A Certain Idea of France, an Uncertain Idea of Time: Cultural Difference in Early 1960s Paris

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The time has passed when time doesn't count.
— Paul Valéry, "La crise de l'esprit"

Paris, May 1968 is one of the most familiar moments in recent French history. Courtesy of documentary footage and historical narrative, the makeshift barricades and poetic graffiti of Parisian students has come to encapsulate the French upheavals of 1968. But consider the sectors this signal figure of middle-class Parisian youth has effectively erased: namely, the socialist worker and the ex-colonial militant at the center of the general strikes that occurred throughout Paris and the provinces. Whatever one's attitude toward Kristin Ross's *May '68 and its Afterlives*, her call to reassess the spatial and temporal framework of May 1968 has undeniably opened a path to question all that surrounds the traditional representation of the event. Reconsidering 1968 beyond its official temporal and spatial boundaries—that is, considering the event as something that greatly exceeded the month of May and Sorbonne's Latin Quarter—allows the early 1960s to no longer be mere shadowy lead-up but to be part of a series of events that stretch back at least to "the ending of the Algerian War in the early 1960s."[1] Therefore, this article investigates how Gilles Deleuze and Chris Marker contested the very foundations of the Gaullist regime's (1958-69) mythmaking within its first few years in power. The Gaullist myth of unification, resistance, and eternal grandeur is often considered hegemonic in its collectivization of memory in the early 1960s. Viewed through a temporal lens, however, early 1960s French culture becomes a far more nuanced place with regard to its treatment of a traumatic past that included the German occupation of metropolitan France, the

[1]Kristin Ross, *May '68 and its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 8.

collaborationist Vichy regime, persisting internal division and economic dislocation, and the loss of empire culminating in Algeria's 1962 independence.

The seminal work on the efficacy of collective memory in postwar France is Henry Rousso's *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*.[2] In his highly influential study of French (dis)remembrance of the Vichy period, Rousso describes how France repressed the trauma of its wartime occupation by collectively hiding away collaboration. The Vichy syndrome, Rousso argues, substituted a myth of resistance and unification for the collective mourning and reconciliation that ought to have followed Vichy collaboration. This Gaullist myth of unified resistance (resistancialism) became the dominant collective memory of the war. Like the Dreyfus Affair before it, Vichy France became the nation's central postwar symbol, and successfully laying claim to its traumatic four years held the key to political power. With de Gaulle's return to power in 1958, a stable identity—an 'eternal grandeur' of France—replaced and repressed the dark memories of the French war experience.[3]

According to Rousso, it took the events of May 1968 and de Gaulle's death in 1970 for a generation born during or after the war to present new visions of the past that challenged the nation's fragile

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[2]Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991). Prior to Rousso's groundbreaking work, histories of the Occupation and Vichy France had primarily come from outside of France. See, among others, Robert Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944* (New York: Knopf, 1972) and John F. Sweets *Choices in Vichy France: The French Under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). For de Gaulle's reaction to the crises of democracy that characterized the twentieth century, see Daniel J. Mahoney, *De Gaulle: Statesmanship, Grandeur, and Modern Democracy* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996). Lawrence D. Kritzman's "A Certain Idea of De Gaulle," in *Yale French Studies* 111 (2007), 157-168, reads in de Gaulle's memoirs a theological faith in certainty—"the platonic ideal of eternal France"—that was instrumental in mobilizing France's collective imagination.

[3]Rousso divides the Vichy syndrome into four chronological stages: a period of postwar mourning (1944-54), the repression years brought on by the Algerian War and Gaullist rule (1954-71), a pivotal period of contestation (1971-74), and finally, France's continued obsession with Vichy (1974-87). And the obsession continues: as recently as 2010 public controversy arose over whether de Gaulle's third war memoir, *Salvation*, should be assigned along with Samuel Beckett and Pascal Quignard as part of the literary baccalaureate. Needless to say, seventy years later, interpretations of Vichy still strongly divide.

realm of representation. Highlighting Marcel Ophüls's documentary of Vichy, *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1971), Rousso writes, "These new images of the past, the work of a handful of writers and filmmakers, marked a fundamental break with what had gone on before." André Harris, cowriter of *The Sorrow and the Pity*, declared, "At the time we were all irritated by the *linearity* and total *unreality* of historical programs and films, by the notion that History is something to be nailed to the wall for the people to look at."[4] Prior to these challenges of the early 1970s, Rousso contends, the Gaullist myth had solidified into the dominant version of France's recent past.[5] Reducing the role of Vichy, elevating Gaullist resistance, and declaring this resistance the unified action of a grand nation, the Gaullists effectively forged a past that by 1960 had temporarily closed the book on collaboration and complicity.[6]

After an introductory investigation into the dominant resistancialism myth embedded within the three-volume war memoirs of Charles de Gaulle, this article then turns to two textual exemplars of an early 1960s Parisian culture that thought quite differently. Nearly ten years before Rousso's pivotal period of contestation, Gilles Deleuze's philosophical writings on Bergson, Nietzsche, and Proust and Chris Marker's photo-novel *La Jetée* (1962) created discourses and depictions of time that challenged the core of the Gaullist's rendering of the past in the present.

If de Gaulle provided postwar France with a harmonious discourse of a homogeneous nation-space outside of time, then Deleuzean philosophy and Left Bank cinematography presented a cultural poetics of another side of Paris that thought differently. As monolithic as Gaullist formulations often appeared, there were in fact already alternative pedagogies and subversive temporalities at work in the early 1960s. Frequently overshadowed by the social upheavals of 1968, early 1960s Parisian culture contained a significant epistemic upheaval regarding the nature of time. Therefore, I argue that a group of intellectuals born in the early 1920s did not wait until the early 1970s to begin challenging the core of Gaullist memory and

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[4] Rousso, 99; cited in Rousso, 109. Emphasis mine.

[5] With de Gaulle's return to power, and the corresponding publication of his three-volume *War Memoirs*, the Gaullist myth overwhelmed rival interpretations, including a wartime past chiefly characterized by communist-led resistance and the personality cult that surrounded the hero of Verdun and Prime Minister of the Vichy government, Marshal Pétain.

[6] Rousso writes, "As early as the mid-1950s many French people clearly wished to lay controversy about the past to rest, and the invented honor of the Gaullist seems perfectly tailored to fit the bill" (97).

mythmaking. Deleuze and Marker demonstrate that despite state censorship and Gaullist repression, early 1960s French culture was a disorderly arena of contestation. Even at its political zenith, the Gaullist myth was contested by new untimely discourses and depictions of time and memory. The alternative pedagogies of Deleuze and Marker effectively deconstructed de Gaulle's timeless conception of the French nation-space.

Following the no longer nascent and now well-established methodologies put forth by the new cultural historians, this article pays special attention to three 'textual' explorations of time and space formulated in Paris from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s. The history of the cultural turn is by now certainly well worn ground, and it is widely known that throughout the 1980s and 90s new interdisciplinary possibilities and the fertile world of aesthetic expression positively enriched the study of the past.[7] Making use of currents in cultural anthropology, literary theory, and philosophy, new cultural history continues to turn to knowledges and beliefs—such as the investigation of a period's temporal *episteme*—often elided by traditional historicism.

By paying special attention to texts, new cultural history is thus able to take each 'textual' discourse on its own terms and in its own unique modes of inquiry and assertion. If, as Dominick LaCapra writes, cultural and intellectual history is the "history of texts," then it is also an investigation into the relays between texts and the historical contexts in which they were created.[8] Lively interactions between political

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[7] *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989); *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, eds. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999); Stephen Greenblatt, "Toward a Poetics of Culture," in *The New Historicism* (London: Routledge, 1989); Robert Darnton *The Great Cat Massacre: And Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984); Clifford Geertz *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Dominick LaCapra *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Context, Language* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990).

[8]Dominick LaCapra, "Rethinking Intellectual History and Reading Texts," in *History and Theory* 19.3 (Oct., 1980), 245-276. LaCapra directs our attention to the multiple layers in which a text is created and operates. Given the numerous interpretative planes of text and context, a 'full' history is, as LaCapra and others point out, in fact impossible. The fact of which illuminates new cultural history's resistance toward epistemological closure and its rejection of positivist Authority. LaCapra writes in "Rethinking," "A purely documentary conception of historiography is itself an ideal type or

institutions, cultural production, and everyday prosaics demand that a text is understood as always already within a rhizomatic network of textual and contextual relays; relays characterized not by dialectical or derivative relations but by profoundly dialogical ones. The "poetics of culture" is neither unidirectional nor complete, for culture is always a messy arena of contestation, circulation, and creation.[9] Recognizing this relation between text and context, this article reads the history of early 1960s Paris through three of its stories: stories that were each, to quote Deleuze, postwar "shudders in quite different terrains."[10]

> But, furious, I replied: 'No! No! No!' And, to add emphasis to my refusal, I struck the ground so violently with my foot that my leg sank knee-deep into the fresh soil, and like a wolf caught in a trap, I remained attached, forever perhaps, to the grave of the ideal.
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> — Charles Baudelaire,
> "Which Is the Real One?"

Completed in 1959, Charles de Gaulle's three-volume *War Memoirs* created an official account of the French wartime experience from 1940-1946.[11] By reformulating national memory of those tragic and yet

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heuristic fiction" (273). It might be said that Marker's subjective documentaries and their rejection of authoritative description are a visual embodiment of precisely the difficult authorial position LaCapra articulates.

[9] The well-known phrase was first coined by the Soviet cultural theorist Yuri Lotman, but is nevertheless more often attributed to New Historicist Stephen Greenblatt. In "Toward a Poetics of Culture," Greenblatt cites his borrowing of the phrase "the poetics of everyday behavior" from Yuri Lotman, Boris Andrevich Uspenskii, and Ann Shukman, *The Semiotics of Russian Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1984); Greenblatt, "Toward a Poetics of Culture," 13. For more on the prosaic world of everyday reception in which circulation, translation, and contestation occur in a field defined neither solely by manipulation nor resistance, see Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994) and *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995).

[10] "There is no work (*oeuvre*) which does not have its beginning and end in other arts," Deleuze writes in "The Brain is a Screen," *Discourse* 20.3 (Fall 1998): 49.

[11] Charles de Gaulle, *War Memoirs: The Call to Honor, 1940-1942* trans. Jonathan Griffin (1954; reprint, New York: Viking Press, 1955); Charles de

ultimately triumphant years, de Gaulle brought to early 1960s France a "certain idea" of both what it meant to be French and the nature of space and time. Courtesy of these memoirs, France was eternally characterized by grandeur and the recent national past was chiefly remembered for its unified acts of resistance. The French general also rendered the nation-space of France as essentially a homogeneous being that repeatedly triumphed over the external and ephemeral discontinuities brought on by the passage of time. De Gaulle hoped that by deploying this 'grand' reading of France's wartime past he might bring concordance to the nation's tumultuous late-1950s present. And according to Rousso, this official Gaullist memory did, in fact, reign supreme throughout the early 1960s as the nation collectively repressed individual memories that might speak differently.

In 1955, three years before returning to power, de Gaulle (in)famously opened his voluminous war memoirs with a declaration of his faith in the eternal grandeur of France. "All my life I have thought of France in a certain way," began the future president of the Fifth Republic. "To my mind, France cannot be France without greatness," he continued. Despite a disastrous German invasion and occupation, an inept postwar Fourth Republic, and the renewal of internal divisions brought about by the ongoing conflict in Algeria, de Gaulle maintained a particular *idée fixe* of what France truly was. Such was de Gaulle's timeless faith in France's "exalted and exceptional destiny." French grandeur, he writes, is as dependable as the instinctive imagination and as permanent as the eternal mother painted deep into a moist lime plaster: "The emotional side of me tends to imagine France, like the princess in the fairy stories or the Madonna in the frescoes, as dedicated to an exalted and exceptional destiny."[12] If ever France did not fulfill this exalted capacity, when she appeared mediocre, disjointed, or fallen, it certainly was not the fault of the "genius of the land" but rather the complacency of its citizens. Deep within French soil, de Gaulle opined, resided an immutable idea of France ready to reemerge out of the abyss. This affirmation of an eternally grand space was at the heart of Gaullist mythmaking and politics.

Throughout his memoirs de Gaulle maintained a religious reverence for the space of France—its soil and its cities—that could

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Gaulle, *War Memoirs: Unity, 1942-1944* trans. Richard Howard (1956; reprint, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959); Charles de Gaulle, *War Memoirs: Salvation, 1944-1946* trans. Richard Howard (1959; reprint, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959).

[12] De Gaulle, *Honor*, 3.

repeatedly transcended the uncertain alterations of time. Generally speaking, space and time were conceived of differently in the first half of the twentieth century. Whereas de Gaulle's certain idea of France was outside of time and thus unaffected by its passage, space was more typically understood as decidedly within time's passing phases. Principally based on Hegel's philosophy of history, this timely notion of space understood a nation to progress across epochal phases of varying degrees of reason and freedom. Therefore, as an indication of its epochal progress, a space's external appearance was deeply important. What did this say about a French nation that considered itself the "seat of civilization"[13] but whose external appearance was seriously hampered in a discordant postwar present in which "terrible elements of chaos seethed in the crucible of public affairs"?[14] For this reason, de Gaulle's *War Memoirs* replaced timely notions of linear evolution with a nation-space unobstructed by time.[15] The traumas of the recent past—invasion, occupation, and the loss of empire—undoubtedly made France appear fractured and fallen, but on the inside, hidden behind the closed shutters of Paris, lived an eternal grandeur that no Vichy official or Nazi officer could unearth. It was proof enough, de Gaulle insisted, that Paris had again "become the loadstone" as it triumphantly emerged out of the abysmal four years in which it

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[13] According to de Gaulle, France and England had been the seats of civilization for nearly two thousand years. The Gaullist belief in an eternal idea of France even transcended the often-made distinction between the Ancien Régime and post-Revolutionary France. Cf., de Gaulle's 25 November 1941 lecture, "The Triumph of Spirit Over Matter" at the Oxford French Club: "This civilization, born in Western Europe, has weathered many storms. It has been seriously threatened by barbaric invasions, partitions brought about by the feudal system, discord inside Christendom, the upheaval of the French Revolution, the rise of the nationalist spirit, social strife, and the advent of great industrial undertakings. But, so far, it has always managed to retain sufficient internal vitality, sufficient power of attraction, to enable it finally to carry the day" (Charles de Gaulle, *The Speeches of General De Gaulle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), 107). Daniel Mahoney also writes, "De Gaulle seems to treat the Reformation, the French Revolution, the modern capitalist and industrial revolutions, and the rise of a new democracy in America as mere secondary events or even epiphenomena of a largely continuous civilizations that is dedicated to the same lofty and humanizing ideal of civilized order" (Mahoney, *De Gaulle*, 102).

[14] De Gaulle, *Salvation*, 103.

[15] "Wishing to transcend what Hegel described as the concrete universality of death, de Gaulle transformed the image of the French nation into an entity that is eternal and that always already reveals itself" (Kritzman, 162).

was bemoaned as "the remorse of the free world."[16] As a political formulation, de Gaulle's epic historicism posited the nation as immutably great and infinitely renewable, and in so doing was an outright rejection of the linear trajectories that characterized the prewar period.

Importantly, de Gaulle's memoirs spoke not just of his own resolute stance in the face of uncertainty but of a resolve every French citizen might read back into their own past. Both citizen and nation could scour their past and recall the day in which they too declared: "If I live, I will fight, wherever I must, as long as I must, until the enemy is defeated and the national stain washed clean. All I have managed to do since was resolved upon that day."[17] Recalling the second anniversary of his famous Appeal of 18 June 1940, de Gaulle remembers hearing "every mouth in that enthusiastic crowd crying out faith to me." De Gaulle adds to his recollection the transmission of these cries and cheers to "those who, at home, behind closed doors, shutters and curtains, were listening in to the wave lengths that would bring it to them."[18] Whether enthusiastically cheering in the street of London or silently resisting behind the closed doors of occupied Paris, all of 'authentic' France was, in fact, unified and resisting.[19] However dispersed and pacified France might appear, one only had to look deep enough within the smallest of actions, and there you would unarguably find the grandeur of France.

One not-so-subtle way by which *War Memoirs* transmitted de Gaulle's particular rendering of the past to the populace-at-large was through shifting narrative point of view. De Gaulle's voice oscillates so frequently between the "I" common to autobiographies and the academic outside of "he, Charles de Gaulle" that his subjective first

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[16] De Gaulle, *Unity*, 324.
[17] De Gaulle, *Honor*, 39.
[18] De Gaulle, *Honor*, 300-01.
[19] So while the French general recalled, "drawing the conclusion that, in spite of everything, Fighting France was rising from the ocean," in the same volume he also maintained that Vichy France would go "from fall to fall till it reached total degradation." (De Gaulle, *Honor*, 301, 96). Marshal Pétain's Vichy government and the Nazis may occupy the land of France, but neither embodied de Gaulle's certain idea of France. Rather, de Gaulle writes, Vichy was an "abject regime of collaboration," a pretender that had "improperly violated" and "illegally occupied" the interior space of France (Kritzman, 164). With the postwar partisan divisions over France's imperial wars in Indochina (1946-1954) and Algeria (1954-1962), the wartime debate over who and where was the authentic version of France forcefully returned.

person point of view slowly begins to read as an objective third person account of the past. An example of these shifts from each of the three volumes ought to suffice:

> So it was that, on January 15, I signed with Mr. Eden a "jurisdiction" agreement concerning the Free French…thus while their rallying to de Gaulle bound all our elements together morally;
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> No one doubted that if de Gaulle reached the capital…some sought to exploit the liberation in order to produce a situation by which I would be hampered and, if possible, paralyzed;
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> Unless de Gaulle assumed the initiative…this was the immediate task on which I set to work.[20]

It is deeply troubling just how natural these narratorial shifts begin to feel.[21] As they take on a comfortable familiarity, it is not long before de Gaulle has effectively positioned his voice as that of the general will. De Gaulle's detailed description, rhetorical maneuvering, and naturalized narration constructed a political discourse that told a reassuring story of how France had heroically never left the war. Consequently, de Gaulle secured what Rousso describes as the fundamental Gaullist axiom: "the Resistance equals de Gaulle, de Gaulle equals France; hence the Resistance equals France."[22] De Gaulle's *War Memoirs* tell the story of how the recollections of a hero turned into the memories of a nation.

More than any other individual, de Gaulle propagated the myth of unification and resistance, and arguably more than any other text, his *War Memoirs* fulfilled the constant narration required for this resistancialism to become a nation's collective memory. Clearly articulating his particular remembrance of things past across three volumes, de Gaulle's *War Memoirs* played a principal role in providing France with a ready-made, resistance-based vision of the war. His was a story about the past that brazenly elevated particular memories while

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[20] [*Sic*]. De Gaulle, *Honor*, 148-49; De Gaulle, *Unity*, 324; De Gaulle, *Salvation*, 108.

[21] What's more, there's something disturbing about their effective simplicity. Precisely composed—rarely a point in view shift in contiguous sentences—these shifts, repeated ad nauseam, force a reader to at least begin to reconsider how they have perceived the intellect of de Gaulle. And as far as I can ascertain, unlike the majority of memoirs readers are inundated with today, all the research points to de Gaulle as the text's sole author. It appears there is no ghostwriter behind these past-shaping pages.

[22] Rousso, 90.

simultaneously subverting others.[23] French grandeur could not merely be posited once—for a politics of the past requires constant narration in order to pedagogically plug memory's gaps—and de Gaulle's *War Memoirs* repeatedly articulated an official version of the past appropriate to the country's eternal grandeur. In this way, the hero's past became the past of a people.

There is a historical sense that France entered the 1960s with its recent past effectively repressed and at least temporarily laid to rest. With de Gaulle in power and the economy rebounding, by 1959 even Vichy itself could be exorcised.[24] Further proof de Gaulle contended that despite the ups and downs of time, with the right policy and leadership the space of France would inevitably climb out of the abyss time and again. This was de Gaulle's steadfast belief in the eternal return of the same.[25] Finally, de Gaulle's certainty is reminiscent of another "certain" beginning by another Charles nearly one hundred years prior. "I once knew a certain Benedicta who filled earth and air with the ideal," Charles Baudelaire begins "Which Is the Real One?" In

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[23] For more on this other and less-discussed form of knowledge production: the creation of ignorance by state censorship and purposeful forgetting, see Robert Proctor and Londa L. Schiebinger, *Agnotology: The Making and Unmaking of Ignorance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008) and Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[24] On his first official trip to Vichy in June 1959, de Gaulle declared, "History is a continuous thread. We are one people, and whatever ups and downs we may have suffered, whatever events we may have seen, we are the great nation of France, the one and only French people. I say this in Vichy. I am bound to say this in Vichy. The past is finished. Long live Vichy! Long live France! Long live the Republic!" (Cited in Rousso, 73).

[25] De Gaulle writes in *Salvation*, "If the present still suffered from the aftereffects of disaster, the future was ours to build. To do so, we must have policy" (105). The tension then in this 'inevitable' return of the same is that in order to overcome France's disparities and differences, the nation needed political guidance, order, and unification in the present. The paradox here being that by using France's essentialism as a means of motivating Frenchmen and women, de Gaulle has at the same time fundamentally put into question the very nature of French immutability. In other words, if future greatness depends on the considerable and united efforts of the present, then there is, in fact, nothing inevitable or essential about France's *fait accompli* grandeur. Greatness is then merely contingent on the work of the present, and therefore assertions as to 'horizons of the future' are merely motivational (or indoctrinatory, depending on your stance) tools to secure particular praxes in the present. When one speaks of the future, what we really ought to be attune to is what they want us to do in the present.

Baudelaire's telling, however, time brings a hysteria that soon tramples upon this eternal embodiment of greatness. Despite assertions of regularity and permanence, Baudelaire teaches us that one "cannot prevent heterogeneous, conspicuous fragments from remaining within time."[26] While de Gaulle remained stuck knee-deep "forever to the grave of the ideal," others, as we will see, promoted a cultural laughter that traversed the illusory traps of ideality, certainty, and immortality.[27]

> The order of time has broken the circle of the same and arranged time in a series only in order to reform a circle of the Other at the end of the series.
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> — Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*

Along with Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and numerous other French philosophers who would come to reshape the *Académie*, Gilles Deleuze radically relocated thought within temporality. The crises of the twentieth century demanded that the search for meaning now be "a temporal apprenticeship," writes Deleuze.[28] With its roots in a time out of joint, this new image of thought brought bifurcations, deferrals, and difference to the univocality that permeated French institutions. Although far from definitive as an explanatory principle, this new thinking in time nevertheless deeply challenged the socio-political context of early 1960s France.[29] As a pedagogical alternative to

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[26] Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 184.

[27] Charles Baudelaire, *Paris Spleen*, trans. Louise Varèse (New York: New Directions, 1970), 81.

[28] Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (1964; reprint, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 3. "The search for lost time is in fact a search for truth. If called a search for lost time, it is only to the degree that truth has an essential relation to time" (15).

[29] While literature on Deleuze the philosopher seems insurmountably large, explications of his philosophy of time have only sparsely appeared since his untimely death in 1995. See, for instance, Jack Reynolds's impressive attempt to ascertain the ethico-political implications derived from particular understandings of time in *Chronopathologies: Time and Politics in Deleuze, Derrida, Analytic Philosophy, and Phenomenology* (New York: Lexington Books, 2012); Keith W. Faulkner's Freudian reading, *Deleuze and the Three Syntheses of Time* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006); and D.N. Rodowick's compelling investigation of Deleuze's cinema volumes, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) x. See also, *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures*, ed. Elizabeth Grosz

Gaullist atemporality, this epistemic shift toward time entailed developing a number of new strategies and returning to a number of previously neglected thinkers.

Throughout the period Rousso labels the "Gaullist repression years," Deleuze investigated the immanent complexities of time in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962), *Proust and Signs* (1964), and *Bergsonism* (1966). While unarguably diverse in thought, a temporal thread runs throughout each of Deleuze's initial philosophical subjects. Throughout this period, Deleuze most sustained attention was toward the fin-de-siècle French philosopher Henri Bergson's notions of time. In 1956, Deleuze published one of his earliest studies on Bergson; ten years later, on the eve of completing his seminal *Difference and Repetition* (1968), Deleuze published *Bergsonism*, a book-length study of Bergsonian intuition, *durée*, and memory.[30]

According to Deleuze, Bergsonian intuition was a precise methodology that presupposed a thing's *durée*, and therefore framed questions in terms of the continuous passage of time. With Bergson, thought is framed with enduring intervals, rather than beginnings and endings. Put simply, Bergson thought with time rather than space.[31]

(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) and David Martin-Jones, *Deleuze, Cinema, and National Identity: Narrative Time in National Contexts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006).

[30] Gilles Deleuze, "Bergson, 1859-1941," in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2004), 293n.1. Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (1966; reprint, New York: Zone Books, 1988). N.B., *durée* is typically translated duration. The problem, however, is that English duration—the time during which something occurs—tends to bring to mind a period of time bound by a beginning and an end. Because this misses the mark of what Bergson's *durée* actually stands for—far more of an indivisible and ceaseless swirling of time—I will use the French *durée* throughout. For more on this issue of translation, see Rodowick, *Time Machine*, 123. For an in-depth reading of Bergson's *Time and Free Will* and *Matter and Memory*, and how these texts were transmitted to thinkers such Deleuze and Derrida, see Suzanne Gueriac, *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006). For Henri Bergson himself see, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (New York: Humanities Press, 1971) and *Matter and Memory* (New York: Zone Books, 1988), among others.

[31] Deleuze, *Desert Islands*, 22. Similarly, Deleuze writes in *Proust and Signs*, "Time forms different series and contains more dimensions than space" (26-7). Compare with Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 31 and Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 74. See also Deleuze's later writings in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*: "The direct time-image always gives us access to that Proustian dimension

Bergsonian intuition was then primarily a call to think from the alternative perspective of time (*durée*). In Deleuze's reading, time was neither superficial (de Gaulle) nor spatialized (Hegel), for their timeless and timely frameworks only allowed for eternal homogeneity or the dualism of identity and alterity, respectively. To rediscover internal difference Deleuze searched not within fixed points or temporal phases but within the ceaseless and indivisible *durée*. This search within *durée* was the leitmotif of Bergson's oeuvre: "Bergson is aware that things are mixed together in reality; in fact, experience itself offers us nothing but composites."[32] By thinking in time fixed representation gave way to the internal differences that characterize lived experience. To explicate this being of composites, Deleuze referred to Bergson's often-cited sugar cube example:

> Take a lump of sugar: It has a spatial configuration. But if we approach it from that *angle*, all we will ever grasp are differences in degree [external difference] between that sugar and any other thing. But it also has a duration, a rhythm of duration, a way of being in time that is at least partially revealed in the process of its dissolving, and that shows how this sugar differs in kind not only from other things, but first and foremost from itself [internal difference].[33]

In this way, Bergsonian intuition was an alternative that allowed Deleuze to thinkwith 'and' rather than with the oppositional 'is' or 'is not'. Deleuze writes, "A difference of nature is never between two products or between two things but in one and the same thing between two tendencies that encounter one another in it."[34] Consequently, Deleuze's Bergsonism turned to the very internal difference[35] about which Gaullist society remained so staunchly silent. Understood in this way, Deleuze's return to Bergson was a radical challenge to de Gaulle's atemporal belief in the immutable and homogeneous space of France.[36]

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where people and things occupy a place in time which is incommensurable with the one they have in space" (39).

[32] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 22.

[33] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 31-32.

[34] Deleuze, *Desert Islands*, 26.

[35] (As in, it is possible that not everyone was as unified in resistance as the Gaullist myth would have us believe. As in, this thing we call France is, in fact, made up of a whole lot more divergent composites than we have been led to believe.)

[36] Immensely popular in the United States, Britain, and France during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Bergson's vitalist philosophy

If *durée* underpins the reshaping of the past in the present, then the past can never fully be captured by either identity or alterity. In the early 1960s, Deleuze taught à la Bergson that completed states, even Gaullist ones, were always haunted by the yet-to-come. Time's efficacy lay in its creative power to deconstruct and renew; time annihilates what was and alters what is, Deleuze writes in *Proust and Signs*. Recall that de Gaulle, however, understood France to be an eternally homogeneous nation-space capable of repeatedly transcending the discontinuities of time. Bergson's *durée* conversely affirmed a space's transient heterogeneity. "Duration is that which differs or that which changes nature, quality, heterogeneity, what differs from itself."[37] And with this we get to what is frequently regarded as Deleuze's central concept: To become something other, without being something else. In Deleuze's words, "There is other without there being several."[38] If things endure and if time has a tendency to displace, then the Gaullist notion of an autonomous space (and the resistancialism that it undoubtedly inspired) needed to be dramatically reassessed upon new temporal foundations.

To do so, Deleuze turned to the untimely and controversial thought of the late nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. In July 1964, two years after publishing *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze organized the Seventh International Philosophical Colloquium an hour's drive north of Paris at the Abbey of Royaument. The conference brought together a diverse range of European scholars, including Michel Foucault, Pierre Klossowski, Karl Löwith, and

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eventually came under attack from Bertrand Russell, Julien Benda, and the Catholic Church. The result of this three-pronged assault was that by the late 1920s Bergson was largely ignored both in and outside of France. And when the lectures of Alexandre Kojève swept Hegel's master-and-slave dialectic through Paris in the 1930s, Bergson was, for all practical purposes, forgotten. A significant attempt at a philosophical resurrection did not occur until Deleuze's 1966 *Bergsonism*. To understanding the place of these assaults within interwar French culture, see Dudley Andrew and Steven Ungar, *Popular Front Paris and the Poetics of Culture* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2005), 86-88.

[37] Deleuze, *Desert Islands*, 26. Compare with Deleuze's similar proclamation in *Bergsonism*: "Duration divides up and does so constantly: that is why it is a multiplicity" (42). Internal multiplicity is proper to duration itself. Therefore, considering its heterogeneous qualities of time in its pure state, *durée* was then the ideal mode of investigation through which to grasp the multiplicities of life and knowledge.

[38] Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 42. See also *Proust and Signs*, "Difference is what constitutes being, what makes us conceive being" (41).

Gabriel Marcel, in an effort to renew interest in Nietzsche's untimely transvaluations.[39] Demonstrative of its importance to the French philosopher, it was to be the first and last of such colloquia the fairly reclusive Deleuze would ever organize. As is customary, Deleuze concluded the colloquium with an attempt to summarize what had been learned.[40] It is telling that Deleuze dedicated nearly half of his closing remarks to how Nietzsche's notion of the eternal return might help early 1960s France affirm the openness and self-transformation characteristic of what Deleuze would come to call an "ever-deterritorialized singularity."[41] For Deleuze, the rare references of the eternal return sporadically spread across the German philosopher's *Gay Science*, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, and *The Will to Power* articulated the necessary conditions for the appearance of internal difference.

Already in his 1962 *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze explained how Nietzsche's notion of repetition ungrounded permanence through two principles, the cosmological-physical and the selective-ethical. Given finite physical matter's location within the infinitely long *durée* of the cosmological, it begs to reason, Deleuze suggested, that if matter were to ever reach a state of equilibrium or static identity it would have done so already. But since matter still changes both in degree and kind, it must be recognized, Deleuze argued, that a being never completely becomes. Individual, social, and national beings are not immutable, for they are always involved in a process of perpetual metamorphosis. The eternal return, Deleuze writes, "must not be interpreted as the return of something that is, that is 'one' or the 'same'… [that] it is the passing moment, forces us to think of becoming, but to think of it precisely as what could not have started,

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[39] The proceedings of which have been published in French as *Nietzsche, Cahiérs du Royaumont* (Paris: Les Édition du Minuit, 1964). Deleuze's book and conference were an important first step in bringing a renewed Nietzsche to France. A renewal both in terms of frozen understandings of the past and in the typically icy French reception of the German philosopher whose will to power—courtesy of misreadings and the editorial work of Nietzsche's anti-Semitic sister and literary executor Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche—had been closely tied to Nazi aggression.

[40] Gilles Deleuze, "Conclusions sur la volonté de puissance et l'éternel retour," in *Cahiérs de Royaumont* 6 (1964). Translated in *Desert Islands* as "Conclusions on the Will to Power and the Eternal Return," 117-127.

[41] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 133. "Subjectification assigns the lines of flight a positive sign, it carries deterritorialization to the absolute, intensity to the highest degree, redundancy to the reflexive form."

and cannot finish, becoming." Therefore, neither final, nor original, nor eternal States can account for the simultaneity ("diversity of co-existing cycles") and internal multiplicity ("existence of diversity within the cycle") that characterize life's *durée*.[42]

According to Deleuze, only an active will secures the return of difference. Thus, Nietzsche's new ethical imperative reads: "Whatever you will, will it in such a way that you also will its eternal return."[43] Contrary to common understanding, Deleuze found that the eternal return begets not sameness but difference. He writes, "We misinterpret the expression 'eternal return' if we understand it as 'return of the same.'"[44] Deleuze's original reading of the eternal return called for a becoming active that "overcame certain stock notions" of repetition the early 1960s had to offer.[45] "Repetition is the power of difference, no less than difference the power of repetition," Deleuze suggested in *Proust and Signs*.[46] Just as Nietzsche announced in *Zarathustra's* prologue, the eternal return demanded that one cross newly constructed bridges (*jetées*) without hesitation.[47] Conversely, attempts to conserve were the work of a reactive will, a conservative Gaullist will that strove for nothing more than a pacified future and the eternal return of the same. Thinking in time, however, brought into existence an alternative ethics of repetition based on life's contingencies and the test of the eternal return: what Deleuze called "the eternal joy of becoming."[48] Therefore, this newfound search within the untimely and its corresponding ethics of repetition was decidedly oriented toward the future.[49]

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[42] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (1962; reprint, New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 48.
[43] Deleuze, *Nietzsche*, 68.
[44] Deleuze, *Nietzsche*, 48.
[45] Deleuze, *Proust*, 27. Emphasis mine.
[46] Deleuze, *Proust*, 49.
[47] Compare with Nietzsche's prologue to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: "Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman—a rope over an abyss. A dangerous across, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous shuddering and stopping. What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end: what can be loved in man is that he is an overture and a going under. I love those who do not know how to live, except by going under, for they are those who cross over" (*The Portable Nietzsche* ed. Walter Kaufman (New York: Penguin, 1968), 126-127).
[48] Deleuze, *Nietzsche*, 70.
[49] Deleuze, *Proust*, 4.

> He said that in the nineteenth century mankind had come to terms with space, and that the great question of the twentieth was the coexistence of different concepts of time.
>
> —Chris Marker, *Sans Soleil*

Unlike de Gaulle, Left Bank filmmaker Chris Marker did not banish time from the immutable soil of France. In his 1962 film *La Jetée*, time was not an external impediment but was alternatively envisaged as an inescapable passageway that might be manipulated for salvific purposes. Making full use of cinema's ability to render time tangible, Marker's *La Jetée* effectively questioned France's ready-made assumptions about the nature of national space and the past's presence in the present. Containing only a brief encounter with the future, Marker's photo-novel was centrally concerned with how snapshots of the past constantly thwart fixity as they are repeatedly reinscribed in new contingent contexts.

Made up almost entirely of still images, the twenty-seven minute *La Jetée* is the fictional exception among Marker's approximately eighty film-essays.[50] Its stripped-down style of black-and-white photography and sparse off-screen narration—a style matched by the film's post-apocalyptic setting—makes *La Jetée* the epitome of minimalist cinematography. *La Jetée*, we are told, is the story of a survivor (played by Davos Hanich) who is "marked by an image from his childhood." We quickly come to learn that this prewar image, the face of a woman (Helene Chatelain) on the observation deck (*jetée*) of Paris's Orly Airport, is the only hope for a society driven underground. Through the retentions and protentions of this image, the man's captors (the lead of which is played by Jacques Ledoux) sought a temporal loophole that might eventually secure Paris's future. These are the most basic of *La Jetée's* linear emplotments; they tell us very little about the film however. As a filmmaker who puts "thought, history, and cinema in direct relation," Marker's intellectual cinematography speaks of much more than story and suspense.[51] Far more important than simple

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[50] Chris Marker, dir., *La Jetée*, starring Helene Chatelain, Davos Hanich, and Jacques Ledoux (Paris: Argos-Films, 1962), 35mm, black and white, 27 minutes. Unless otherwise cited, all subsequent quotes in this section are from Chris Marker, *La Jetée: ciné-roman* (New York: Zone Books, 1992).

[51] Janet Harbord, *Chris Marker La Jetée* (Cambridge, Mass.: Afterall Books, 2009), 97. Harbord's highly theoretical work provides the most extensive investigation into Marker's short photo-novel. Her discussion ranges from photography (Barthes and Benjamin) to memory (Derrida and Nietzsche) as

plot points are *La Jetée's* penetrating explorations into the nature of the past in the present. Consequently, *La Jetée* profoundly contested the Gaullist conceptions of time and space that permeated early 1960s Paris.

Marker's films of 1962, *La Jetée* and *Le Joli Mai* (*The Lovely Month of May*), each sought to question and dislodge France's sense of itself.[52] For Parisians, May 1962 was the first month of peace in over twenty years.[53] There was certainly reason to be optimistic: the prospects of peace, a stable Gaullist Fifth Republic, and rising prosperity thanks to economic restructuring and Marshall Plan aid. Yet for many, this lovely month of May held shadows of another May yet-to-come: the pervasive use of torture and terrorism in Algeria increasingly became public knowledge, state censorship continued unabated, and all the while somewhere between ten to fifty Algerians were retributively killed per day. If the French government had not disclosed dirty domestic secrets such as these, what else had it

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she seeks to cover the vast ground opened up by Marker's 1962 film. For a film that can be interpreted in a multitude of ways, Harbord's analysis demonstrates a deep investment into both Marker's work and art theory. See also Jacques Rancière, "Documentary Fiction: Marker and the Fiction of Memory," in *Film Fables*, trans. Emiliano Battista (New York: Berg, 2006), 157-170, and Sander Lee, "Platonic Themes in Chris Marker's *La Jetée*," in *Film and Knowledge: Essays on the Integration of Images and Ideas* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2002), 95-101. For broader studies of Marker's oeuvre, see Nora M. Alter, *Chris Marker* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006) and Catherine Lupton, *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005).

[52] *La Jetée* is widely considered to be a product of Marker's interactions and interviews with Parisians during the filming *of Le Joli Mai*. For a month, Marker was face-to-face with the outspoken memories of the people. Catherine Lupton describes *La Jetée* as, "turning the documentary adventure of *Le Joli Mai* inside out, distilling its subterranean fears and anxieties about the future into an elegiac masterpiece of speculative fiction" (78). The twenty-seven minute *La Jetée* was filmed during a day off from his work with Pierre L'homme on *Le Joli Mai*. Incidentally, with just a Pentax 24x36 camera and a Arriflex 35mm film camera (borrowed for one hour), Marker's photo-novel highlights the influence of Dziga Vertov's kino-glaz and the possibilities of 'no budget' filmmaking.

[53] From 1954 until the ceasefire of March 19, 1962, France fought with Algeria over that colony's desire to be independent of more than one hundred years of French colonial rule. Prior to that, the Indochinese's eight-year fight against French rule successfully culminated in the retreat of the French following the 1954 battle of Dien Bein Phu. Before these imperial wars, France was occupied for four years following the Nazi invasion of 1940.

contracted and erased in order to preserve a pacified future? Although it remained unspoken, the official narrative of Vichy loomed large. Since 1953, Marker had committed his cinematography to estranging ready-made contractions of history such as these.[54] Given this context, we begin to understand how Marker's question — How does a past moment become a present memory? — effectively challenged Parisian's passive acceptance of the Gaullist vision.

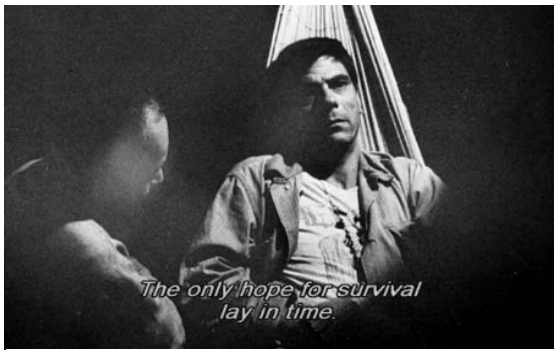


Figure 1. Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, 35mm bl 1

There is a way to 'read' *La Jetée* whereby time is that which saves. In this reading, temporality is the phenomenological category through which humankind is forced to find salvation. Inverting de Gaulle's formulation, Marker alternatively emphasized a space's subordination to time. With Paris utterly destroyed and the surface of the earth inhabited only by nuclear radiation, Marker's film moved well beyond the possibilities of place. For the human survivors of *La Jetée* living in underground bunkers like rats, "the only hope for survival lay in time." To save the human race, *La Jetée's* post-apocalyptic experimenters sought a solution within the recesses of time's past and future.[55] The German-speaking and OAS-resembling experimenters thus manipulated time, just like their human subjects, in order to lay bare its hidden dimensions that might deliver them from their dystopic present.[56] The

[54] Which unsurprisingly meant that the pervasive postwar censors frequently headed off Marker's films. Marker's first film with Alain Resnais, *Statues Also Die* (1953), was banned for its anti-imperial sentiments. A significant scene of their next project, *Night and Fog* (1955), was edited out due to its implicit acknowledgement of French collaboration in the deportation of Jews during the German occupation. Marker's film directly preceding *La Jetée*, a documentary on the Cuban Revolution, *Cuba, Si!* (1961), was banned, labeled as treasonous, and declared a menace to French society. Consequently, in order to avoid Gaullist censorship Marker's socio-political critique in *La Jetée* only implicitly spoke of Vichy collaboration and the atrocities of the Algerian War.

[55] Understood in this way, time then neatly aligns with the eponymous French noun *la jetée*.

[56] A group of dissident French paramilitary officers, the *Organisation de l'armée secrète* (OAS) used terrorism and torture in their failed attempt to keep Algeria French. Combine this with *La Jetée's* heavy German whispers

experimenters repeatedly sent their captives into madness or death in their efforts to rework the past for the purposes of the present. Undeterred, they continued to send emissaries into time with the hopes that one day they might "summon past and future to the rescue of the present." With time as their tool, the experimenters hoped that a destroyed Paris might again become the great City of ten thousand streets.

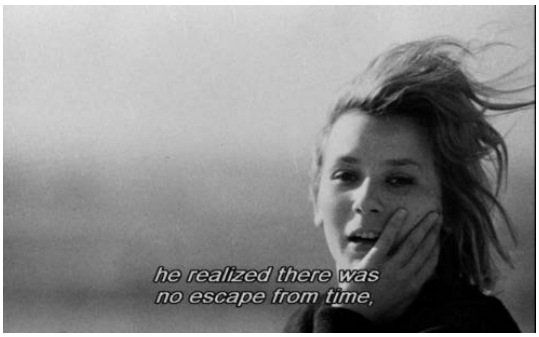


Figure 2. Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, 35mm bl 1

Marker's *La Jetée*, it might just as easily be said, is a vision of France's inescapable entrapment within the confines of time. If *La Jetée's* experimenters saw in the depths of time a region to be manipulated, then time, as it is understood here, is not a source of salvation but rather an indiscernible reality within which we are always already entrapped. Devoid of Gaullist escapes, *La Jetée* unrelentingly depicted the temporal situation in which France had been cast. Thrown within the depths of time, it is in this temporal abyss that France remained. "He realized there was no escape from time," Marker concludes.[57] A spatial body, whether corporeal or social, reels and gnashes its teeth before the inescapable enclosures of time.

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and its concentration-camp-like underground shelters, and *La Jetée's* experimenters directly connect French colonization with the German occupation and the Nazi Holocaust.

[57] Fittingly, the past-tense verb thrown is translated *jeté*. In *Being and Time* (1927), Heidegger writes, "The primordial ontological ground of the existentiality of *Dasein*, however, is temporality." In other words, the whole of our being has been 'thrown' into time. This thrownness into temporality, he goes on to write is the principal characteristic of our being-in-the-world (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein Und Zeit*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 224. Understood in this way, time is then an extra-cognitive being. Or to put it another way, we are in this thing we call time, rather than time being inside of us. And therefore temporality is presented as an actor who plays discordant tricks upon human prop-like objects. It is for this reason that Marker speaks of a mind jettisoned into the hidden zones of time's past and future as a "recoiling mind." The artistic corollary here is the feeling of estrangement (*ostranenie*) that Marker's cinematography compels. The viewer habituated on coherent, quick cutting, and linear shot progressions recoils in shock when faced with Marker's photographic stills.



Figure 3. Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, 35mm bl 1

It is difficult to find any attempt in Marker's 1962 film to reconcile whether time is salvific or ensnaring. Rather it is this deeply ambiguous nature of time that Marker's *La Jetée* seeks to maintain.[58] It is significant, however, that in both readings Paris cannot escape into the immutable confines of space and is thus forced to search for meaning within the abysmal depths of time. Marker's *La Jetée* posed questions that penetrated right to the core of Gaullist resistancialism: What does it mean to search within time rather than space for an image of a past present? How does a past moment become a remembrance in time?[59]

La Jetée, I contend, sought to estrange Parisian's belief in an epistemological mastery of the past. According to Marker, when we remember our temporal orientation is multiple, fractured, and displaced.[60] That is, snapshots of the past are constantly reinscribed in new contexts, as memorial montages create new polyvalent meanings. Much like an archive, images are contracted into a recognizable artifice. Memory's archive, however, never truly solidifies and therefore functions much differently than the stale collection or the permanent frescoes of de Gaulle. In its perpetual state of postproduction editing, human memory has much more in common

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[58] Perhaps this is because time in-itself also maintains this paradoxical nature: on the one hand, as humans we are trapped, at least in the large, within time's irreversible trajectory as days march on toward our inevitable death; but, on the other hand, it is also true that in the small, humans are more than capable of finding within temporality an openness which exceeds the closed and completed dimensions of space.

[59] Marker states in *La Jetée*, "Nothing distinguishes memories from ordinary moments." Similarly, Deleuze writes in *Proust and Signs*, "It comes too late, for it cannot distinguish within the moment the phrase that should be retained, that gesture that it could not yet know would assume a certain meaning" (52).

[60] The film itself attests to this: its fictional present is both a projected post-apocalyptic future and a depiction of the cavernous shadows of France's Vichy and colonial past; the film's fictional past is set in early 1960s Paris, which is also, of course, the film's actually present; while the film's fictional future is a "pacified" future of progress and yet this fictional future also speaks of the early 1960s reconstruction of Paris that turned the French capital into a "city of 10,000 incomprehensible streets."

with the temporary and circulating exhibits that dominate contemporary museums. All too often, however, as Parisians grasped for landmarks in time they replaced memory's interlacing webs with fixed linear emplotments. And far more often than they would like to believe, memory's gaps were covered over with ready-made Gaullist reconstructions. It is precisely these ready-made recollections of the early 1960s that *La Jetée* sought to deconstruct.

In *Film Fables* (2006), contemporary French philosopher and film critic Jacques Rancière contends that cinema's efficacy rests on its ability to thwart its own artistic means. This capacity to deconstruct allows cinema to extract truth from the fictional stories that fill its screens: consider, for instance, the false 'facts' by which one is forced to introduce *La Jetée* and the temporal truths of its fictions. Although *Film Fable's* sole essay on Marker, "Documentary Fiction: Marker and the Fiction of Memory," concentrates on his homage to Soviet filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin (*The Last Bolshevik* (1994)), Rancière sees in Marker's cinematography an artistic embodiment of this capacity to deconstruct. In fact, it is possible to understand Marker's oeuvre as an effort to visually depict memory as an interlacing of heterogeneous documents, the referential real, and constructed artifice. Rancière suggests that like cinema memory seeks "to cut a story into sequences, to assemble shots into a story, to join and disjoin voices and bodies, sounds and images, to lengthen and tighten time."[61] Hence, cinema is the ideal medium through which to depict how memory evades fixity and remains an unstable product of additions, omissions, and admixtures. By illuminating memory as a forged fiction, located somewhere between the referential real and artifice, Marker's *La Jetée* was a cultural contestation that struck at the atemporal heart of Gaullist mythmaking.[62]

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[61] Rancière, 158.

[62] In his essay on Marker, Rancière also turns away from the notion of myth—collective memory as a product of the collective unconscious and the social imaginary—and instead suggests that collective memory is a forged fiction. Rancière posits four self-evident, yet nevertheless frequently misunderstood, claims with regard to memory: (1) "Memory is not the store of recollections of a particular consciousness, else the very notion of a collective memory would be devoid of sense;" (2) Memory is founded upon both absence and overabundance, a process of forgetting and supplementing; (3) Memory is rooted in the interplay between the referential real, the heterogeneity of documents, and the assemblage of these parts into constructions of meaning; (4) Memory is a chronology, which at the outset is already confounded without losing its chronology.



Figure 4. Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, 35mm bl 1

La Jetée begins and ends on the observation deck of Paris's Orly airport. In *La Jetée* when we are at the beginning, we are also already at the end; and when we end, we have merely begun again.[63] Are not remembrances repetitions such as this? Rather than a fatal flaw, to repeatedly bring back to mind is an affirmation of the past's active presence in the present. One's fate is not sealed by a desire to repeat. When we learn that the most basic of *La Jetée's* linear emplotments turn out, in fact, to be circular — "He understood there was no way to escape Time, and that this moment he had been granted to watch as a child, which had never ceased to obsess him, was the moment of his own death." — will we gnash our teeth or will we consider nothing else more divine?[64] Repetition in-itself does not kill, for the active and aleatory reconstruction of the past is the stuff of every passing moment. When *La Jetée's* protagonist rejects the pacified future of a rebuilt Paris and returns to the woman who just might be waiting, he throws himself against (*se jeter contre*) the multiple contingencies of repetition.[65] It is only in a society of control—in a regime that proliferates an official past and demands its precise repetition—that contingent contractions of the past are met with violence. So perhaps the man's death was not, as most commentators assert, a result of his "fatal flaw" to relive and activate anew an image

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[63] In his cinema volumes, Deleuze notes how the circularity of postwar cinema replaced the linear trajectories and inevitable arrivals of "classical" pre-war cinema (cf. Hitchcock's 1938 *The Lady Vanishes*).

[64] Compare with "The Greatest Weight," one of Nietzsche's first articulations of the eternal return in his *The Gay Science* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001), §341.

[65] So too does *La Jetée*. By concluding the film when he does, Marker's intervention allows new viewings that will beget new visions. Instead of conceiving remembrance as a nostalgic eternal return of the same, it might be more useful to follow Marker's lead and consider the cinematographic nature of remembrance. Certain films, including *La Jetée* and *Last Year at Marienbad*, demand repeated viewing. Each time one returns to these films, they unavoidably take on new aleatory shape and assume polyvalent meanings. It has been said that cinema is a "choreography of memory." If this is the case, then Chris Marker's *La Jetée* was a contesting choreography par excellence.

of the past.[66] We tend to forget that it was not time but the political experimenters who pulled the trigger.[67] By refusing to subsume this immanent temporality into a transcendental presence—be it God, Reason, Being, or the Space of a particular nation-state—*La Jetée* visually depicted the postwar temporal turn. In a direct challenge to Gaullist conceptions of space, Marker poignantly demonstrated how meaning and memory must repeatedly pass through the labyrinth of time's passing.

> The aim of cultural difference is to re-articulate the sum of knowledge from the perspective of the signifying singularity of the 'other' that resists totalization—the repetition that will not return the same, the minus-in-origin that results in political and discursive strategies where adding-*to* does not add-*up* but serves to disturb the calculation of power and knowledge, producing other spaces of subaltern signification.
>
> Homi K. Bhabha, "DissemiNation"

Deleuze's early philosophy and Marker's *La Jetée* were centrally concerned with new understandings of time, memory, and repetition. If all stories are truths of a kind, then these philosophical and cinematographic stories of the early 1960s spoke of an alternative temporal truth that contested the Gaullist narrative of an eternal grandeur that scarred over France's wartime wounds. Regardless of de

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[66] See Harbord's, "Going back is not something that one can get away with." And her suggestion that, "His fate is sealed by a desire for repetition, for an identical match, to experience the moment as it was then" (5). In "Platonic Themes," Lee agrees, "The poignancy of this story, as in traditional classical Greek tragedy, lies in the hero's fatal flaw. Although intellectually superior to all others of his time, in the end he reduces himself to the level of his enemies when he chooses to discard the noble path offered to him by the future in order to wallow in a nostalgic illusion of adolescent romantic love" (100). Recall that the future presented to the man is a pacified Paris of grid-like abstraction, which may be perfect but certainly does not sound ideal.

[67] In this final scene, we get, as Lee describes, "The most active visual impression of actual movement presented in the course of the entire film" (100). As the man 'runs' along the observation deck to reach the woman, fades quicken and dissolves are heightened as he almost gets to the point of actualization. But just like the woman's awakening, here too the experimenters intervene; only this time they do so before the man reaches twenty-four frames per second.

Gaulle's insistence otherwise, neither a nation-space nor its narratives are ever homogeneous. As monolithic as it might have seemed, the Gaullist mythical forging was far from stable, even in the early 1960s. De Gaulle's resistancialism competed with a whole range of other pedagogical depictions that both avoided the censors and refused to mechanically repeat the ready-made assertions of politics. Deleuze and Marker each spoke of new untimely notions of time and space that provided France with alternative temporalities.

Written by a generation born in the early 1920s, these alternative pedagogies also illuminate the cultural hybridity of early 1960s Paris. Before the events of May 1968, the philosophical overthrows of the early 1970s, and Ophüls's *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1971), Deleuze and Marker's disjunctive depictions of time challenged the heart of the timeless Gaullist narrative. Furthermore, reading the early 1960s through these stories suggests that France's pivotal post-1968 confrontation with its national past was deeply indebted, both in thought (*episteme*) and technique (*techne*), to these earlier searches for truth within a time out of joint. Following an untimely ethics of repetition, an ethics that required thinking with 'and' rather than with 'is' or 'is not', Deleuze and Marker remind us that cultural identity is inseparable from its own alterity. If the express purpose of *The Sorrow and the Pity* was, as Rousso writes, "to shed light on hitherto shadowy areas of history," then this article sought to highlight the cultural shadows that persisted within the often overlooked early 1960s.