

JEAN-LUC GODARD in SIXTIES:
A SOCIOLOGICAL READING OF SEXUALITY and POLITICS
IN THE NEW WAVE CINEMA.

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
GRAPHIC DESIGN
AND THE INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS
OF BILKENT UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

By
Esin Hossucu
June, 2000

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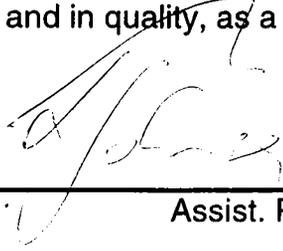
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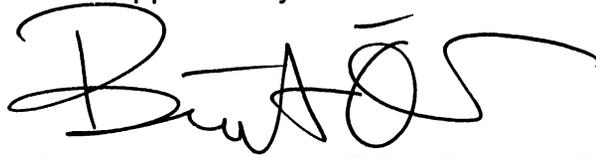
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ABSTRACT

JEAN-LUC GODARD in the SIXTIES: A SOCIOLOGICAL READING OF SEXUALITY and POLITICS IN THE NEW WAVE CINEMA

Esin Hoşsucu

M.F.A. in Graphical Arts

Supervisor: Nezih Erdoğan

June, 2000

This study aims to investigate the representation of sexuality in Jean-Luc Godard's early movies in order to understand the figuration of femininity as well as masculinity in cinema politically. Being in a specific historical context, New Wave cinema is important due to its crucial cinematographic experiments and revolutionary style. This semi-cinematographic analysis of Jean-Luc Godard's cinema is completed in order to be able to understand the inner mechanisms of cinema from a sociological point of view.

Keywords: The New Wave Cinema, sexual difference, deconstruction

ÖZET

YENİ DALGA SİNEMASINDA TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYETİN İŞLENİŞİ: 1960'LI YILLARDA JEAN-LUC GODARD

Esin Hoşsucu

Grafik Tasarım Bölümü

Yüksek Lisans

Tez Yöneticisi: Nezih Erdoğan

June, 2000

Bu çalışmada, amaçlanan sinemada toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin ifade biçimlerini araştırmaktır. Jean-Luc Godard sinemasının bu tez çalışması için seçilmesinin nedeni ise Godard ve Yeni Dalga sinemasının gerek tarihsel gerekse politik açıdan, dönem itibariyle büyük önem taşımalarıdır. Sinemanın evrensel bir dil olduğu düşünüldüğünde bu tarz bir incelemenin Türk sineması analizleri için de bir anlam taşıması amaçlandığından, yapılan çözümleme de daha çok içerik analizi vurgulanmış ve teknik analiz geri planda bırakılmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Yeni Dalga sineması, cinsel farklılaşma, kurgusöküm

for hope,

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I am grateful especially to my mother and my sister, and all the members of my family for their continuous love and care during my education period. I also would like to give thanks to my peaceful friends who are usually listen my monologues. And I also shouldn't forget my computer that was always with me when I am depressed.

Finally, I want to show my respect for those who worked for the cinema and gave it to us in such a revolutionary identity.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Jean-Luc Godard's Cinema

“ People like to say, 'What do you mean exactly?'
I would answer, 'I mean, but not exactly.'”
Jean-Luc Godard

Jean-Luc Godard is one of the most widely recognized French film directors who have influenced the history of cinema with his avantgarde works. As one of the New Wave filmmakers, he produced many movies including video works and TV practises which have usually focused on politics, history and communication, anxiety, sex and desire, art, aesthetics and music as well as on the history of movies. Godard is an artist related to many of the arts: he began his career writing for Cahiers du Cinéma magazine and continued to write about cinema for print journals, while creating his own cinema as one of the most autobiographical of filmmakers who has so thoroughly used the medium to analyze his personal obsessions.

Godard's cinematic language is constructed through his new conceptualization of art which is produced with innovative techniques. With the coming of *A Bout de Souffle* (Breathless) which was the standard-bearer of a new aesthetics, that of the French New Wave of 1959, Godard explored an unknown continent in the aesthetics of cinema which was improvisational

(unscripted) as a general understanding. Working with low budget, using the new, cheaper and lighter equipment, able to film in real locations and at night if required, influenced by television practises like using hand-held camera and making interviews straight to it, Godard paradoxically achieved a vibrant and graphic realism while at the same time experimenting self-consciously with the medium of film (Austin 15). Above all, in search for a new kind of realism, Godard- and generally New Wave directors gave their films the 'look' of documentaries by shooting in authentic and recognizable locations instead of the studio, by using faster film and blurring the distinction between fiction and documentary at the same time as abandoning any pretence that the world depicted was not that of a film (Hill and Gibson 461).

Godard started his art life with the belief that the meaning of his films was self-generated (his existentialist period), however later he considered film as 'society communicating with itself'- especially in 60s (his Marxist period). Through this understanding, he made films as 'sociological essays' with an understanding of marrying new subjects to new forms and breaking down the 'bourgeois' distinction between fiction and documentary.

In the socio-political conditions of 60s, Godard started his career with his films that revolve around art, politics and sexual relations. In relation to his links with Dziga-Vertov group and Situationists, he saw film as a form of education rather than entertainment. Hayward and Vincendeau quotes Godard in the French Film: Texts and Contexts that

“Cinema is not one image after another, it is one image plus another out of which is formed a third, the latter being formed by the viewer the moment he or she makes contact with the film.” (Hayward and Vincendeau 252)

What is thus important about his cinematographic language is his conceptualization of montage. While arguing “my idea as a practitioner of the cinema was that one of cinema’s goals was to invent montage” (Bellour and Bandy 161), he tries to emphasize the importance of the relationship among images: “One image does not necessarily show. A true image is a group of images.” These arguments are closely related to Godard’s collaboration with Situationists who basically claim that “everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation”. In the light of this understanding, Godard shares Debord’s argument: “ The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images.” So, Godard brings the language of images to the level of film form via montage and links the disparate images to produce a truth effect. White quotes Godard as such that

“An image doesn’t exist. This is not an image, it’s a picture. The image is the relation with me looking at it dreaming up a relation at (with) someone else. An image is an association.”(White 38)

This is the basis of his understanding of cinema which argues “film is truth at 24 frames per second” that “substitutes for our gaze a world that corresponds to our desires” as it is quoted from Bazin in Godard’s late movie *ForEver Mozart* (1996).

Through this path, according to Aumont (Bellour and Bandy 208), Godard applies himself to “extracting thought from the visual”, but he adds a dialectical beat, in which thinking returns to the visual in the form of the image. This understanding can open a way to understand his movies as ‘visually written texts’ and make his understanding of cinema as “an intellectual adventure which creates enlightenments through the process of shooting” (Derman 51).

His move towards aesthetics of materialism in the militant late 60s was accompanied by a move towards Marxism. During his Marxist period, he reformulated the surface/secret, beauty/deception oppositions that had characterised his representations of women in keeping with the struggle against capitalist, commodity society. Out of this struggle he developed his politically radical and aesthetically avant-garde counter cinema. In the place of a femininity of mystery, a femininity of enigma emerged (Mulvey 77).

The ambivalence which is characteristic of many Godard films, exists in both the imagery of women and in the narrative structure. It is not only the product of anger directed at an exploitative economy, oppressive social institutions or manipulative textual systems, but is also unconscious aggression at the Oedipus complex as a fact of reality (Hayward and Vincendeau 252). So, Godard creates an interactive relation between sociological and psychological dimensions of the subjects in his movies through representing both the conscious and unconscious procedures of them.

In conclusion, critics explain Godard's style as such: "a jerky rhythm, its 'crossing-out', its frequent quotations, and above all the casual way such quotations are introduced" (Hayward and Vincendeau 219) and this style is the result of Godard's understanding that "movies should have a beginning, a middle, and an end, but not necessarily in that order" (The National Film Theater Online Magazine).

1.2. The Purpose of the Study

This study is based on Godard's alternative cinematic language in the light of the socio-political conditions of France. Specifically being concentrated on the representation of feminine and masculine as well as the relations between them, this study will try to explore the inner dynamics of Godard's style in order to understand what is different and alternative in it. The main argument of this work is that Godard constructs such a cinema in which the representation of sexual difference creates a possibility of the representation of 'women as women' unlike their usual fictional constructions portrayed by women actresses as signifying male discourse.

As Derman argues:

" Jean-Luc Godard, while making use of the Hollywood tradition on the one hand, questions the representation of women in mainstream cinema on the other. He exploits certain themes of the Hollywood Cinema but in a totally different fashion. The novelty of style in Godard's cinema stems from the way he handles image and sound in his romantic period. Godard shows the position of women in the modern society and the destructiveness of heterosexual affairs. His approach is inherent in the cinematic discourse , but he refuses to judge. Women are

industrialized as a part of the consumer society and are sexually alienated. Being the auteur he is, Godard sees himself as a mediator of this system and claims that women have the value of a commodity in the reality of the film which is also a commodity." (Derman 11)

Recent feminist work on film seeks to break with the dominant assumptions, which concentrates on characters and stereotypes. This concern has been displaced by the one with 'textual production', on the grounds that we cannot understand or change sexist images of women for progressive ones without considering how the operations of narrative, genre, lighting, mise-en-scène, etc. work to construct such images and their meanings. This critical shift from interpretation of meaning to an investigation of the means of its production locates the identification of ideology in aesthetic structures and filmmaking practises themselves, which as organizing principles produce their own ideological effect in the material they organize (Doanne, Mellencamp, Williams 183).

1.3. Definition of Basic Terms

1.3.1 The New Wave Cinema (*La Nouvelle Vague*): The New Wave was born in the 1950s with the intention of putting into practise the theories of cinematic style advocated by the cinema magazine Cahiers du Cinema. This cinema rejected the traditional cinema of the modernist age and focused its attention on the importance of the auteur and mise-en-scène.

The New Wave film makers manifested their avant-gardism not just through

their subversion of the mainstream cinema of their predecessors but also through their concerted attempts at a complete rupture with modernist cinematic codes, both narrative and visual. In terms of the visual, the New Wave cinema deconstructed the traditional iconography before the spectators' eyes. The establishing shots (which safely orientated the spectator in terms of space and time) were excised. A fast editing style (achieved by jump-cuts and unmatched shots) replaced the seamless editing style that had prevailed before. The camera went out into the streets and suburbs of Paris. The directors of this cinema were Godard, Truffaut, Rivette, Chabrol and Rohmer, but except for Godard, New Wave filmmakers continued their careers in mainstream cinema. This cinema was being kept alive by the instability of France's institutions in the great political upheaval of May 68 events- an instability which the New Wave reflected through its praxis.

1.3.2. Sexual Difference: In classical psychoanalytic theory, women are conceptualized as *lack*, as other and castrated which represents the patriarchal forms of social production. However, according to feminist understanding of difference like Irigaray who argues "women are the sex which is not one: not one (like the phallus) but not none either!" (Grosz 172) in fact they are like fluid. So, they can not be posited in a sexual difference based on the 'a priori of the same'- that is a difference understood as opposition, binary division or the presence and absence of a single term. Irigaray attempts to develop a difference understood as a Saussurian 'pure difference'- *a difference without positive terms*. Instead of positing women as

'non-men' (-A), she seeks an altogether different space for woman. Irigaray argues that:

"Woman is neither open nor closed. She is indefinite, form is never complete in her. She is not infinite but neither is she a unit(y), such as letter, number, figure in a series, proper noun, unique object (in a) world of the senses, simple identity in an intelligible whole, entity of a foundation etc. This incompleteness in her form, her morphology, allows her to continually to become something else, though this is not to say that she is ever univocally nothing. No metaphor completes her. Never is she this, then that, this and that...But she is becoming that expansion that she neither is nor will be at any moment as definable universe."
(Irigaray a 229)

Defining in this way, Irigaray conceptualizes femininity as a dynamic state of becoming rather than the states of metaphysical Being: a continuing transformation that seemingly aims to elude, nomad like, the fixed points and structures of patriarchal thought (Burke, Schor, Whitford 243). Thereby she turns the philosophical attention from an outer reality and exterior light. Her project is committed to making explicit the sexualization of all discourses in order to develop accounts of subjectivity and knowledge that acknowledge the existence of two sexes, two bodies, two forms of desire and two ways of knowing;

"...That 'elsewhere' of feminine pleasure can be found only at the price of crossing back through the mirror that subtends all speculation...the issue is not one of elaborating a new theory of which woman would be the subject of the object, but of jamming the theoretical machinery itself, of suspending its pretension to the production of a meaning that is excessively univocal. Which presupposes that women do not aspire simply to be men's equals in knowledge...but rather repeating / interpreting the way in which within discourse the feminine finds itself defined as lack, deficiency, as imitation and negative image of the subject, they

should signify that with respect to this topic, *a disruptive excess* is possible on the feminine side." (Irigaray b 78)

Much of Irigaray's criticism is directed towards the privileging of the visual in Western culture, which she argues is tied to the perpetuation of a monological masculine subjectivity. She argue that the light which makes things visible is 'the light of the same' in which difference is ultimately erased in the return of the light from an intermediary point which is never present in language. Difference which can only be figured as absence or invisibility, is ultimately reducible to an indiscriminate and overpowering light in which everything appears identical (Vasseleu 7).

In contrast to a hierarchical differentiation of vision and touch, Irigaray's work also conceptualizes vision as open to 'the touch of light'. According to her, without the sense of touch, seeing would not be possible, although the visual and the tactile function according to different logic and rhythms. The tangible is the visible, unseeable milieu of the visible, the source of visibility; it precedes the distinction between active and passive and subject and object (Vasseleu 105). In so far as philosophy speaks of itself as a 'love' of wisdom that is equated with light, it reduces eroticism to a love that photology is singularly unable to reveal. Irigaray's consistent argument is that such a love is both inadequate to the representation of woman's desire and to any sexuate expression. She emphasized that feminine participation in representation is subsumed within a patrilineal economy where it remains supplementary to a fantasy of masculine autogenesis.

In place of the erasure of the participation of matter, Irigaray develops her well-known concept of a sexualized morphology, or a notion of the sexed body. She conceives of the body as a discursive reality that is irreducible to either physical or cultural determination. Morphology is the form of a body as it is lived and represented, as it is interpreted culturally. According to Vasseleu, Irigaray's aim is to reopen the constitution of the matter that has been directed toward the establishment of an isomorphism between an imaginary masculine body and systems of representation.

1.3.3. Deconstruction: With this concept Derrida challenges the metaphysical assumption of an original unity of meaning and being in discourse. To 'deconstruct' a text is to draw out conflicting logics of sense and implication, with the object of showing that the text never exactly means what it says or says what it means (Norris and Benjamin 7).

Deconstruction is the critical manoeuvre that reveals the moment of negation inscribed in any notion of presence, including the presence of the subject to consciousness as the condition of possibility of meaning, the presence of signifier to signified, and the presence of reality to perception (Brunette and Wills 254). It calls into question the metaphysical hierarchies that allow self-presence, meaning and reality supposedly to transcend the moment of their inscription in representations. Derrida argues that metaphysical philosophy defines being with reference to its other (nonbeing), defines the meaning of

discourse with reference to its negation in graphic notation, and defines reality in terms of its capacity to be copied in representations. Then nonbeing, writing and representation can no longer be considered supplements to an original reality or perversions of an original closure of the subject in spoken discourse, but as moments in the very constitution of the subject and signified of discourse.

In the case of the visual arts, the work, as Derrida reminds us, is similarly conceived of as a receptacle or dwelling place for meaning, one whose borders are both clearly defined and consistently repressed. In this respect, Derrida's philosophical inquiry is again exemplary, and the structural resemblance between linguistics and visual models is reinforced. This reinforcement is for the hierarchical relation between speech and writing that deconstruction analyzes and seeks to displace. As Brunette and Willis quoted from Derrida who argues that:

"...Film is a very particular case: first, because this effect of presence is complicated by the fact of movement, of mobility, of sequentiality, of temporality; second, because the relation to discourse is very complicated, without even speaking about the difference between silent film and sound film, for even in silent film the relation to the word is very complicated. Obviously, if there is a specificity to the cinematic medium, it is foreign to the word. That is to say that even the most talkative cinema supposes a reinscription of the word within a specific cinematic element not governed by the word. If there is something specific in cinema or in video and television –it is the form in which discourse is put into play, inscribed or situated, without in principle governing the work. So from that point of view we can find in film the means to rethink or refound all the relations between the word and silent art, such as they come to be stabilized before the appearance of cinema...If the advent of cinema allowed for something completely new, it was the possibility of another way of playing with the hierarchies. Now here I am not speaking of cinema in general, for

I would say that there are cinematic practises that reconstitute the authority of the discourse, while others try to do things more closely resembling photography or painting- still others that play differently with the relations among discourse, discursivity and nondiscursivity. I would hesitate to speak of any art, but in particular of cinema, from that point of view.” (Brunette and Willis 12)

1.4 Preview of the Chapters

Chapter 1: As the introduction part, in this section, the aim is to construct the schema of the study. The key elements and the purpose of the study, preview of the chapters and limitations of the thesis are the sub-parts of it in order to consider the innovative figure of the French New Wave.

Chapter 2: In this chapter what is studied is the historical conditions of the France in 60s related with cinema and New Wave directors- especially with Jean-Luc Godard. Socio-cultural conditions of the world in those period including the birth of capitalism and wars such as Algerian and Vietnam are the key issues of this chapter. How those events affected the cinema and vice versa?

What is also an issue in this chapter is Godard's relation with Dziga-Vertov group between 1968-1973. He produced a series of motion pictures through this film cooperative named after the Soviet documentary filmmaker of the 1920s. The group was dedicated to making “revolutionary films for revolutionary audiences”, according to Godard.

Chapter 3: Feminist investigation of the processing of patriarchy in the cinema is a very crucial issue for many film theoreticians. This chapter will

be based on investigations of these theories. Feminist film analyzers usually reads cinema as a “patriarchal” activity by itself because of the repressive character of the act of “seeing / looking / watching”. And also what is more important is the question of the representation of femininity, whether cinema creates an alternative way for the figuration and representation of feminine?

Chapter 4: Jean-Luc Godard in his early movies (film analysis) : Are his movies like ‘sociological essays’ in terms of the presentation of sexuality? Are these movies exemplifying a ‘difference’ in the cinematography of 60s representing ‘politics of everyday life’? And, if yes, what is the effects of representing everyday life ‘politically’ ?

Movies that are selected for the study:

- i i. A Woman is a Woman
- ii. Masculine-Feminine
- ii iii. 2 or 3 Things That I Know About Her

Chapter 5: In this part, there is a debate over the sociological issues about movies. The role of cinema in the process of communication, how can we understand movies and what are their importance in today’s world are some issues that are questioned. And finally how can we relate these with Godardian understanding of cinema? As a conclusion this part is a review of all the study.

1.5. Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study will be based on the 60s movies of Godard which can be generalized as his Marxist period such as *Le Petit Soldat* (The Little Soldier, 1960), *Une Femme est Une Femme* (A Woman Is a Woman, 1961), *Vivre Sa Vie* (It's My Life; My Life To Live, 1962), *Les Carabiniers* (The Riflemen, 1963), *Le Mépris* (Contempt, 1963), *Une Femme Mariée* (A Married Woman, 1964), *Deux ou Trois Choses Que Je Sais D'elle* (Two or Three Things That I Know About Her, 1967), *Masculin/Féminin* (Masculine-Feminine, 1966), *Week-End* (1967), *Alphaville* (1965) etc. This study is based on three movies which are selected because of their high concentration on the subjects of sexual difference and politics of sexuality that are *Masculine-Feminine* (1966), *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (1967) and *A Woman Is a Woman* (1961). Masculine-Feminine will be the focus movie of this film study because of the movie's documentary-fictitious style which creatively exemplifies Godard's representation of sexual relations in the sixties, namely in his 'militant period'.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW WAVE CINEMA

1. The Socio-Historical Conditions of France in Sixties

During the years 1959 to 1962, started with François Truffaut's *Les quatre cents coups / The 400 Blows* (1959) and Jean-Luc Godard's *A Bout de Souffle / Breathless* (1960), there appeared a 'New Wave' of stylistically innovative films directed by former critics of Cahiers du Cinéma such as Truffaut, Godard, Eric Rohmer, Jacques Rivette, Claude Chabrol and classically trained independent filmmakers like Varda, Resnais, Malle, Jacques Demy and others (Vincendeau 8). The brief popularity of this New Wave Cinema coincided with the political culture in which it found itself and with the most politically tense moments in France's history of that period. The first period of popularity, 1958-62, coincided with the radical effect on institutions of the advent of the Fifth Republic and its new constitution. This time also marked by the decolonising of Algeria in 1962 (Hayward 209). The second period of popularity, 1966-8, coincided with the progressive disenchantment with De Gaulle's authoritarian presidential style (from 1958 to 1969), unrest on social and educational levels due to a lack of resources to accommodate the expanding urban society and university students, workers' concern at their socio-economic as well as political conditions, and lastly concern with the rise in unemployment, all of which culminated in the events of May 1968. (Hayward 9).

The transformation of French cinema that came about as a response to the financial stability problems of the film industry of postwar years in France can only be understood with relation to the socio-political crisis in the nation at large: the crucial 1958-59 film season took place during the creation of the Fifth Republic under the leadership of De Gaulle (Williams 327). The crisis in Algeria was a prime mover for this swing to the Right in the political agenda. De Gaulle agreed to the investiture on condition that parliament would grant him the constitutional reforms he deemed necessary to a national recovery. The panic caused amongst the general public by these events, therefore was a major cause for this historical period that is called as the 'dictatorship by consent' (Hayward 214).

Although the age of Gaullism was called period of "economic regeneration, modernity and the birth of new institutions " (Hayward 214), this modernization of France was not, however, a nationwide story. The apparent prosperity of 60s did not increase the life-standards of people which was reflected in much of the French cinema of the 60s. Firstly, the rapid social change which created by the mechanization and improved technology put the artisanal class in a very unfavourable position. Moreover, automation in industry took away workers' privileged position as skilled workers and reduced them to semi-skilled status with repetitive jobs on assembly lines (Larkin 167). Out in the suburbs the modern, low-rent flats (known as *habitations a loyer modéré*), although providing shelter for a proportion of the growth in the urban working class, brought about an increased sense of

isolation amongst both men and women. The spaces were unsocialised and monotonous with no centralised shopping or café area to meet. Women at home felt cut off from life and workers now had to add extra time on to their working day. Furthermore, the four-week paid holiday (introduced in 1963) did little to compensate for this loss in leisure hours and as late as 1969 less than half the working class (43%) took a holiday away from home (Larkin 168). Nor did taking a holiday represent any upward movement in social status-the working class stayed (i.e., were economically obliged to stay in their houses). Even if in other areas of leisure consumption (TV, radio, hi-fi, etc.) credit made the accumulation of previously inaccessible consumer durables possible, the working class still remained socially fixed whilst the middle classes had more chance for making an upward mobility in comparison with the working classes. This reality was further evidenced by the effects of the slow implementation of reforms in education. In the belief that education can give a child the cultural capital s/he needs to advance socially, in 1959 the school leaving age was raised to sixteen. However, this liberalizing law did not come into effect until 1969. This meant that no true social change in terms of upward mobility was felt during the 1960s and was unlikely to be felt until at least the mid-1970s (Hayward 213-4).

Therefore, in May 1968 French students, workers and professionals united briefly in a wave of demonstrations and strikes known as “the events of May 68”- which challenged the institutions of de Gaulle's republic and the ideals of the consumer society (Austin 18). The official reporting of the struggles between protestors and police throughout May 1968 revealed the extent to

which the complicit French television system functioned as an apparatus of the State. The response of independent film-makers and collectives was to report the struggle from a viewpoint outside state control. Already in February of 1968 filmmakers had been mobilised against government control of the media. In May came the establishment of the States-General of the Cinema, with the declaration that "free speech doesn't exist in either cinemas or television in this country, as a very small minority of writers and technicians control both production and the means of expression". As the States-General reported later, eyewitness films were made during the events (Austin 18). Despite the continuation of de Gaulle's presidency until 1969, and a general return to the political status quo, in terms of film culture the 68 events had a profound effect, facilitating the development of politicised and collective film-making, and contributing to the rise of gay film and women's cinema in the decade that followed. Above all, it was documentary film-making which was most directly influenced by 68 events (Austin 18), through which Gaullism was ended and the Left institutionally reborn again. As Forbes quoted Cahiers critics from an article of the Michael Wilson in the 80s: " There are very few films(...) today which do not show traces of the bitter class struggles which are currently taking place across the entire planet" (Forbes 19).

2. A New Conceptualization of Cinema

The events of May 1968 did lead to the birth of a new kind of political or documentary cinema as well as to the elaboration of theories of cinema

which affected the way in which all films were viewed (Forbes 18). The New Wave left to later French cinema a fascination with the details and small rituals of everyday life: lighting cigarettes, shopping, conversing in cafés, walking in the streets. The theatricalized, socially neutral speech which dominated the Tradition of Quality cinema of postwar era for example the ones in the Alain Resnais's movies, had disappeared (Williams 338). In New Wave cinema, the characters spoke again with the accents, vocabulary, and rhythms of the world in which most film spectators lived. Location shooting, though it quickly ceased to characterize entire films, became a standard accent even for otherwise routine stories of young love or criminal activities. The deliberately unpolished and often chaotic images of many early New Wave works found their continuation in a generally anti-pictorialist visual style offering what Roland Barthes would call *effets de réel*, or "reality effects" (Williams 338). Soundtracks of post-New Wave films likewise introduced measured doses of "real" noises of traffic, the noise of conversation in a café, or birds and animals in the country. Many films explored jazz and pop idioms, and even the more traditional symphonic scores typically used smaller musical ensembles and emphasized diverse instrumental colors over massed orchestral effects. The new generation of directors often chose to work with new composers, such as Michel Legrand, Georges Delerue, and Maurice Jarre, who had distinctive and recognizable musical styles (Williams 338).

How the new filmmakers had arrived at their positions in the industry had a great deal to do with how they responded to the freedom to choose between

marginality and the commercial mainstream. The more extensive their experience in the industry, the more likely they were to adopt to its demands without much apparent discomfort, making the sorts of works which most producers required (Williams 339). For most of the New Wave directors such as Chabrol and Truffaut, working within established genres was the only way of addressing relatively large audiences, once public interest in cinematic innovation had declined. However, Jean-Luc Godard was the one *enfant terrible* of the New Wave who remained *terrible* even when the industry came back to commercial normalcy in the mid 1960s (Williams 379). In response to the events of May 1968, he continued to serve as the symbol of the New Wave's "anarchic" experiments, neither compromising with the commercial mainstream nor retreating from it.

3. Godard and Gorin: The Dziga-Vertov Group

Documentary film-making in France in the 1960s had been dominated by *cinéma-vérité* –the recording of everyday life and events (Austin 18). This style was gradually supplanted by more formally experimental and politically-motivated forms of documentary from the late sixties onwards. Moreover, after May 1968 the very distinction between documentary and fiction was questioned, for example in Jean-Luc Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin's *Tout va bien* (Austin 19).

For Godard the turn for the radical came with May 1968. The political turn resulted in the formation of a radical film collective, the Dziga Vertov Group.

The group realized nine films, only one of which (*Tout Va Bien*, 1972) played in mainstream theatres. The name that they chose for their collective was symbolically relevant. The debates that were occurring in France during May 1968 were very similar to those that arose among the artistic groups in Post-revolutionary Soviet Union in the beginning of 20th century: Is the artist a worker in the service of the State or an artist among society? Is art subservient to society or can it be concerned with questions of pure form and aesthetics? In film, debates raged between the relative merit of non-narrative form (Dziga Vertov) versus narrative form (Sergei Eisenstein). Consequently, the artists had a politically correct form with which to work from: marxist dialectical materialism. As such, the Dziga Vertov group was a period of intense searching for that form to, as Godard said "make political films politically".

The French 'politicization' of film making and criticism were part of a larger paradigm shift in critical theory. Even before May 1968 there was a move away from the humanist tradition to theories that were perceived as being more scientifically rigorous and analytical: structuralism and semiotics. In film, this saw a shift away from auteurist, genre, and formalist theories to theories borrowed from social, political economic, and psychological fields.

Interviewed about *Tout va bien* (*Everything's OK*) in April 1972, Godard and Gorin rejected the cinéma-vérité style of documentary as unable to answer

the questions raised by May 1968 (Godard 127). They argued that both the form and the content should be politicised in what Godard had already termed in 1967, with regard to *La Chinoise*, a “struggle on two fronts” (Godard 10-8).

Godard had got back in touch with Gorin early in 1968 and as the year progressed Gorin introduced him fully to the Marxist-Leninist discourses that he had merely observed in *La Chinoise* (Bellour & Bandy 20). It was impossible to use images until one really understood how they worked and understood, how they articulated a whole social organization so, the methods of analysis were largely drawn from contemporary intellectual debates in Paris, in which a version of Althusserian Marxism was used to criticise the consumer society. In some sense the films of that period, *British Sounds* (See You at Mao, 1969), *Pravda* (1969), and *Vent d'est* (East Wind, 1969) are didactic; in another they mark an unparalleled attempt to investigate the operations of the image (Bellour & Bandy 20).

The political ‘essays’ made by the Dziga-Vertov group represented a synthesis of ideas drawn from European modernism with others derived from the activist and agitational tradition extending from the Soviets to the Vietcong and the followers of Third Cinema. (Hill and Gibson 404) However, in the late 70s, they exercised a more poetic and commercially viable-form of cinema. After dissolving the Dziga-Vertov Group in 1973, Godard

organized a media laboratory to experiment with combining film and video images. To conclude, it can be argued that, Godard's retreat from an overtly radical political cinema as well as the other militant directors of that period can exemplify the fate of political modernism in Europe as a whole. (Hill and Gibson 404)

CHAPTER III
FEMININITY in CINEMA

3.1 Feminist Arguments on the Visual Representation of Sexuality

“Woman do not know what they are saying, that is the
whole difference between them and me.”
Jacques Lacan, *Encore Le Seminaire XX*.
(Irigaray b 86)

Margaret Whitford explains the French word ‘sexe’ as such: ‘sexe, usually translated as sex, although it can also mean something like *gender*... In French, because of grammatical gender, the masculine subsumes the feminine, so that for example, to refer to a group of men and women, the masculine plural, *ils*, is used, even if there is only one man and a hundred women.’ (Irigaray c 18). She argues that the power of discourse and the subordination of the feminine opens with some specific remarks on psychoanalytic discourse and from which point of view she makes a connection with the Irigarayan argument that science and discourse are sexually indifferent which means that the difference between the sexes has never been symbolized or represented. (Irigaray c 75) However, on the feminist question of equality or difference, she suggests that equality demands by force or authority an enormous price; it means becoming-a-man. Women need to become speaking subjects in their own right. At this stage of Irigaray's work, there are only a few indications of how she imagines

this possibility of representation, of the difference, might come about.
(Irigaray c 76)

Irigaray identifies sexual difference as 'one of the major philosophical issues' this is why it 'is probably the issue in our time which could be our 'salvation' if we thought it through.' She argues in the *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* that:

" Sexual difference would constitute the horizon of worlds more fecund than any known to date and without reducing fecundity to the reproduction of bodies and flesh. For loving partners this would be a fecundity of birth and regeneration , but also the production of a new age of thought, art, poetry, and language: the creation of a *new poetics*." (Irigaray c 5)

Discussions of the representation of women in cinema have centred on the image of the woman as it is visually and narratively constructed. Here, there are three related issues; first, there is the political issue of the images of women which arise from the sociological conditions of women that is the gender roles through which woman is then defined and recognized or interpellated. Second, there is the issue of the image as identity which is twofold, on the one hand it can be seen as an external imposition, so that these social definitions penetrate the woman as an image of her identity and on the other hand recognized by the woman as other and as imposed. Moreover, there is the image as identity which is possessed and appropriated by the woman as a social agent and a physical subject. (Cowie 3) As Laura Mulvey suggests in the A Screen Reader In Sexuality: The Sexual Subject:

“In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*. Women displayed as sexual object is the leitmotif of erotic spectacle: from pin-ups to striptease,..., she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire. Mainstream film neatly combines spectacle and narrative...The presence of woman is an indispensable element of spectacle in normal narrative film, yet her visual presence tends to work against the development of a story line, to freeze the flow of action in moments of erotic contemplation. This alien presence then has to be integrated into cohesion with the narrative.” (Screen 27)

Mulvey also argued that the institution of cinema which is characterized by a sexual imbalance of power can be explained by using psychoanalysis in order to understand the unconscious mechanisms of it. Because psychoanalysis emphasizes sexual difference as a central category, feminist thinking can use it to understand women’s exclusion from the realms of language, law and desire-from what Lacan called the symbolic register. Freud’s description of scopophilia was Mulvey’s starting point. Dominant cinema deploys unconscious mechanisms in which the images of women function as signifier of sexual difference, confirming man as subject and maker of meaning. These mechanisms are built into the structure of the gaze and narrative itself through the manipulation of time and space by point of view, framing, editing and other codes. (Hill and Gibson 119)

According to Mary Ann Doane, on the other hand, the woman is constructed differently in relation to processes of looking. Irigaray states the dichotomy between distance or proximity of male and female subjects in relation to the

image in the book A Screen Reader In Sexuality: The Sexual Subject as such that:

“ The masculine can partly look at itself, speculate about itself, represent itself and describe itself for what it is, whilst the feminine can try to speak to itself through a new language, but cannot describe itself from outside or in formal terms, except by identifying itself with the masculine, thus by losing itself.” (Screen 233)

One of the critical issue for feminist film criticism is the argument that 'women as women' are not represented in the cinema, that they do not have a voice, that the female point of view is not heard. As Teresa de Lauretis proposes, the crucial question of contemporary feminist film theory is "...what about my time and place in the apparatus of look and identification, in the nexus of image, sound and narrative temporality?" (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 9)

The guiding questions, then, for the following inquiry are: why *women as women* are not represented in the cinema; whether this is the case for all cinematic representation; if so, how it is that fictional constructions portrayed by women actors come to signify male discourse; and finally for whom this signification works-the male audience, or men and women? (Hill and Gibson 18) Recent feminist works on cinema seeks to break the concentration on characters and stereotypes and displays it by the semiotic structuralist concern with 'textual production', on the grounds that we cannot understand or change sexist images of women for progressive ones without considering

how the operations of narrative, genre, lighting, mise-en-scène, etc., work to construct such images and their meanings.

The value of this semiotic redefinition of film as 'visually written text' for feminist film analysis is that it enables us to escape from sexist stereotypes and the analysis of characters as to the degrees of liberation they represent, which often depends more on the critic's personal point of view than anything that can be determined by a reading of the film. The problem facing feminist works on the cinema then becomes to understand how this knowledge can shape a practice of making, distributing, exhibiting and writing about films that will enable them to play a cultural and political role outside a self-reflexive theoretical discourse. (Hill and Gibson 20) This point of view brings us to the emphasis on the idea that whether cinema is considered to be an art or a mass industry, experiment or entertainment, a language-system or a subjective, fantasmatic production, cinema depends on technology, or better, is implicated with it. (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 150) This would also mean abandoning-theoretically that is, the concept of an autonomous or internal development of cinema's 'technological means', whether mechanical, chemical or electronic, the techniques supposed to derive from them, and even the expressive styles elaborated against or in spite of them; would mean abandoning, too, the idea of cinema as a device to capture phenomena and guarantee their reality and historical occurrence, their taking or having taken place. In short, one would have to abandon the idea of cinema as a self-contained system, semiotic or economic, imaginary

or visionary. (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 20)

3.2 Foucauldian Understanding in Film Studies

Rather than treat the history of sexuality as a history of the imposing or lifting of restrictions on sexual expression, Foucault describes how power has produced our ways of understanding and taking up sexual practises and how these discourses later become the primary positions in struggles concerning sexuality, thereby eliding the reality of other expressions and practises.

(Sawicki 32) Foucault argues in the Power and Knowledge that:

“What I want to make apparent is precisely that the object ‘sexuality’ is in reality an instrument formed long ago, and one which has constituted a centuries-long apparatus of subjection. The real strength of the women’s movement is not that of having laid claim to the specificity of their sexuality and the rights pertaining to it, but that they have actually departed from the discourse conducted within the apparatuses of sexuality...(This constitutes) a veritable de-sexualization, a displacement effected in relation to the sexual centering of the problem, formulating the demand for forms of culture, discourse, language...which are no longer part of that rigid assignation and pinning down to their sex.” (Foucault a 219-220)

On this model, one’s sexuality becomes a matter of socially and historically specific practises and relationships that are contingent and dynamic, and thus a matter of political struggle. In such model of identity, freedom does not follow from a notion of one’s ‘true nature’ or ‘essence’ as human being, woman, homosexual or proletarian; it is rather the capacity to choose the forms of experience which we constitute ourselves. (Sawicki 42) So, neither wholly a source of domination nor of resistance, sexuality is also neither

outside power nor wholly circumscribed by it. Instead, it is itself an arena of struggle. So, there are no inherently liberatory or repressive sexual practices; rather they are matters of historical and social investigation. From this point, we can quote Foucault again from Sawicki's book Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, Power and the Body:

"Freedom does not basically lie in discovering or being able to determine who we are, but in rebelling against those ways in which we are already defined, categorized and classified." (Sawicki 26)

Foucault's attention to the productive nature of power, and his emphasis on the body as a target and vehicle of modern disciplinary practices were compatible with already developing feminist insights about the politics of personal life, the ambiguous nature of the so-called 'sexual revolution' in the sixties, the power of internalized oppression, and the not-easily manageable characteristics of gender as a key to personal identity. (Sawicki 95)

According to him, our freedom consists in our ability to transform our relationships to tradition and not in being able to control the direction that the future will take. Foucault says of his own critique:

"A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out, on what kind of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices we accept rest...Thought exists independently of systems and structures of discourse. It is something that is often hidden, but which always animates everyday behavior. There is always a little thought even in the most stupid institutions; there is always thought even in the silent habits...Criticism is a matter of flushing out that thought and trying to change it: to show that things are not as self-evident as one believed, to see that what is accepted as self-evident will no longer be accepted as such...In these circumstances, criticism

(and radical criticism) is absolutely indispensable for any transformation...As soon as one can no longer think things as one formerly thought them, transformation becomes both very urgent, very difficult and quite possible.”(Foucault b 154)

What Foucault offers to film studies as well as feminist studies then, is not a humanist theory, but rather it is a critical method and a set of recommendations about how to look at our theories. The motivation for a politics of difference is the desire to avoid dogmatic support of categories and assumptions as well as the omission of differences to which such dogmatism can lead. As a summary, according to Sawicki the critique of the sexuality debates developed out of a politics of difference amounts to

- a call for a more detailed research into the diverse range of women’s sexual experiences based on their freedom and
- avoiding analyses that invoke universal explanatory categories or a binary model of oppression and that thereby overlook the many differences in women’s experience of sexuality. (Sawicki 32)

In the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault gives an historical account of the process through which the modern individual has come to see him/herself as a sexual subject. Discourses such as psychoanalysis view sexuality as the key to self-understanding and lead us to believe that in order to liberate ourselves from personality disorders, we must uncover ‘the truth of our sexuality’. (Sawicki 22) Foucault has not only consistently attempted to

conceptualize the relation between discourse, power and sexuality, he has also forged a link between a certain kind of discourse theory and an analysis of the collaboration between power and the gaze. In the *Power/Knowledge* Foucault explains this relation as such:

“...We are talking about two things here: the gaze and interiorisation. And isn't it basically the problem of the cost of power? In reality power is only exercised at a cost. Obviously, there is an economic cost, and Bentham talks about this. How many overseers will the panopticon need?...But there is also a specifically political cost. If you are too violent, you risk provoking revolts...In contrast to that you have the system of surveillance, which on the contrary involves very little expense. There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. *Just a gaze*. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorisation to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself. A superb formula: power exercised continuously and for what turns out to be minimal cost.”

This aspect of Foucauldian understanding makes it particularly relevant for the studies of cinema and its representation of feminine and masculine sexuality with respect to the processes of looking. In his analysis of discourse, Foucault frequently uses the terms borrowed from optics such as dispersion, diffusion or diffraction. (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 13)

Teresa de Lauretis explains in her article 'Now and Nowhere' that

“Were one to adopt Foucault's method of historical analysis and to adopt it to cinema, one would have to shift the terms of the question 'cinema' away from the ideas of cinema as art, documentation or mass communication and from the idea of cinema history as the history of those ideas; away from auteur theory as well as from the project of an economic history of cinema per se; away from the presumption that a film expresses the filmmaker's individual creativity, her/his 'visionary' draw on the bank of a collective

unconscious; and away from the assumption that historical research is done by collecting and assembling 'data'." (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 150)

According to her, this is one of the reasons why Foucault's writings seem to be more and more quoted in relation to cinema: "technology, power and pleasure, sexuality and the body, the family and other forms of confinement, prisons and hospitals, psychoanalysis- what other historian or philosopher has to put together and spoken of things that so directly concern cinema? Who can resist, for instance, applying his notion of sexuality as a 'technology of sex' to cinema: a set of regulated procedures which produce sex and the desire for sex as their end result, sex as not just the object of desire but at the same time its very support?" Cinema-in its '60 years of seduction' is seen as exemplifying, employing and perfecting that technology of sex. It exemplifies the deployment of sexuality by its endless investigations and confessions, its search for vision and truth; and it perfects its technology by "placing" the images and patterns of meaning in the spectators' body, in perception and cognition;

"Its mechanisms of capture and seduction, confrontation and mutual reinforcement. Few can resist it. Yet perhaps we should. It's almost too easy, too congruent, too pleasurable, almost numbing." (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 151)

Foucault assures us that power is exercised from below, and that the 'points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network; they are not superstructural or 'in a position of exteriority in relation to power' and 'by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations. Thus,

according to him, the question should be: how do we weigh 'the effects of resistance and counter investments'? The critical tools for this kind of history, this 'microanalytics of cinema' in which the usefulness of Foucault's work for current film theory and practise lies, are yet to be developed. (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 153) Foucault's bottom-up analysis of power is an attempt to show how power relations at the microlevel of society make possible certain global effects of domination, such as class power and patriarchy. As Foucault argues which is quoted by Sawicki:

"One must rather conduct an ascending analysis of power starting, that is, from its small mechanisms, which each have their own history, their own trajectory, their own tactics, and then see how these mechanisms of power have been- and continue to be- invested, colonized, utilized, involuted, transformed, displaced, extended etc., by even more general mechanisms and by forms of global domination. It is not that this global domination extends itself right to the base in a plurality of repercussions..." (Sawicki 23)

CHAPTER IV

GODARD'S FIGURATION of THE FEMININE

4.1 Representation of Sexual Difference in His Early Movies

This chapter is based on the analysis of Godard's three early movies, A Woman is A Woman (Une Femme Est Une Femme), Masculine-Feminine (Masculin/Féminin) and Two or Three Things I Know About Her (Deux ou Trois Choses Que Je Sais D'elle). These three movies are selected because they can be generalized as performing the same subject that is sexual relations, politics and gender issues. Infact, it seems as though we can go from one of the sixties' works to another by a multiplicity of routes therefore, although stories are different, we can take them as similar and create a productive open place for knowledge of them. So, in investigating Godard's cinematography, what is tried here is a non-technical semiologic study of Godard's works in order to explain the inner mechanisms of selected movies.

Godard's impact on how we saw movies was very dramatic and revolutionary: he attempted to confront the contradiction of movie-making which is its being a narrative and visual art-form at the same time. He tries to break the effects of a narration while creating a language of images that is a 'visual narration'. It can be argued that before Godard, film was locked into realistic fantasy and the very nature of the medium had seemed to dictate this. On the other hand, Godard's films are usually very different

from 'story tales' and have no pretensions at being so.

In 1960s it can easily be observed that Godard's movies have certain themes such as de-humanisation in modern society, prostitution (both literally and metaphorically) and as the decade stumbled towards May 1968, revolutionary politics. Unlike from the romances of the early days, in 60s Godard turns toward a pronounced political orientation with statements on consumer society, gender politics, class relations, the student movement, and imperialism in movies such as Masculine-Feminine and Two Or Three Things I Know About Her.

4.2 A Woman Is A Woman (Une Femme Est Une Femme, 1961)

Dir: Jean-Luc Godard

Screenplay: Jean-Luc Godard from an idea by Geneviève Cluny

Photography: Raoul Coutard

Performers: Anna Karina, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jean-Claude Brialy, Marie Dubois, Jeanne Moreau.

Producers: Georges de Beauregard, Carlo Ponti

Music: Michel Legrand

Sound: Guy Villette

Production: Rome-Paris Films/Unidex, Euro International. 35 mm. 84 min.

Jean-Luc Godard's third movie and first studio production starts with a subversive premise: a neorealist musical in which the major characters (Jean-Paul Belmondo, Anna Karina and Jean-Claude Brialy) can not really sing and dance. These three people are the characters of a love and friendship triangle. Although it is packed with obvious references to other movies, it is, in fact, the most memorable movie for being a highly personal 'documentary' about Karina and Godard's relationship at that time.

The movie is based on the story of the stripper Angela who wants a baby

and settle down with her bookseller lover Emile (Jean-Claude Brialy). He on the other hand, is not yet ready for fatherhood and marriage and they quarrel. She threatens to give herself to the first man she meets. He crossly suggests his best friend Alfred (Jean-Paul Belmondo), who is in love with her, as the most likely candidate. Through the movie, Emile and Alfred prefer their male friendship rather than Angela's desire to 'be in love' and have a child and the movie concentrates on Angela's hopeless endeavour to create a communication and a balanced relationship with her lover as well as with his friend. A child is a key for Angela's existence and she is very eager to complete this desire, however Emile's indifferent even mocking behaviours toward having a child put her into a desperate position. On the other hand, Alfred both observes, makes fun and being distressed about his friends relationship and the contradictions. However, he is also in love with Angela and does not hide his own desire 'to be with Angela' and the situation gets more and more complicated because, this is important for Angela in order to be able to fulfil her wishes. At the end, Angela gets what she wants as she announces because "she is a woman."

Godard keeps Anna Karina at the centre of the proceedings which largely take place in an apartment in Paris and focus on the three characters. Basing on this scenario, coming after his second movie The Little Soldier at 1960, A Woman Is A Woman is mostly taken as a failure in the cinema environment because, it didn't attract the public's attention although

Godard himself does not share the same feeling. Although this commentary can be explained by its personal and private significance explains this situation as it is quoted by Sterritt in Jean-Luc Godard: Interviews that,

“ ...a certain number of people liked A Woman Is A Woman... One must be sincere, believe that one is working for the public, and aim at them. In my early days I never asked myself whether the audience would understand what I was doing, but now I do...At the same time I feel that one must sometimes just go ahead- light may always dawn in a few years time. But of course one must be sure one knows what one is about, because if one just goes ahead and does something, saying 'They won't understand but it will not matter', one may be disastrously wrong and find that it does matter.

...(On the other hand) I think that as soon as people see something a little unusual on the screen they try too hard to understand. They understand perfectly well, really but they want to understand even more. People didn't like Une Femme Est Une Femme because they didn't know what it meant. But it didn't mean anything...I simply hoped that the film would give pleasure. I meant it to be contradictory, juxtaposing things which didn't necessarily go together, a film which was gay and sad at the same time. One can't do that, of course, one must be either one or the other, but I wanted to be both at once.”
(Sterritt 3-6)

Although Godard has a very modest explanation about this movie, his cinematography in this movie also based on his 'anarchic experiments' on the techniques of making a movie so it is fully innovatory. The New Wavist method of challenging 'the old modes of tracking shots' can be observed in his style of directing the movie as a battle arena of ideas about creating cinema. In the A Woman Is A Woman Godard explains this method, especially the importance of improvisation to Sterritt as such that:

“...it is wrong to say that I use improvisation, except in so far as I always work at the last minute. I always use a written text, although it may often be written only two or three minutes before shooting. My actors do not usually improvise too, though they did a little in A Woman is A Woman. Usually the lines are written at the very last minute, which means that the actors have no time to prepare. I prefer this, because I am not a director of actors like Renoir who can rehearse an actor over and over until he manages a good performance. I like to sneak up on an actor from behind, leaving him to fend for himself, following his groping movements in the part, trying to seize on the sudden, unexpected good moment which crops up spontaneously; and so gradually I build up an idea of what I am trying to do myself...We certainly improvised in the sense that I change my mind all the time, deciding to do this, then that.”
(Sheritt 7)

For Godard what is central in his early movies is the place of women in society with their contradictions and difficulties to exist both in public and private life. A Woman Is A Woman for example, which is distinct as Godard's first colour movie in wide-screen, is a movie like 'Gene Kelly musicals' showing respect for 'pretty women', fun and Hollywood cinema and a woman's struggle with all of them at the same time. (Loshitzky 23) Although he excludes this piece with his transition from cinéphilism to political radicalism (Loshitzky 23), in its time it was another upheaval of cinematic experience like Breathless after, through its expression of the manners and the communication of a young-heterosexual couple. (Sterritt 6). The language of sexuality in both of these movies is enigmatic mainly because of the female character, and generally 'the communication of couples' reflects the socio-political conditions of early Sixties as well as the

beginning of the 'sexual revolution' period. If we think what was important about the sexual revolution unlike from other revolutionary movements of that period, we can reach 'the issue of representation as well as that of equality' which was questioned by women activists. Therefore, in those times not only equal pay and opportunity debates of women but also theoretical and artistic areas including cinema, continued to be a fundamental objective of debates. This was what marked the re-emergence of feminism as a political and social movement from the late 1960s. This was a new articulation of the contradictions of 'femininity', of motherhood and gender for women in the industrial Europe, together with a new analysis of the conditions- social as well as economic- producing these contradictions. (Cowie 15) The sexual revolution of the 1960s refers to the chaotic personal experience of a generation which grew up in the conditions made possible by a series of conjunctural changes in the decade 1960-70 and also experienced the socio-psychological effects of Vietnam War and this process is reflected in cinema too, especially for the new generation directors including New Wave directors. As a result, we see that for that generation 'sexual desire' came into public sphere in the claim that 'private is political' as we see in the desire of Angela. The representation of women in these movies are transgressing the boundaries between personal and public so that sexuality and its pleasures were asserted as an affirmation of identity and as a human right and this transformation is echoed in the different spheres of art branches. (Cowie 15)

If we leave this political struggle on to one side, we can more closely see what is also important for history of cinema and Godard in this period was a genuine and 'existential' model for approaching 'true speech' which is defined by Silverman and Farocki in Speaking About Godard as such:

"... 'True' speech is what the philosopher describes as speaking 'in a way that is right, doesn't hurt, says what has to be said, does what has to be done without hurting' or what Nana calls in My Life To Live, 'speaking in good faith'. Significantly, the philosopher's verbal ethics once again entails spiritual realization through the death of everyday. This death means 'detachment', a signifier which implies the withdrawal of cathexis from the things that normally absorbs us most fully: the world and the self. In other words, it signifies something like the abandonment of desire and the abdication of the 'me'." (Silverman and Farocki 26)

Why does speech especially discourse as Foucault conceives it have such an importance? The explanation of the emphasis on speech is especially exemplified in Godard's later movie My Life To Live. In this movie, through Nana's (Anna Karina) dialogue with the philosopher (Brice Parain) in a café on Chatalet, we see the importance of speaking in everyday life about 'everday life' without forgetting that private is political because as the philosopher argues 'without words, we can't think.' Nana as figuring a woman 'who wants to live her life' favors not to speak because of the inability of the words to express our feelings, ideas and desires, on the other hand we see the philosopher's insistence on the opposite. He argues that we should talk so that we can live in peace and silence of the words. This dialogue can be seen as a declaration of a woman who has problems about living her life. The philosopher's speech, then, exemplifies the slogan of those days for women: 'fight- or talk- for your right'. Silverman analyzes

this situation as follows:

“Nana’s anxiety that her words will not communicate her intent reintroduces a topic which was first introduced in the topic of empty speech. Nana tells the philosopher that it would be better to live without speech, since the more we talk, the less the words mean. This is almost an exact repetition of what she says to Paul (her ex-husband). But the philosopher objects that we can’t live without speaking not only because without speech we couldn’t communicate, but because without words we couldn’t think. He then advances an existential model for approaching ‘true’ speech- which is labeled as ‘full speech’ for Lacan.” (Silverman and Farocki 26)

This psychoanalytic analysis show us the importance of discourse both for women and for Godard’s movies concentrated on women and A Woman Is A Woman is one of the genuine movies in which language is emphasized as the sine qua non of constructing a relationship for a couple. It can also be taken as the endeavour of a woman who tries to explain and represent her life, desire and rights in a masculine world. What is striking here is the representation of experience as Foucault argues about because it is the power experienced and represented.

Here, another important point is the relation between the language and the sexuality that is the representation of sexuality in the language. In the movie, sexuality is also neither outside power nor wholly circumscribed by it that means neither totally a source of domination nor of resistance which is closely related with its figuration. Instead, it is itself an arena of political struggle among the characters. Angela continuously insists on having a

baby, Emile rejects and Alfred stays in between them and at the end they find themselves in a situation which can be estimated by none of them; it is a struggle without a winner or loser. Here, it can be argued that evaluating the political status of sexual practices should be a matter of historical and social investigation and not a priori theoretical pronouncement and cinema as an act between life and art connotes this.

In addition to its theoretical background, A Woman Is A Woman is also technically important especially because of the usage of studio by Godard although, he usually prefers to shoot movies without using studios and specially controlled features. Unlike using natural light conditions for example in Breathless, in A Woman Is A Woman several sequences were shot in studio and this allowed easier camera manipulation during the lengthy and complicated sequence shots. (MacCabe 111)

However, when it came to the shooting, Godard removed many advantages of shooting in a studio firstly. For example, he would not allow any of the walls to be moved and demanded that a ceiling be built for the set, in order to create a more naturalistic claustrophobic space. What was also important is that, this was his first colour film and he used an overhead studio lighting with his cinematographer Raoul Coutard who points to this situation as an example of 'Godard's passion for filming against white walls'. (MacCabe 112) What the effects of these technical innovations of this movie maybe

lies in the neorealist style of A Woman Is A Woman which is one of the first movies that elaborates on private jokes of Godard. However, as the world of cinema slowly being aware of the revolutionary nature of his work, appearances became deceiving. Loshitzky argues in the The Radical Faces of Godard and Bertolucci that:

“Perhaps more than any other director’s career Godard’s can be neatly divided into stages or periods. The periodization of Godard’s work is that each of stages of his career is associated with another woman/actress/collaborator and the cinéphile/New Wave stage is associated with Godard’s first wife, Anna Karina who brought out the more romantic aspects of him.” (Loshitzky 135-136)

But Godard’s periods are also associated with different types of male leads too. In the 60s, Jean-Paul Belmondo is the actor favored by Godard. Belmondo projects an image of a macho, a tough but vulnerable guy, emulating the male heroes of film noir (Humphrey Bogart in particular) which is one of the New Wave’s favourite genres. However, proceeding through the 60s, instead of the tough detective, Godard increasingly focused on the student/intellectual/revolutionary male leads such as Jean-Claude Brialy and Jean-Pierre Léaud (in Masculine-Feminine).

In the movie, Angela and Emile tries to control their relationships and live some difficulties while doing so. As quoted from the movie: “Everything go wrong for them because they love each other” and “They have made the mistake of thinking they can go too far because their love is both mutual

and eternal." What is connoted in this scene is the communication problem of this young couple. They talk, quarrel, fight and create language games for each other while asking to each other "as it is a tragedy or a comedy" Emile answers this question of Alfred as saying "you never know (the answer) with women." So we can understand that Angela is the origin of the problems of this love triangle. She is a person "who always make mistakes" for Alfred who talks a story:

"ALFRED: ...A girl was in love with two fellows. She sent both express letters, arranging to meet...One at the Gare du Nord, the other two hours later at Port d'Italie. She posted the letters, and as soon as she posted them she realized she'd put them in the wrong envelopes. The letter 'my darling Paul...' was in Pierre's envelope and vice versa. She was frantic. She rushed to the first block, the letter hadn't arrived. She says: "Darling, when you get an express letter, take no notice of it". He asks why, and she has to tell him the whole story. So, learning about the other guy, she's seeing, he kicks her out. She says to herself: "I've lost one, but I can still have to other." She rushes across Paris to the second fellow. The letter had arrived, he didn't seem at all angry, quite the opposite. She says "you're very kind, you've forgiven me". He seems surprised, but he says nothing so she tells him the story thinking he's humiliating her before really forgiving her. So, the bloke shows her the letter and kicks her out. She realizes than that she hadn't put them in the wrong envelopes.

ANGELA: So what?

ALFRED: I thought she sounded a bit like you...I don't mean the details. I mean her character, always making mistakes."

Although we see some implications of misogynist tendencies in Godard's early movies including this movie, it can be said that these movies were critical representations of sexual relations rather than 'politically written arguments'. What is also important is that this highly personal filmic

representations can not be separated from Godard's private life with women and thoughts about them. So it can be concluded as such that A Woman Is A Woman is a movie in which he continues to play with images of women and men-but this time from his life through which we can explain the documentary strength of his images. However this does not mean that for Godard the image is important insofar as it revealed reality in contrast for Godard image and reality could never be separated. (Bellour 16-17)

4.3 Masculine-Feminine (Masculin/Féminin, 1965-1966)

Dir: Jean-Luc Godard

Screenplay: Jean-Luc Godard, from "La Femme de Paul" and "Le Signe" by Guy de Maupassant

Photography: Willy Kurant

Performers: Jean-Pierre Léaud, Chantal Goya, Marlène Jobert, Michel Debord

Music: Francis Lai

Sound: René Levert

Production: Anouchka Films/Argos Films/Svensk Filmindustri/Sandrews. 35mm. 110 min.

After A Woman Is A Woman, Godard shot movies such as My Life to Live (1961), Contempt (1963), A Married Woman (1964), Alphaville (1965) and Pierret le fou (1965) before we came to the second movie of this study that is Masculine-Feminine. The importance of Masculine-Feminine is that it is the beginning of Godard's series of explicitly political films which ended with his withdrawal from the traditional cinema in the early 1970s. (MacCabe 20) Although Godard himself said that the exact point in time when his break from bourgeois to revolutionary filmmaking occurred after May-June events in France in 1968 (Loshitzky 23) with his collaboration with Dziga-Vertov group, Masculine-Feminine poses the political repression of 1960s more intensely than the others. It shows Godard's desperate search for a form adequate to the demands of politics; particularly the pressures of the war in Vietnam. In this movie and the two films he made concurrently immediately afterwards, Two Or Three Things and Made in USA, the problems of politics

and art are articulated in the same terms; the terms provided by the forms of cinema. (MacCabe 51)

Masculine-Feminine like A Woman Is A Woman is about a love relationship of a young couple and the relations with their friends. This film is an example of Godard's essay film focuses on French young people in 1960s dealing with their value judgement, political views, daily life and sex. It centers especially on Philip (Jean-Pierre Leaud) and his girlfriend Madelein (Chantal Goya) dreaming of being a pop singer.

Before and after this film, movies of Godard turned into 'filmed essay' and his narrative way eventually faded out. What is at stake for this movie is especially its central position in the pre and later movies of Godard's movies for which Loshitzky argues that self-reflexivity has always played a major role. The Godardian style has been primarily characterized by the extensive use of self-reflexive methods and this movie is a complementary example of this understanding. Masculine-Feminine (1966) criticized the consumer society and its addiction to images manufactured by advertisement. This is a movie in which 'politic' surfaces are on the screen for the first time, that is something to identify the Godard's movie world from late 1960s. In this movie, he express dilemma of young French in 1960s with more clarified 'personal comments' through form-free attempts.

What is also obvious in this period for Godard is the fascination with language and other means of communication like the previous movies including A Woman Is A Woman. (Loshitzky 39) His permanent obsession with questions of verbal and sign language expresses a critique of representation both in life and cinema.

In Masculine-Feminine, the protagonist, Philip, occupies the position of the oblique idea in the title caught between the masculine world of party politics in which his Communist friend (Michel Debord) moves so comfortably and the feminine world of teenage magazines and pop music inhabited by his pop-singer girlfriend Madeleine. Just finished his military service, Philip tries to get on with his girl friend and the ambiance that they are all live in that is the historical conditions of 60s. MacCabe explains this situation as :

“...his own desire somehow to unite and transform these two disparate elements of his experience with the aid of fragments of the traditional discourses of Western culture leaves him without listeners in a solitude emphasized when his only audience is provided by a record-your own-voice compartment.” (MacCabe 51)

It can be argued that this film is a critic of Western capitalist society, particularly of French and American foreign policy with its complex political statements that combined documentary footage; shots of posters, comic strips, and advertisements. Here, Philip as a young militant plays the central role with his social survey which represents the opinions of young Parisians. From scene to scene as Philip swings from frustration and anger

to the melancholy or joy, we understand the highs and lows of his peers.

Masculin/Féminin consists of a series of short, discontinuous scenes loosely centered on the romance between Philip and Madeleine as a study of 'the children of Marxism and Capitalism' whose slogans are 'Give us this day our television- and an automobile, but deliver us from freedom!'. This is the society of the spectacle as Debord calls it in which 'having turns into appearing'; the age of consumerism and image. The spectacle is another facet of money, which is the abstract general equivalent of all commodities. (Debord 32) The spectacle, however, is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images. It can not be understood either as a deliberate distortion of the visual world or,

"...as a product of the technology of the mass diffusion of images. It is far better viewed as a *Weltanschauung* that has been actualized, translated into the material realm- a world view transformed into an objective force." (Debord 12-13)

However, young people that are represented in this movie prefer love to money as we also see in Philip; in his look, in his speech or in his smiles. He sees "discipline and finance sharing the same logic" and ignores both of them. Even while talking about politics he is like talking about love. He is confused and it is the confusion of one who is desperate to not be alone. He declares, "without tenderness you'd shoot yourself" and answers Madeleine when she asks "why do you want to go out with me?" as saying "because

you're pretty and because of tenderness”.

Like Belmando in A Bout de Souffle (1959), who echoes the gestures of Bogart, Philip affects the actions of the stereotypical heroic lead in Masculine-Feminine. He casually tosses cigarettes into his mouth (but misses), he plays the seducer (but is snubbed), he gets into lovelorn fights (only to have his opponent casually suicide in front of him). Like the survey Paul conducts, which he ultimately knows to be a deception, he walks the streets of Paris, playing heartthrob to an unseen audience.

Arguing in the movie as “philosopher and film-maker share a generation’s outlook”, Godard succeeds in representing masculinity as well as femininity of the 60s through this society of the spectacle in such a manner that still today we are looking in them. Masculine-Feminine is one of the example of his visually written historical texts of 60s which represents the feminine in the masculine world as well as the masculine through feminine.

The task of the antispectacle film for Godard, as he saw it in 1968, was unmasking the internal relations of the dominant language while developing an alternative syntax of sound and image. Godard's fascination with language has taken various forms. In his 60s movies, he disrupted the flow of words in order to expose their complicity with socio-political forces. He also foregrounded words in order to undermine the tyranny of commercially

seductive images. Linking his works can be taken as a determination to make language out of images and to make images out of language. By subjecting written and spoken words to cinematic transformations (such as superimpositions), Godard plays with the substructures of verballity.

These mean that the notion of the language of images is the subject of one of Godard's initial experiments. By bringing transgression to the level of film form via montage, he links the different images to produce a truth effect: the realization of their shared existence as 'reified or alienated discourses' of commodity culture. On one hand, his strategy can be taken as misreading; and on the other, it is the disclosure of a hidden meaning that already exists. The narrative transitivity in which each unit follows the one preceding it according to a chain of causation, has been broken by Godard in order to disrupt the emotional spell of the narrative and thus force the spectator, by interrupting the narrative flow, to re-concentrate and re-focus his attention in a Brechtian manner. (Wollen 80-81) The constructive principle of the film is rhetorical, rather than narrative, in the sense that it sets out the disposition of an argument, point by point. Bellour quoted Godard who says that:

"Each art has its verb. In the creation of art, the verb is there to authenticate the subject with the same name. To paint is the act of painting. To have fun, that is, to compose and sing, is the act of music. To write becomes the act of writing and of the writer. To film, that is, to record a sight and project it, is the act of cinema and of the makers of films. It is always freedom speaking." (Bellour 158)

In addition to these, Godard's early fascination in 60s with the misleading and dissembling nature of appearances, the impossibility of reading an essence from a phenomenal surface or telling a lie from a truth which all exemplifies a Cartesian rather than a Marxist understanding, shows his radical Romanticism which sees silence as the only true communication, when reality and representation, essence and appearance irreducibly coincide: the moment of truth. According to Wollen:

“The cinema cannot show the truth, or reveal it, because the truth is not out there in the real world, waiting to be photographed. What the cinema can do is produce meanings and meanings can only be plotted, ...not in relation to the criterion of truth, but in relation to other meanings. This is why Godard's objective of producing a counter-cinema is the right objective.” (Wollen 89-91)

As we said before, what is crucial for Godard is to express and analyze the relationship between capitalist-spectacle society and language as well as the position of the individuals in it. In this schema, the possibility of the representation of feminine difference in verbal and visual language is new neither for feminism nor for the works of Jean-Luc Godard. Feminist theoreticians have argued with varying degrees of success for and against the possibilities of a women's language and women's writing, and Godard in his way has taken up similar issues of women's representation and the representation of women in films such as A Married Woman, Masculine-Feminine, Two or Three Things and Tout va bien among others. Bellour argues that cinema reduces femininity to the 'narcissistic mirroring' of masculinity by taking up Luce Irigaray's similar observation about psychoanalysis, that it always collapses sexual difference into one,

masculine sexuality. While Madelein explains her position toward Philip in the movie as "love, love...in the man's heart is solitude and on the face of my naked femininity your face is mirrored and my love is in the sea, in dreams and we are faced by death.", she posits the same problematic situation.

However, what is different for Godard that in his movies 'difference' can exist only at the price of the lived sexual relations and the possibility of difference turns into an impossibility in the no-win logic of ambivalent situations although what we need is still a new economy of power relations in both theoretical and practical sense.

In Masculine-Feminine, the socio-economic conditions of Paris in the 60s is represented in the hesitation of using the forms of fiction and the documentary by Godard who argues in the La Chinoise that 'Art is not the reflection of reality (but), it is the reality of that reflection.'" As quoted by MacCabe from Godard, it is because,

"...the photographic image is an unique combination of art and science, of aesthetics and technology- the intuitive eye of the artist and the mechanical laws of the instrument...which is the camera used by the film-maker as a neutral tool for recording either the world as it exists out there in documentary films or the expression of the filmmaker's own peculiar (and subjective) view of the world in art cinema." (MacCabe 109)

It is easier to understand these arguments in Godard's pre-militant movies

in which Marxist-Leninist ideology is not much dominant in relation to later ones for example; in Masculine-Feminine, Philip talks with his communist friend (Michel Debord) as such,

LEAUD: The problems with women are my affair...

DEBORD: It is all very simple: women, money. That is it. It is like a perpetual revolt. I can not accept things like you. That is what makes me a militant.

LEAUD: I admire you for it.

DEBORD: Join in, then..."

The reflection of the historical conditions of Sixties, Masculin/Féminin is neither a militant nor an apolitical movie but, both: it can be defined as central or even 'neutral' in the history of Godard's cinematography. However, in this movie Godard divides the two sexes and their world's as they are existing in a binary opposition. He concentrates the contingency between Philip's male-revolutionary world and Madeleine's feminine 'advocacy of free enterprise' but, these two worlds looks like very far away from each other eventhough Philip tries to make them closer.

If we want to give an example here, it is convenient to quote a part of the dialogue between Philip and one of Madeleine's friend (a model) which is named by Godard in the movie as 'the dialogue with a consumer product':

“PHILIP: You'd better have your car than your baccalaurate?”

MODEL: I'm happy to say I have both...

PHILIP: Do you think socialism has a future?

MODEL: Socialism, did you say?... I don't really know enough about it...

PHILIP: Say you had to choose between socialism and the American way of life, is there a difference?

MODEL: Of course, but it's difficult to explain...well, everthing going at a terrific pace, very free and easy...I am lucky that I saw America...it was pretty terrific, I really liked it.

PHILIP: What was terrific about it?

MODEL: It's all so different from France, you see. They live and work hard, but everthing goes at such a pace. You get the impression that everyone is running all the time, busy with important things. One thing is that women play a more important role there.”

The 'expected' division of labour (as well as the division in understanding of lives and politics) between men and women in 60s can not be thought without remembering that it was also the period of sexual 'freedom'. Madelein explains those days as saying that “in the near future, each citizen could well be wearing an electrical apparatus designed to stimulate pleasure and sexual gratification.” Under the legitimization period of those days, the model exemplifies a typical-young female of those days, their goals and desires. Here, there can also be seen an identification between the young model and the pop music singer Madeleine under the sociological interview of Philip which implies a way of communication between Philip and Madeleine because they are not able to 'talk' and seem as if they come from different worlds although they are lovers. The reason behind Philip's not talking to his lover then, is his own relation with

masculine world. If we quote a part from the movie, we can understand this contradiction in survey with model which is represented like Madeleine answering Philip:

“PHILIP: Does the word reactionary mean anything to you?

MODEL: Yes, but it is very difficult to explain what it means...To be reactionary is to be in opposition to react against things, not to accept just anything.

PHILIP: Does the Popular Front mean anything to you?

MODEL: I don't want to answer such questions...

PHILIP: Do you want to have children?

MODEL: Later, not just yet.

PHILIP: Why later?

MODEL: Because I want to live a little first to be independent, so children are out...

PHILIP: Do you often fall in love?

MODEL: No, no, certainly not...it isn't something you go looking for. It just happens; and when it does, it is terrific; it is something you can't help, and it doesn't happen everyday...

PHILIP: Do you know of war going on just know?

MODEL: No, that doesn't concern me...I don't know.”

This quotation can be taken as an example of Bellour's argument that cinema's reducing of femininity to the mirroring of masculinity in which masculine-patriarchal world legitimizes its construction and its production of the division of labour. This world is like excluding the feminine world which is antagonistic to it although showing an endeavour to include it. Philip as the protagonist shows anger as well as tenderness for the model (and

especially for Madelein) and represents his dilemma which is between his political slogans and emotional stance. This position expresses a dangerous state for both of them because it is unpredictable both physically and emotionally although they have the love of danger. So as Philip declares "they master ideas which are nothing, but not our emotions which are all."

In addition to these, when Philip come face to face 'a homosexual relationship' while he went to cinema with his girl friend, we again see him as intolerant. While writing 'Down with the republic of rat-finks!' on to the toilet cabin in which he sees and consulted by a gay couple, we are manipulated to understand that he doesn't accept homosexuality and humiliates it with identifying American or a capitalist way of life. Here, what is at work can be taken as "repression" on the ground of sexuality- in the Foucauldian sense. Here we can analyze this image from an archeological point of view which is defined by Bannet as such:

"Foucault treats history as a series of reinterpretations; describing 'the principle and single law of their appearance' and the play of forces in each 'system of subjection'. Foucault describe each system of interpretation of 'discursive formation' in its complexity, specificity and concrete mode of operation. What he called archeology is a way of describing 'the law of what can be said, the system which regulates the appearance of statements of singular events...which differentiates the multiple forms of existence of specific discourses and specifies the duration proper to each.' (Bannet 106)

In other words, archeology is a way of achieving generality without sacrificing specificity, continuity without sacrificing discontinuity so archeology shows what the positions people could occupy within the area, and how its organisation imposed on them certain postures of the body, certain forms of behavior and certain attitudes of mind. Therefore, archeologically speaking, while representing aggressive acts in the toilet, Philip owns an ideological position toward homosexuality as well as heterosexuality and this can not be separated from his political stance.

As Bellour stated, in his early movies, the forms of cinema seem to offer Godard infinite possibilities. But as Godard progress through the decade, the forms become more limiting. (Bellour 17) In 1965, Godard says in an interview, "The only great problem is...when and why to start a shot and when and why to end it." This dissatisfaction was infact his despair with the existing forms of cinema followed from two different but complementary developments. Firstly, in the public sphere, the war in Vietnam was coming to dominate the international scene. Godard's increasing disturbance with the United States' involvement there was crucially linked to developments within his own understanding of culture. On the other hand, at the Cinémathèque in the late 40s, American films had seemed to offer a host of new possibilities, the film culture from which those films had sprung was no longer foreign but 'the daily reality of France'. (Bellour 18) Therefore, United States' attempt to impose a political system on Vietnam, and the daily imposition of their cultural system in France, became aspects of the same

process for Godard. As Deleuze revealed Godard can be taken as one of the directors who always questioning according to a Marxist schema that has 'infiltrated everywhere', and Masculine-Feminine is the beginning of this criticism and the period of 'political Godard'.

This point in Godard's works can be exemplified in the preceding dialogue. The worker (Michel Debord) from Communist Party talks to a student-woman (Madelein's friend) to whom he has fall in love, about revolutionary spirit and criticizes the woman's existentialist stand both on politics and sexuality through defining the revolution as such:

"DEBORD:...Take a piece of complex machinery, for instance. You are given the raw material and the design showing what it should be like when finished. There is no time to lose, so you must be capable of exceptional precision in thought as well as gesture, visualizing at once not only how to do it, but each stage in the operation. You have each stage clearly in mind, even before you start. You take it up and you know exactly what you have to do...(woman takes the paper and continues to read) and as you work, your mind can see what must come next. You have already foreseen the necessary tools and phases. This is known as a revolution; this too, is the revolutionary spirit."

Although the woman (student) does not fall in love with the man (worker), she accepts his understanding of revolution. However this does not mean that the oscillation of the generation of 60s between marxism and imperialism in contrast to the confrontation of activist and passivist sides, the revolutionary spirit creates more severe effects, even for the characters of the movies. For example Philip says that 'man's existence is not

determined by his conscience rather, the reverse' and realizes at the cinema that 'they are not watching the film that they have imagined, the perfect film each of them carried within, the film they would like to have, made or perhaps even to have lived.' Therefore for him, the everyday life itself has become more and more politicized both in reality and its cinematic representation, until the streets were filled with militant demonstrations, and home, factory and film set became sites of political action. (Bellour 192)

Because of Godard's close and permanent ties with the life-style of vanguard urban youth, this situation implies his trajectory road toward his Leftist political commitment with Jean-Pierre Gorin and others. Despite the changes in the political back ground, Godard's movies are usually based on similar strategies of cinematography as we can also observe in A Woman Is A Woman, Masculine-Feminine and Two Or Three Things I Know About Her such that:

- they are structured in blocks and modules (often parts are numbered),
- image track and sound track are filled with quotations,
- dialogue is replaced by direct adress to the camera/audience,
- voices are divorced from characters as a crucial alienatory effect,
- "real people" are mixed with fictional roles,
- genres are joined in the same film,
- cinematic devices and techniques are foregrounded for 'the spectator's

eye',

- the semiotic character, its codes and 'signifying practises' of the cinema is emphasized,

- importance of the recorded image, the image seen, of seeing, and of knowing how to see is overtuned because; he argues that thinking returns to the visual in the form of image,

- 'resistance' is always a duty in the movies as a contingent aspect of a fundamental obligation, of a necessary phenomenological responsibility toward oneself, others, the world and the truth. (Bellour 193-211)

In summary, Godard's cinema, as an example of Brechtian aesthetics, deconstructs the spectator's pseudo-dominant position and forms its position as a critic-viewer. This alienatory effect is also the cause of importance for feminist theoreticians of the analysis of cinematic production: criticism of what is visual; of vision and sight and, of their hidden structures.

As Grosz implicated:

"Vision performs a distancing function, leaving the looker unconnected in or unpolluted by its object. As Sartre recognized; the look is the domain of domination and mastery; it provides access to its object without necessarily being in contact with it."
(Grosz 38)

Much of Irigaray's criticism is also directed towards this privileging of the visual in Western culture (Vasseleu 7), which she argues is tied to the

existence of a monological masculine subjectivity. For Derrida who defines 'light' as the concept or the metaphor by means of which truth can be made to appear or become present to consciousness. (Vasseleu 251) Therefore, light as the truth claim is like a fabrication in its texture, a surface of a depth that also spills over and passes through the interstices of the fabric. As Blanchot argues:

“Seeing presupposes distance,...seeing means that this separation has nevertheless become an encounter. But what happens when what you see, when the manner of seeing is a kind of touch, when seeing is contact at a distance? What happens when what is seen imposes itself upon the gaze, as if the gaze were seized, put in touch with the appearance? What happens is not an active contact, not the initiative and action which there still is in real touching.” (Blanchot 32)

Sterritt quotes that for Godard a movie is a photographed reality and so can not be symbolic (Sterritt 39) Then, the process of looking become very important because cinema is just life and there is nothing symbolic about reality. Godard has always insisted on the importance of the recorded image, of the image seen, of seeing, and of knowing how to see: “You have to be able to see, and if you are, to exercise this ability at the right moment.”, if we quote him. (Bellour 208) What is more, the Godardian 'vision' is anything but a hallucination, a fantasy or a dream that is a relation of the whole body to vision: contact, but a distance.

4.4 Two Or Three Things I Know About Her (Deux Ou Trois Choses Que Je Sais D'elle, 1966)

Dir: Jean-Luc Godard

Screenplay: Jean-Luc Godard, suggested by two articles of Catherine Vimenet, 'La Prostitution dans les grands ensembles', *Le Nouvel observateur*, 29 March and 10 May 1966.

Photography: Raoul Coutard

Performers: Marina Vlady, Anny Duperey, Roger Montsoret, Raoul Lévy

Music: L. Van Beethoven

Sound: René Levert

Production: Anouchka Films/Argos Films/Les Films du Carosse/ Parc Films.
35 mm. 90 min.

Two or Three Things I Know About Her is a film about a family, and especially about the wife, Juliette. It is first of the later examples of documentary-fiction style of Godard's cinematography so, it can easily be observed that the movie oscillates between the forms of documentary and fiction; it is both a sociological report on the urban transformation of Paris (which is referred to with a double referent of the word *Her* at the title), and the fictional investigation of a nuclear family and especially of a woman's life. Godard quoted by MacCabe states that:

"...the real 'political' film that I would like to end up with would be a film about me which would show to my wife and daughter what I am, in other words a home-movie, amateur movies represent the popular base of the cinema." (MacCabe 23)

According to Colin MacCabe, the 'I' of the title is represented by Godard's own commentary on the soundtrack and the uncertainty of the 'knowledge' which is emphasized by the dissociation of sound and image and the increased use of montage. (MacCabe 52) Two Or Three Things concentrates on the effects of consumer capitalism on the Parisian working class. The nuclear family in the movie lives in a new housing estate on the outskirts of the city and the film represents the changing world around them; Robert is a car mechanic, Juliette is a house-wife and their boy is a student of a beginning school as a typical nuclear family around which the mise-en-scène is changing. The screen of the movie is filled with construction machines which are re-forming the urban spatial relations. While proportions of Paris are disappearing and the city is being reconstructed, Godard's voice announces on the soundtrack of the movie:

"One thing is obvious: that is the structuring of the Paris region will enable the government to carry out its class policy with even greater ease and that the monopolies will be able to direct and organise the economy without really taking into account the strong desire to a better life of those eight million inhabitants."

The film is set at the moment when luxury goods came within the economic sphere of the working class, during the boom in consumer goods before rampant inflation and depression of the French economy. Here, Godard, sees advertising as playing a crucial role in forming people's desires, creating a new market for expanding production. (MacCabe 93) Once

again, the family and the home are the centers of consumption and it is the wife's job to manage this process. It is stated by the movie as such that:

“Enjoying facilities they never had before, people use gas and hot water without thinking of the bill to come. This means money for the rent or else doing without TV, a car, or holidays. A change from their usual standards, in other words.”

Not very different from contemporary socio-economic conditions of our country today, Godard represents the historical changes in 60s' France without being very optimistic about them. In Two Or Three Things, his attention focuses on the wife, Juliette who takes casual prostitution to earn the extra money needed to keep up with this new definition of 'correct standards of living'. However, women's usage of their sexuality is not perceived as exotic or erotic in this movie unlike from My Life To Live or A Woman Is A Woman, on the other hand, alienation as well as identity problem of feminine world in relation to masculine counterpart is emphasized.

Godard's perception of women's sexuality in relation to consumption under the oppression of capitalism finally reproduces the equation of woman and sexuality. In Two Or Three Things voice-over tells a story which is:

“ always the same...she meets a boy., gets pregnant, he leaves her. Next year, another guy, same thing. At the maternity home she gets

sermons but also useful tips on how to support two kids. So she does her job day by day and becomes a prostitute at night. One day a nice guy falls in love with her and marries her. They set up house...too expensive, of course. A third kid arrives and the husband asks her to go on the street."

This story can be analyzed as the post-war development of capitalism which has powerful effects on the working-class family as well as the middle-class life standards. The embourgeoisement of the consumer boom in 60s has created a conspicuous consumption, and its contradictory results have mostly affected women. The house wife is tied more to the home and a rigid division occurs between inside and outside i.e. between private and public life. Here, it is also important to emphasize the two-sided metaphorical meaning of the 'house' for Godard and his cinema; for example Juliette explains to her child the meaning of 'language' as 'the house that man lives in'. This Heideggerian dialogue might be analyzed as follows:

"As social beings, women are constructed through effects of language and representation. Just as the spectator, the term of the moving series of filmic images, is taken up and moved along successive positions of meaning, a woman or a man is not an undivided identity, a stable unity of 'consciousness', but the term of a shifting series of ideological positions...The social being is constructed day by day as the point of articulation of ideological formations, an always provisional encounter of subject and codes at the historical (therefore changing) intersection of social formations and his or her personal history. While codes and social formations define positions of meaning, the individual reworks those positions into a personal, subjective construction." (Lauretis 14)

Godard's female characters, especially in his New Wave period, are

youthful and concerned with attractiveness in a narcissistic fashion. Their representation is largely as children; very playful and being aware of displaying fascination with their movements. (Loshitzky 137) Women in his early movies are not 'charming or sexy' for example in Alphaville unlike the femme fatales of early American thrillers; because they are related to child-women types: they are always dressed simply, in regular, everyday clothes and their clothes are not used to fetishize their bodies. To a certain extent, it can be argued that Godard's 'misogynism' and his tendency to portray cinematic versions of the romantic idea of women as 'enigma' in his existentialist period are the results of his conceptualization of women as the 'unknown other as if it is a dark continent.' However with Two Or Three Things I Know About Her, which was made during the same year as Masculine-Feminine, Godard's move to representation of politics of the sexual difference and radical cinema began. The themes of prostitution, capitalism and consumerism are crystallized in his ethnographic observation of French society in relation to its environment. In Two or Three Things, he continuously quotes Raymond Aron's book, Eighteen Lessons On The Industrial Society while talking about economic developments. (Loshitzky 144) Godard's voice-over whispering in the film promises 'to examine the city and its inhabitants like a biologist studying social pathology' and he argues in *Le Nouvelle Observateur* that '...in order to live in society in Paris today, on no matter what social level, one is forced to prostitute oneself in a way or another-or to put it another way, to live under conditions resembling those of prostitution...In modern industrial society, prostitution is the norm.' (Loshitzky 144-145)

An unique aspect of Two Or Three Things I Know About Her is its de-romanticization of prostitution as opposed to My Life To Live. In the movie, Juliette's prostitution is represented not as an example of bohemian lifestyle but as an economic necessity for a house wife and it is also not represented as the moral corruption of female world and ethics. On the other hand, in Two or Three Things prostitution is dislocated from its natural environment that is the street or the brothel, to the domestic sphere, the dominance of family. Thus, the tension between ordinary, familial or monogamic sex and its 'other' which is extra-familial or polygamous, is blurred. Juliette is a mother, a wife and a prostitute and the new protagonist of consumer society while she is fully aware of her submissive function in it. (Loshitzky 145) However, she does not have the courage either to criticize or to rebel against a whole patriarchal system that encourages prostitution and consumerism. While Juliette is confessing her existence in a hotel room to the camera, Godard forms his social criticism:

"JULIETTE: The idea of being sexually independent of a man is tempting. But in practice I'd hate it. Humility isn't a good thing because it is sad. I'd say the same about shame as a way of stopping people quarelling. Because shame determines everyone's actions on the basis of other people's approval or censure so, it is sad, too. Therefore, it is bad, like self-contempt and all such feelings."

'Women suffer because they cause suffering' was the dialogue of Emile with Angela in A Woman Is A Woman. However, in Two Or Three Things,

Juliette is more conscious about her identity as well as her male counterparts as she saying:

“JULIETTE: Together is a word I like. Together means thousands of people perhaps a whole city. No one knows what the city of the future will be like. Part of the wealth of meaning it once had will undoubtedly be lost. Maybe the creative and formative roles of the city will be taken over by other forms of communication, maybe television or radio...(whatever) a new language is needed.”

Godard is one of the filmmakers whose speech is like his filmmaking because his filmmaking is like speech. What should be emphasized especially for Two Or Three Things that it is maybe the first movie which exemplifies 'solitude as well as that much popularized' language of Godard.

What he argues about Two Or Three Things is as such:

“My approach in this movie can be explained in four principle movements:

1. objective description
2. subjective description
3. search for structure...in other words, the sum of the objective and subjective description should lead to the discovery of certain more general forms; should enable one to pick out, not a generalized overall truth, but a certain complex feeling, something which corresponds emotionally to the laws one must discover and apply in order to live in society.
4. life...in other words, having been able to define certain complex phenomena while continuing to describe particular events and emotions, this will eventually bring us closer to life than at the outset.

Actually, when I come to think about it, a film like this is a little as if I wanted to write a sociological essay in the form of a novel, and in order to do so had only musical notes at my disposition.” (Godard on Godard)

The figuration rather than representation of women in the Barthesian sense (Barthes 55) is very important in Godard's movies. If we quote Barthes here to explain the distinction between figuration and representation; figuration is the way in which the erotic body appears in the profile of the text...and even more than the text, the film will always be figurative even if it represents nothing. Representation, on the other hand, is embarrassed figuration, blocked with other meanings than that of desire: a space of excuses (reality, morality, likelihood, truth etc.) (Barthes 56) This can be a crucial keypoint to explain Godard's continuing emphasis on the importance of images as metaphorical prepositions in the filmic representation. The images as figurative pictures associated with each other and form a totality which 'represents' the position of the filmmaker in relation to culture and the film industry; and the common workings of sexuality and money: consumerism and prostitution. In Two Or Three Things he asks and answers questions about 'images' that:

"Why all these signs which make me doubt language by drowning reality rather than detaching it from the imaginary? In images, anything goes: the best and the worst. Before my eyes, common sense repairs the break in my reasoning. Objects exist and if we pay them more attention than we do people, it is because they exist more than those people."

Godard also exemplifies images of the 'objects of desire' which are usually women's bodies and consumption goods and defines an object as 'a link' enabling us to pass from one subject to another, therefore 'to live together'.

But since social relations are always ambiguous, he argues that everybody must listen and look around more than ever and formulates the hope for a genuine new city as such, in Two Or Three Things : “If you can’t afford LSD, buy a colour television.”

The socio-economic and psychological states of characters in this movie clearly figurates the historical conditions of 60s when the capitalist boom starts and people are eagerly starting to consume products. What is striking here are the philosophical undertones of the economic analysis through which Godard usually forms his cinematic style. Although, women are seen as naturally enigmatic, people, whether men or women, are trapped in the uncontrollable changes in the city. Urban development-as well as rural ones which are subjected to other movies of Godard; creates a social crisis that can be formulated in a triangle: consumerism, women’s body and the spectacle society. From this point we can skip to cinema which figures, shows, represents or transforms this dilemma. Two Or Three Things exemplifies the female body as the signifier of commodity fetishism, linking it to the society of spectacle through the discourse of sexuality-in advertising. While Godard draws attention to the commodification of woman, in the advertisement of consumer capitalism as well as literally in prostitution, he also draws attention to an eroticization of the commodity. The figuration of femininity and the feminine enigma allows Godard to suggest other enigmas; aesthetic, cinematic and socio-economic, e.g. that of the commodity. Laura Mulvey argues that:

“Two different topographies underlie the network of links between ideas, slippages of meaning, displacements and condensations that are exchanged across the triads. For instance, the cinema, the eroticized female body, and the consumer commodity all share the attribute of spectacle. They can reinforce and overlay each other in a series of analogies. On the other hand, they can create a network of interconnections so that the connection between woman and commodity consumption is a social alignment rather than one of analogy or metaphor. On the other hand again, in the form of the prostitute, the woman's relationship with the commodity is analogous. Both offer themselves for sale in the market place. Both have to produce a desirable surface. Both have to circulate without reference to any history outside the moment of exchange.” (Mulvey 79)

What about the women's self-knowledge about these formulations? Juliette says 'I existed that is all I know', just like Angela in A Woman Is A Woman and Madelein in Masculine-Feminine are not very different either. So, from here we can reach a similar conclusion with Godard that although there are always individual differences among people and especially among men and women, they are historically formed by the social structure. Unlike from dominance of money in American movies, however, Godard represents social structure processing everyday life without forgetting the power struggle continuing in the background and, by this way, alienates the spectator from what he/she watches in order to make him/her being able to 'deconstructs' what is seen. However,

“The cinema is all money (but), the money figures twice: first you spend all your time running to get the money to make the film but then in the film the money comes back again, in the image. All the images of cinema are also images of money.” (MacCabe 27)

On the other hand, there is a difference for Godard as he stated in one of

his interviews that:

“...politics has been so used, so misused and I feel that I have used it too much because I bought it under false pretences...I consider myself much more in terms of between, than in terms of some fixed place...For me it is the between that exists and the places are more immaterial. The camera is a between (too) but, because it is a solid object, people, movie people, do not think it is real communication. They think travel is just showing your ticket. They forget the between but the camera is a between, between what goes in and what comes out; the camera is communication in a solid state.”
(MacCabe 77)

Finally, as later Godard states in Gay Knowledge (1968) that ‘the problem is to get back zero’, Robert says at the end of the Two Or Three Things while concluding the struggle as such that: ‘I forget everything except that I'm back at zero and have to start from there.’, before we see the last images of the movie which are advertisements for cleaning materials. Here, maybe we also came back to the point of zero and have to start again.

What is important then, is to analyze the rhetoric of patriarchy in the cinema. The difference of Godard's movies is his radical technical efforts as well as his improved dialogues and lengthy philosophical discussions. Godard as one of the most influential figures of the cinema deals with all the concerns of the history of cinema such as the relationship of film to society, questions about whether there is a ‘correct’ radical form or is radical content enough, the relation between theory and praxis as well as film and ideology etc. Therefore, seeing cinema as something between life and art, Godard tries to realize a dream of it; in his words “to try and make his film as best he can” because “this is the work of a filmmaker”.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Virginia Woolf explains in the article, "The Cinema" , that cinema has been caused many difficulties for the traditional understanding of aesthetics before its time. As Neillie quoted from Woolf:

"People say that savage no longer exists in us, that we are at the fag end of civilisation, that everything has been said already and that is too late to be ambitious. But these philosophers have presumably forgotten the movies. They have never seen the savages of the twentieth century watching the pictures...For the cinema has been born the wrong end first. The mechanical skill is far in advance of the art to be expressed. It is as if the savage tribe instead of finding two bars of iron to play with had found scattering the sea shore fiddles, flutes, saxaphones...and had begun with incredible energy without knowing a note of music to hammer and thump upon them all at the same time."
(Neillie 348-352)

It can be argued that Walter Benjamin explains the same difficulties in his well-known essay "The Work of Art in the Age Of Mechanical Reproduction" as such that in the case of films, mechanical reproduction is not an external condition but a *sine qua non* of the technique of film production for mass distribution. As Braudy and Cohen from this article, he argues that : "From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints; to ask for the 'authentic' print makes no sense. But the instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practise-politics..., mechanical reproduction of art changes the

reaction of the masses toward art.” (Braudy and Cohen 731) This understanding has been seen in Godard’s understanding of filmic production too because, for him as we can see in the MacCabe’s *Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics* that “... two aspects of cinema are important; on the one hand, the financing of the films and, on the other, the organisation of sounds and images.” (MacCabe 18)

Objectively projected, visibly and audibly expressed before us, the film’s activity of seeing, hearing and moving signifies in a pervasive language. Cinema, thus, transposes without completely transforming, the modes of being alive and consciously embodied in the world that count for each of us as a direct experience. Braudy and Cohen quotes from Benjamin’s article “The Work Of Art In The Age Of Mechanical Reproduction” that:

“Abel Gance..., compares the film with hieroglyphs as saying that ‘pictorial language has not yet matured, because eyes have not yet adjusted to it. There is as yet insufficient cult of, what it expresses’...Werfel states that undoubtedly it was the sterile copying of the exterior world with its streets, interiors, railroad stations, restaurants, motorcars, and beaches...” (Braudy and Cohen 739)

So, it can be said that because films communicate, enforce and suggest meanings, they constitute a kind of a hieroglyphic language through which, an analogy between the word and the shot can be produced. What is political about and in this language, then, is the montage; the art of combining pieces of film or shots into larger units as in

Eisensteinian and later Godard's understanding who argues in Jean-Luc Godard: Son+Image that "my idea as a practitioner of the cinema was that one of cinema's goals was to invent montage." (Bellour 161)

If we think about filmic representation especially from a post-structuralist point of view, we can see that theoreticians shared the belief that, even in the most seemingly natural or 'beautiful' visual images, there is an invisible ideology that affords the gaze and as John Berger points out in Ways of Seeing, like Mulvey's later formulation of the visual pleasure at cinematic narrative, that the hypothetical spectator is male with the ideology behind him that is patriarchy. Although, the hegemony of a masculine-bourgeois-white-Eurocentric classical gaze was eventually challenged by a range of diverse positionalities not only of gender but also of class, race, sexual orientation and ethnicity, those challenges did not themselves add up to a newly coherent formulation of spectatorial relations. For Mulvey, exceptions of visual domination occurred only in avant-garde films that could frankly destroy spectatorship and spectatorial pleasure and return to viewers to a material awareness of the medium. As Williams argues:

"There is still the need for a theoretical understanding of relations between films and viewers. No amount of empirical research into the sociology of actual audiences will displace the desire to speculate about the effects of visual culture, and especially moving images, on hypothetical viewing subjects. Berger's insight that spectators are somehow 'in' the work remains valuable." (Williams, L. 4)

However, the concept of a singular, dominating, voyeuristic male spectator-subject is in as much need of revision as that other stereotype: the spectator as passive subject, as pure absorber of dominant ideology. If we look from a phenomenological point of view, most of the descriptions of classical and contemporary film theory have not fully addressed 'the cinema as life, expressing life, as experience expressing experience'. (Williams, L. 37) Therefore, the perception of expression and the expression of perception in filmic representation are overlooked and the intersubjective basis of the objective cinematic communication is annihilated. As Braudy and Cohen quoted Benjamin:

"The progressive reaction is characterized by the direct, intimate fusion of visual and emotional enjoyment with the orientation of the expert. Such fusion is of great social significance. The greater the decrease in the social significance of an art form, the sharper the distinction between criticism and enjoyment by the public." (Braudy and Cohen 744)

Then, is it possible to create the productive ways of criticizing the patriarchal codes of the cinema? Reading from inside as well as looking from outside and showing how in texts as complexes of signs, some structure at work can be the way to analyzing visual representation and its social codes. On the other hand, Lauletis argues that:

"As the sum of one's experiences as spectator in the socially determined situations of viewing, and in the relations of institutional discourses to the economics of film production, the dominant cinema specifies 'woman' in a particular social and natural order, sets her up in certain positions of meaning, fixes her in a certain identification. Represented as the negative term

of sexual differentiation, spectacle-fetish or specular image, in any case improper, 'woman' is constituted as the ground of representation and its stability, the mirror held up to man; but, as historical individual, the woman viewer is also positioned in the films of classical cinema as spectator-subject and thus doubly bound to that very representation which calls on her directly, engages her desire, elicits her pleasure, frames her identification and makes her complicit in the production of (her) womanness. On this crucial relation of 'woman' as constituted in representation to women as historical subjects depend at once the development of a feminist critique and the possibility of a materialist semiotic theory of subjectivity and culture." (Lauretis and Heath 187)

From this point of view, the crucial question then becomes as such: can Godard's cinema be an alternative of representing women 'on screen' without losing their voices under the masculine codes? Specifically being concentrated on the representation as well as figuration of sexuality, his cinematography is different from traditional auteur style so, as an example of a deconstructive reading of the history of cinema, early New Wave cinema and Godard's cinematography can be defined as creating a possibility of 'feminine' i.e. a female voice on screen. Godard states to MacCabe in Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics that:

"I think that my originality is that I don't make any distinction between men and women. It is just two kinds of animals. I put my direction and my lines in a man's body and a man's mouth or in a woman's body and a woman's mouth without worrying that because she is woman she can, or because he is a man he can't, say it. Sometimes I put my philosophy in three different characters whereas most directors have their own character. If they are on the left then one character represent their point of view and the other plays ping pong. That was the difficulty that people had in understanding *The Little Soldier* (for example), that my own opinion was not expressed by any one of the characters. People expect you to be for this character's view or that character's view. I say I'm for the picture...I say what I've got to say in any kind of mouth that I like. If it's a woman, it's a

woman. I don't think about whether it should be a man or a woman." (MacCabe 102)

Godard and more generally, a large section of the French intelligentsia of the 60s did at least share one basic notion: that any work worthy of the name must contain its own keys. Their complicity was not only formal, but ideological: modernity, this 'novelty' so often violently denigrated, resides in a rejection of naivety, a wish to show that one knows what one is doing; a wish which towards the end of the decade, and more particularly in Godard's case, naturally took on a directly political form. (Hayward and Vincendeau 222) Therefore, although Godard started with the belief that the meaning of his films was self-generated, he later considered film as 'society communicating with itself'. (Hayward and Vincendeau 243)

Cahiers group during the 1950s popularized Alexandre Astruc's formulations of 'caméra-stylo', and especially Jean-Luc Godard used this concept of movie-camera as if it is 'writing' rather than shooting movies in order to see 'what one would do if one could'. Alan Williams quotes Astruc who in his famous essay "The Birth Of A New Avant-Garde" explains this conceptualization:

"The cinema is quite simply becoming a means of expression, just as all the other arts have been before it, and in particular painting and the novel. After having been successively a fairground attraction, an amusement analogous to boulevard theatre, or a means of preserving the images of an era, it is gradually becoming a language. By language, I mean a form which and by which an artist can express his thoughts, however abstract that may be, or translate his obsessions exactly as he does in the contemporary essay or novel. That is why I would like to call this new age of cinema the age of the caméra-stylo." (Williams, A. 306)

Here, the problem for Godard becomes the ways of expressing thought outside the traditional methods because, cinema appears as an apparatus which tries to close itself off as a system of representation. However, there is always a certain refusal of difference, of any troubling of the system, an attempt to run away from that movement of difference, and to bind it back into the logic of perfection of the film system itself. (Wallis 378)

In conclusion, what Godard is producing through making movies about urban, consumerist and metropolitan world of 60s is a history of cinema that is also a history of the twentieth century, an account of the development of the image that is both intensely personal and steadily objective. Although he has admitted that he is not much interested in telling stories and explains his movies 'as a kind of happening, but one that was controlled and dominated" (Armes 173), this desire of free cinema puts him in parallel with the Marxist desire to defetishize the commodity by making visible through a political analysis. In this way, in Godard's cinema the materialism of a modernist aesthetics meets with the materialism of Marxism in Brechtian sense through montage and opens a new world of understanding by means of the apparatus of the camera in order to produce the product which is 'a movie'. Here, what is important in Godard's words as it is quoted by White is that "a movie is always a compromise." (White 41)

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