and its *audible* presence' (Davis 2009, 67)⁴⁷ which, for Davis, suggests 'Lange's solitude, his position outside the community, and the foundation of the murder in desire and rivalry rather than political commitment' (67). O'Shaughnessy specifically argues that Davis 'is wrong [...] in suggesting that there is an implicit separation of Lange from the rest of the co-operative' (O'Shaughnessy 2011, 37). Interpreting Lange's escape from the 'totalizing circling gaze' of the camera as a 'step into the uncharted space of the authentic political act' (32), O'Shaughnessy purports

that ‘the sound [of laughter] surely serves to remind us of exactly in the interests of whom or what Lange is acting’ (37). Although Davis’s argument is more convincing than that of O’Shaughnessy within the context of this article, neither sufficiently addresses the breadth of physical space incorporated by the bravura camera movement, and each fails to interpret the pan in relation to the *mise en scène* of the courtyard in earlier narrative sequences, or to the space that becomes the subject of the camera’s fleeting gaze.

Through the formally radical camera movement, space is foregrounded in its capacity as a ‘precondition for the temporal’ (cf. Massey 2005, 89), an aspect effaced by Deleuze’s depoliticisation of the pan, and by Bazin’s famous map of the camera’s movement, in which, like any map in Massey’s analysis, ‘space is completely and instantaneously interconnected’ and the ‘loose ends and ongoing stories’ are ignored (106–107). In particular, it is primarily pre-occupied not only with the absent cooperative but also with the very vacancy of the physical space between Lange and his co-workers and beyond the courtyard. The detachment of the camera acknowledges the possibility of hitherto invisible trajectories interfering with Lange’s solitary course of action within a manifestly open space, but neither the public nor the cooperative is present in Lange’s hour of need. Unlike the fluid shots that elsewhere track the fleeting entrances and exits of other characters within the world of the courtyard, the view beyond the archway is now uninhibited by passing bodies. Readers of the *Arizona Jim* comics, through their absence, are portrayed as avid consumers whose purchases ensure the financial growth of the cooperative, but who do not personally contribute to the expansion of the cooperative’s network in any notable way. In fact, the financial success reaped by the comics renders the cooperative even more oblivious to the threats potentially admitted by the impartial archway than during the photo shoot of the *Arizona Jim* comic covers, and their laughter during Lange’s off-screen approach to Batala articulates their blindness to both Lange’s plight and the limits of their own collaborative project. Whether or not we agree with O’Shaughnessy’s assertion that Lange is reminded of the cooperative as he commits murder, the fact remains that neither Lange’s comrades nor the Parisian public are present to assist Lange during the cooperative’s darkest hour. As Reader’s lucid consideration of the contradictions inherent to the cooperative’s socio-political identity suggests, the pan ‘operates less as the agent of [harmonious] closure than as a “holding together” that incorporates antagonism and splitting itself into rather than seeking to deny or transcend them’ (2000, 297).

If the pan is, as Bazin proposes, ‘l’expression spatiale pure de toute la mise en scène’⁴⁸ (Bazin 2005, 42), it is because the camera’s sweeping movement further dismantles the pre-existing perceptions of any reassuringly fixed spatial coordinates projected by the spectator and the cooperative, revealing a malleable space that is, as Massey writes of public spaces, ‘riven with antagonism, always contoured through the playing out of unequal social relations’ (2005, 153). Given the inherent political fissures within the alleged cooperative which are constantly evoked by the narrative, the pan hardly represents a sudden, radical shattering of the cooperative but the final statement on the inevitable dissolution of the cooperative.

By the end of the film, Lange and Valentine have been forced into voluntary exile, whilst the fate of the cooperative remains uncertain. The shot of the beach, notes Tom Conley, represents ‘an indistinct border between air and land or “molar” and “molecular” states of being’ (2007, 50). Although Conley is referring to this distinction as it appears in Deleuze’s differentiation between the liquid and solid masses that contrast with one another in the

classic French cinema,⁴⁹ it would be even more suitably read through Deleuze and Guattari's spatially informed interpretation of these terms: the cooperative's temporary success holds no currency as they venture towards an uncertain future, unsure of their ability to navigate the social structures of the as-yet-invisible world beyond the border. If, as Faulkner writes, '*Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* is not a mirror held up to life [...]; it is a mirror held up to a measure of desire circa 1936' (2000, 28), it is also, in hindsight, a starkly prescient commentary on the self-destructive blindness that provisionally ensured the survival of the Left's delusive hopes.

Conclusion: 'Nous dansons sur un volcan'

By reading *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* through *Ida* and Deleuze, and framing the spatial politics mapped by Renoir's *mise en scène* through Massey, we are in a position not only to integrate the import of buildings and characters into our interpretation of spatial politics in Renoir's work, but also to determine the impact of Renoir's engagement with the Front populaire on his framing of space-time. Renoir's community fails to appropriately engage with the various 'cartographies of power' (cf. Massey 2005, 85) that problematise any implementation of a *ligne de fuite* from the embodied past, inadvertently leaving their spaces open to restratification. Their necessarily myopic view of physical space and the social forces that striate it are constantly signalled by Renoir's signature style, notably deep space, lateral camera movement and calculated use of off-screen space, all of which were developed by Renoir during what arguably represents the most technologically innovative period of his aesthetic and political development.

Before closing this analysis, it is important to observe precisely how it interrogates O'Shaughnessy's relatively recent study of this period in Renoir's career, for his analysis is also concerned with the passage of time, specifically what O'Shaughnessy terms 'the *mise-en-scène* of history', and is informed by aspects of Deleuze's film philosophy which are central to this article. On the one hand, O'Shaughnessy is not wholly optimistic regarding the portrayal of social progress within Renoir's Front populaire output: drawing on Deleuze, O'Shaughnessy lucidly argues that Renoir's *mise en scène* of history, during his Front populaire period, involves a sense of 'uncertainty, driven by the co-presence of competing possibilities', and acknowledges that progress in *Lange* can only be achieved through problematic acts of violence (2013, 28–29). However, by failing to critically interrogate Renoir's own attitude towards the cooperative that features in this film, O'Shaughnessy generally overestimates the social agency of the characters who endeavour to supplant the molar economic and political lines that impede their social mobility. Although he insightfully acknowledges what Massey refers to as '[a] notion of becoming', his analysis remains closed to 'the articulation of forms of power within spatial configurations' which Massey (2005, 93) surmises as a unifying argument of her treatise on space, and which is repeatedly signalled by Renoir's *mise en scène*. Because the projects plotted by Renoir's communities are necessarily subject to social forces articulated beyond their own physically enclosed spaces, the range and potential impact of the futures envisaged by Renoir's communities is alarmingly limited. Clearly, the very 'closing down of possibilities' detected by O'Shaughnessy (2013, 30) in *La Bête Humaine* and the final scenes of *La Règle du jeu* should be read as a historical and social process in itself, whose spatial politics are *mises en scène* from the very beginning of Renoir's involvement with the French Left. Indeed, the phrase 'nous dansons sur un volcan',⁵⁰ an

anonymous word of caution that was voiced during the reign of Charles X and later inspired Renoir's portrayal of the *haute bourgeoisie* in *La Règle du jeu* (Narboni, Bazin, and Gauteur 2005, 298), could well be applied to the rich texture of *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*.

The numerous interpretations to which the film has been subjected over time, including the reflexively critical attitude elucidated by this article, arguably result from Renoir's own conception of history. Recollecting the 6 February 1934 crisis, a fatal riot organised by far-right leagues which catalysed the rise of the Front populaire, Renoir commented on his own perspective on the process of interpreting history. The parallels between his memories and the multiple perspectives unearthed in *Lange* are so salient that they are worth citing in full:

Le 6 février 1934, le jour où il y a eu ces bagarres place de la Concorde, je déjeunais dans un petit restaurant qui était peut-être à cinquante mètres de l'endroit où ça se passait. Et il se passait pas mal de choses. Eh bien, c'est en rentrant chez moi que j'ai rencontré un ami qui m'a appris ce qui avait eu lieu pendant mon déjeuner ! On croit toujours qu'un événement est immédiatement et universellement perçu. On croit même qu'il est immédiatement et universellement compris. Ce n'est pas vrai. L'événement reste souterrain ou isolé pendant très longtemps. Ce n'est que peu à peu qu'il émerge, ce n'est qu'après coup qu'il prend son sens.⁵¹ (Narboni, Bazin, and Gauteur 2005, 207)

Considering the input of le groupe Octobre towards *Lange*, Bowles astutely suggests that the film 'should not [...] be construed as a transparent expression of the coalition's political agenda or even of its director's personal beliefs' (2013, 406). Clearly, nothing about the film is transparent, least of all its stance regarding local socio-political reform. However, Deleuze, Guattari and Massey allow us to productively reframe the narrative's fluctuating spatial politics, and *Ida* permits our analysis to comfortably accommodate Renoir's radical pre-war anxiety. Most importantly, this framework allows us to consider the complete range of futures available to Renoir's community, and to better appreciate the diversity of the ideological stances embedded in his multifaceted narrative style.

Notes

1. 'Our great Jean, if he had a heart for the left, had no head for politics.' Note that Gauteur's *D'un Renoir à l'autre* (2005) is a revised and updated version of Gauteur's *Jean Renoir: la double méprise, 1925–1939* (1980).
2. 'The genius director of the Left.'
3. 'It was a moment when the French truly believed that they were going to love one another. We felt ourselves being carried along by a wave of generosity.'
4. 'Will it be necessary to reformulate the credits? *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* – a film by le groupe Octobre – technical assistant: Jean Renoir.'
5. 'Who, at that point, was flirting a great deal with the communists, received some comments: there was to be no question of taking liberties with Gorki.'
6. 'On behalf of the Parti communiste, the great director whose outstanding talent has produced works that will last'
7. 'The great friend of the people who gave us the beautiful film, *La Vie est à nous*.'
8. 'The film of the Front populaire.'
9. For further information on the making of *La Marseillaise*, see Ory (1975).
10. 'Saint Renoir does not exist, nor has he ever existed. [...] Jean Renoir was a man, with all of the strengths and weaknesses engendered by the human condition.'
11. 'Renoir was a man of many political colours.'
12. 'On the political chessboard, he was rather on the right. [...] He was social without being socialist. [...] I strongly encouraged him to accept [the communists' proposition], explaining to him that there he had the opportunity to finally find a real public.'

13. 'Forgot that Marxism and Nazism were not synonyms.'
14. 'A complete traitor.'
15. 'By filming abroad, we betray France and the cinema at the same time.'
16. 'Subsequently chose to be quiet, preferring to situate his decision to film [*La Tosca*] after the war with Germany had been declared.'
17. 'In a few years, his authority was no longer discussed and one could say that his was a sort of Mussolini or Hitler of the forest.'
18. 'The most dreadful burstone house imaginable.'
19. 'Simple and harmonious mentality.'
20. 'This butcher's is distracting me a good deal but we must speak about it. These are the horrors that have dishonoured the *banlieues* of Paris as well as the surrounding areas of every big city.'
21. 'Germany creates HITLER, Italy creates MUSSOLINI. In France, the same category of arrogant petits bourgeois creates burstone houses and they are almost as dangerous.' Capitals are Renoir's own. (19).
22. 'This tiny agglomerate of two hundred people will be the centre of the story that I am going to try to transcribe. Naturally I am changing the name of the country and the people. Someone could recognise him/herself and get angry. But my replacement names are not false – they are borrowed from real people and places which could very easily have been the actors and formed the frame of a similar drama.'
23. 'The most fundamental operation of time.'
24. 'Is never pure and perfect. There is a fault, a point of flight, a "flaw".'
25. 'Always cracked.'
26. 'Frozen, fixed, ready-made, too conformative roles.'
27. 'Already doomed to become memories.'
28. 'Decanted reality.'
29. 'Makes it clear that the crystal is there so that something can escape from it, in the background, through the background.'
30. 'In terms of a dimension of the future.'
31. 'It is Renoir who had an acute awareness of the identity of liberty with a future, be it collective or individual, with an impulse towards the future, an opening of the future. It is Renoir's very political awareness, the manner in which he conceives the French Revolution or the Front populaire.'
32. 'One may make a rupture, draw a line of flight.'
33. 'Groups and individuals contain micro-fascisms simply waiting to crystallise.'
34. 'There is still a danger that one will re-encounter organisations that re-stratify everything.'
35. 'Line of chance, line of hips, *line of flight*'.
36. 'An essay of links between backgrounds and foregrounds within the same shot.'
37. O'Shaughnessy reiterates this argument elsewhere, observing a 'clear solidarity between the camera and the group' (2015, 52).
38. 'Coming soon: Arizona Jim vs Cagoulard.'
39. For further information on la Cagoule consult Blatt (2002) and Bourdrel (1992).
40. 'This old Berlin was a peaceful city with good bourgeois people who were smoking their pipes and discussing the elections as one would have discussed normal elections [...] and then on the morning after the election, another part of the population – unless it was the same part – rose up destructively.'
41. 'Micro-fascisms simply waiting to crystallise.'
42. 'Dead roles or roles of death.'
43. 'Outside History and nature, outside divine creation.'
44. 'Inseparable from a process of decomposition which eats away at them from within.'
45. 'A vanished past.'
46. For other interpretations of the pan see the following, which all restore a politics of collectivity to the camera movement: Sesonske (1980), Grottle Strebel (1981), Tift (1987), O'Shaughnessy (2000, 2011) and Ousselin (2006).
47. Italics are Davis's own.

48. 'The pure spatial expression of the entire *mise en scène*.'
49. See especially Deleuze (1983, 114–116).
50. 'We are dancing on a volcano.'
51. 'On 6 February 1934, the day that these riots unfolded in Place de la Concorde, I was eating lunch in a little restaurant that was perhaps about fifty metres from the area where it all happened. And quite a lot happened. Well, it was when I was going home that I met a friend who informed me about what had happened during my lunch! We always believe that an event is immediately and universally perceived. This isn't true. The event remains buried or isolated for a very long time. It only emerges little by little. It only acquires meaning after the fact.'

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Notes on contributor

Barry Nevin is Assistant Lecturer in French at the Dublin Institute of Technology and Visiting Research Assistant in Film Studies at Trinity College Dublin. Barry fulfilled a Visiting Researcher scholarship at the University of California, Los Angeles, in 2014, was awarded his PhD in French Studies by the National University of Ireland, Galway, in 2015. He previously lectured at NUI Galway and at l'Université de Bretagne-Sud, Lorient. His research interests centre on representations of gender, class and colonialism in French cinema of the 1920s and 1930s, and Gilles Deleuze's spatial thought. Barry's research has previously been published in journals including *Studies in French Cinema* and *Urban Cultural Studies*, and he is currently completing a monograph examining temporality in Renoir's films for Edinburgh University Press (forthcoming 2018).

Filmography

Les Bas-fonds, 1936, Jean Renoir, France.
La Bête Humaine, 1938, Jean Renoir, France.
La Chienne, 1931, Jean Renoir, France.
Le Crime de Monsieur Lange, 1936, Jean Renoir, France.
Il Gattopardo, 1963, Luchino Visconti, Italy.
La Grande Illusion, 1937, Jean Renoir, France.
Ludwig, 1972, Luchino Visconti, Italy.
La Marseillaise, 1937, Jean Renoir, France.
Partie de Campagne, 1936, Jean Renoir, France.
Le Quai des brumes, 1938, Marcel Carné, France.
La Règle du jeu, 1939, Jean Renoir, France.
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