Repetition and the Temporal Double in Cinema: a theory of Critical Cinematic Time-travel

Kiri Veronica Sullivan
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8275-7618

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The University of Melbourne
Abstract

This thesis explores the filmic figure of the double and its relationship to temporality and repetition in cinema. I trace its evolution—extending upon and contributing to the discourse on the trope of the double—by reconceptualising the figure in relation to the function of repetition and manipulation of temporality in film. I consider the dual perspectives of characters and the spectator/scholar, as well as repetition within the individual film, and repetitions forging intertextual connections between films. I posit an original term: the ‘temporal double.’ I define it as a cinematic body/being multiplied by temporal processes, emerging via both narrative and cinematographic techniques. It is characterised by its complex relationship with time, operating as a self-reflexive tool, drawing attention to and deconstructing the function of repetition and temporal manipulations in film. In this thesis, I ask: what is the temporal double’s relationship to patterns of repetition and images of time, and how does this figure continue to be produced and repeated with difference in cinema? To answer these questions, I engage with Gilles Deleuze’s philosophy of time on two connected levels by cross-reading Cinema II with Difference and Repetition. I examine how the images comprising a film speak to each other and understand a film as a synthesis of these repeated images that, in turn, speaks to other films. In my close analysis of three films, I investigate how they extend and complicate Deleuzian conceptualisations of temporality and repetition as elements of both cinema in the form of film as a text, and of film scholarship and discourse. This Deleuzian approach allows me to posit and mobilise another original concept, ‘critical cinematic time-travel’. Critical cinematic time-travel invites contemplation not only by the spectator but also by the film critic/scholar, and occurs within broader cultural and academic contexts of film reception. Critical cinematic time-travel allows the spectator/scholar to alter not only the present and future, but the past, as they re-turn to texts such as Vertigo, which can be re-read through the lens of subsequent films including La Jetée and Primer. Tracing the progression of the temporal double, I demonstrate how this figure becomes increasingly sophisticated in its destabilisation of chronology: the figure’s manifestation renders visible the multiplicities constituting time and the self, drawing attention to and deconstructing the functions of repetition and temporality in and across cinema.
Declaration

This is to certify that:

i. this thesis comprises only my original work towards the Masters

ii. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used

iii. this thesis is less than 50,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices

Kiri Veronica Sullivan

Date: 31/10/17
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Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis employs a Deleuzian framework, based primarily on *Difference and Repetition*, to trace threads between the cinematic texts *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958), *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962), and *Primer* (Shane Carruth, 2004). I will investigate the genesis and journey of the filmic double, a figure that connects these films in a chain of intertextual self-reflexive cinematic repetitions. This thesis argues that repetition is an important cinematic technique and aesthetic that is manifest in the figure of the temporal double, a filmic trope operating as a self-reflexive tool that highlights and deconstructs the function of temporality in and across film.¹ The thesis begins chronologically with *Vertigo*, a film that plays a crucial role in the trajectory of the figure of the double, developing an early iteration of what I have termed the temporal double. The temporal double is defined in this thesis as a specifically cinematic figuration of repetition produced by the Deleuzian processes (or *syntheses*) of time (Sullivan 2016; Deleuze 2004). It will be argued that this figure that destabilises chronology, and in doing so embodies and enables a type of critical cinematic time-travel.

The temporal double is the crucial connection between these three films. These are films that repeat, remake, and update details of other films. They participate in an intertextual dialogue or exchange across different eras and genres, reviving but also reworking images and tropes (specifically the double) from classic films (such as those of Hitchcock), in order to explore the connection between temporality and cinema in new and interesting ways. Close readings of these films will be employed to construct a typology of the cinematic temporal double.

Gilles Deleuze, the eminent French philosopher of time, is the primary theorist whose work is employed in this thesis, providing the lens through which I critique and engage with both filmic and other theoretical texts. Using Deleuzian concepts of time and repetition as conceptualised in *Difference and Repetition* and *Cinema II: The Time-Image* this thesis posits the cinematic temporal double as distinct from the psychoanalytic figure of the double (2004; _ibid._).

¹ This idea of the ‘temporal double’ was specifically conceptualised for the purpose and argument of this thesis. I have presented aspects of my research, including this original term, as part of a paper titled “Repetition and the Temporal Double in Cinema” at the conference, REPETITION/S: Performance and Philosophy in Ljubljana, at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (September 2016). I also extended upon this paper in an article, Ponavljanje in časovni dvojnik v Vrtoglavici in Mestu slovesa (Repetition and the Temporal Double in Vertigo and La Jetée), published in Problemi journal (9-10/2016), which incorporates a nascent iteration of another original concept developed across this thesis, that of ‘critical cinematic time-travel.’
Besides a heightened emphasis on temporality, the Deleuzian double diverges from the psychoanalytic double in my emphasis on its relationship with the future, which not only co-exists with but overshadows its relationship to the past. I investigate how the figure of the double is not only repeated throughout the diegeses of these films, but repeated differently. I show how new narratives featuring the double not only rework this figure but influence how earlier representations of the double are interpreted retrospectively. I interrogate how this figure continues to be produced, repeated, and reworked in cinema, tracing it across time, from the classic double posited by Otto Rank, to the contemporary science-fiction double in Primer (Shane Carruth, 2004).

The temporal double differs from the classic Rankian double because it is specifically cinematic and because it is characterised by and comes into being through specifically temporal processes, which are conveyed by cinematic images and techniques. The temporal double embodies or actualises an individual’s virtual multiple selves. Specifically, a past self or a future self in contrast to one’s present self. These are selves that exist in thought; when one reflects on the past or anticipates the future. Whilst one’s past selves might be captured by photos or film, one’s future selves are purely virtual. Film, however, can visualise multiple selves, including future selves, through cinematographic techniques including flashbacks and flash-forwards, and narrative devices like time-travel. The temporal double belongs to a different realm of time and has the function of either distinguishing or muddling the past, present, and future through its repetitions and fraught relationship with time.

My conceptualisation of the cinematic double diverges from the existing body of work on this figure. As stated, I take a Deleuzian rather than psychoanalytic approach, due to my particular concern with the figure’s relationship to temporality. My approach in this thesis also differs from the continuously expanding corpus of Deleuzian cinematic scholarship, in which Cinema I: The Movement-Image and Cinema II: The Time-Image are most frequently employed. Whilst I do engage with Cinema II throughout this thesis, the text is cross-read and connected to the concepts of Difference and Repetition. In this regard, my approach is influenced by that of scholars including James Williams, Patricia Pisters, and Paola Marrati, who draw comparisons between Difference and Repetition and the Cinema volumes, and work with Difference and Repetition to explore film (2011; 2003 and 2011; 2008). This allows an investigation of repetition as a cinematic technique and concept in more depth and shows how difference goes beyond and precede the repeated cinematic image, to explore the
conditions for the genesis and continuation of recurring tropes such as the figure of the (body) double(d).

Following Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*, I understand repetition as inherently inhabited by difference, to varying extents, which is nearly always latent and masked (2004). I employ the term repetition-with-difference (and variations on this term) to refer to and explore striking instances of repetition in which its internal difference is drawn out and made overt. I will demonstrate how Deleuze’s understanding of time as repetition—particularly repetition-with-difference—is, when applied to cinematic repetition, both productive and deconstructive in terms of a film itself, a spectator’s repeated readings, and the resulting difference or revision in their understanding of the film.

In ‘Repetition + Cinema’ Verevis draws from Deleuze’s *Cinema* volumes and *Difference and Repetition* along with Roland Barthes’ notion of ‘re-reading’ to highlight the multiple and varied types and degrees of repetition occurring in film production, spectatorship, and scholarship. Like Barthes’ notion of re-reading, these repetitions are not ‘re-presentations[s] of identity (a re-discovery of the same), but the re-production—the creation and the exhibition—of the difference that lies at the heart of repetition’ (Barthes 1974; Verevis 2005, 226-227). This thesis investigates how texts change, in terms of meaning, through the difference produced with repetitions both within the film and of the film. Meaning, these repetitions occur both in the film itself and in its relation to other films. A spectator repeats with difference when they re-watch a film because they possess new knowledge or prescience of what is to unfold in the narrative, which alters their reading of the film. Difference also emerges when viewers re-turn to texts, such as *Vertigo*, that can be re-read with the tools provided by subsequent films, such as *La Jetée* and *Primer*, which as repetitions or remakes can give new meanings to this earlier film (Sullivan 2016).

In order to situate repetition as both cinematic technique and method of reading cinematic texts, I expand upon connections made between *Difference and Repetition* and the *Cinema* volumes and privilege Deleuze’s emphasis on repetition as *difference* to show how this notion is embodied by the temporal double. This thesis asks: what is the temporal double’s relationship to patterns of repetition and images of time and how does this figure continue to be produced and repeated with difference in cinema? To answer these questions, I engage with Deleuze across the following chapters on two connected levels; I examine the images
within a film that speak to each other, and the film as a synthesis (of such repeated images) that speaks to other films. This thesis aims to provide new ways of thinking about the filmic double as a tool for reading films. I emphasise how the repetition of the cinematic double influences the non-chronological or cyclical way in which we read films. I mobilise a form of critical cinematic time-travel that is interested in a twofold exploration of the temporal double. This exploration begins with *Vertigo* as the film that paves the way for a cinematic critical exploration of the figure of the double. The films following *Vertigo*, such as *La Jetée* and *Primer*, are thus analysed in terms of the repetition and difference of their exploration of this same trope. In turn, I explore the way we re-turn to texts (like *Vertigo*) which are re-read with the tools provided by subsequent films which give new meanings to this earlier film (Sullivan 2016). I emphasise the word ‘critical’ in ‘critical cinematic time-travel’ to demonstrate that this thesis is concerned with exploring multilayered interpretations and readings. It takes into account not just the traditional film spectator, but also the film critic and scholar within the broader cultural and academic contexts of each film.

I employ Deleuze’s terminology as developed in the *Cinema* volumes to classify each film as a ‘time-image’ film, and within each of these films, the figure of the double as an image of time. Time-image films are characterised by their ability to convey ‘direct’ time. This concerns characters’ subjective perceptions of time, and how these disrupt chronology, and are engendered primarily by cinematography through the ordering of and connection between the images/shots comprising the sequences within and the body of the film (Deleuze 2005). This thesis will explore how the emergence and repetition of the temporal double in film not only provides striking, subjective ‘direct’ images of time, but embodies a conceptualisation of time as comprised of multiple co-existing realms of time.

Whilst Deleuze does explore the co-existence of past, present, and future in developing his theorization of the time-image in *Cinema II*, the past is primarily privileged. I will rework how these three dimensions of time can interact and operate in film through repetition, specifically doubling-as-repetition via the temporal double and this figure’s relationship with these different temporal realms. I will show, for example, not only how the past clings to the present, but how the future can also intrude on and affect the present, and even the past, in cinema. I will reconceptualise and extend Deleuze’s time-image by considering the realm of the future in a way that repositions the future’s relationship with the past and the present. I appropriate Deleuze’s conceptualization of the future and its functions in *Difference and...*
Repetition to interrogate and reposition the realm of the future in the time-image in Cinema II.

Additionally, I extend the future’s functions from the way in which Deleuze regards it in Cinema II, as merely an anticipatory potentiality that is subordinate to and dependent on the past. My re-reading incorporates a variant that operates as a powerful force and determinant, as posited by Deleuze in Difference and Repetition (2005; 2004). Through film analysis I will rework, and in some instances reverse, the relationship between the past and the future in specific time-image films investigated in this thesis, and how we (re-)read these films. Thus, I aim to expand upon the future’s role in repetitions and images that disrupt cinematic chronology. This reconceptualization operates within a time-image, across a time-image film, and even further; extending beyond the film through intertextual connections with other texts. I draw from the meaning, significance, and function of the future in Difference and Repetition, to refocus and reposition its role and influence in cinematic time. I employ Deleuze’s understanding of the future in Difference and Repetition, specifically within the syntheses of time.

Pursuant to Deleuze in Difference and Repetition, I understand time as a repetition and synthesis of instants (2004, 91), much like the individual frames that constitute a film. Deleuze states that (in its simplest state) ‘synthesis constitutes time as a living present, and the past and future as dimensions of this present’ (2004; 97). Time is subjective and its synthesis occurs in the contemplating mind, contracting these repeated ‘successive, independent instants into one another’ (Deleuze 2005, 90). Deleuze further complicates this notion of time as synthesis—engendering the multiplicity of time via the co-existing interrelated realms of past, present, and future—by proceeding to develop three specific syntheses of time. Each align with either past, present, or future respectively, but are inextricably interrelated, and will be further explored in the literature review (2005).

Following scholars, including Pisters, I cross-read and make connections between Deleuze’s Cinema volumes and Difference and Repetition in order to engage with the syntheses of time and Deleuzian repetition in a specifically cinematic sense (2003; 2011). Like Pisters, I combine Deleuzian language and cinematic language, and use Deleuzian language and concepts developed in Difference and Repetition as cinematic language to investigate filmic temporality. As Pisters does, I investigate how the syntheses of time operate in cinema
I will explore how all three syntheses of time operate in a film and argue it is these processes of time, or repetitions, that give rise to the filmic figure of the double. A film unfolds in the present, but was produced in the past and speaks from the future. Following Pisters, I align certain cinematic images (particularly those of doubling) with Deleuze’s three syntheses of time and consider how concepts developed by Deleuze in the Cinema volumes connect to those in Difference and Repetition (2011, 269).

This thesis investigates cinematic images as time-images, that also belong to or align with Deleuze’s syntheses of time. I show that repetition is a crucial dimension of the cinematic time-image through exploring how certain images, especially those repeated, and which convey doubling, draw attention to the syntheses of time operating in a film through repetition-with-difference. I draw from Deleuzian theory to investigate the cinematographic and narrative techniques that convey temporality and temporal manipulation. In the films investigated I consider specific cinematic images and repetitions in order to show how cinematography and narrative work to provide a filmic variant of Deleuze’s syntheses of time.

My methodology involves close textual analysis of each film, and also draws from the work of cinema scholars Raymond Bellour and Constantine Verevis on repetition and intertextuality, explored in depth in the literature review. By focusing on the formal and technological aspects of the individual film, which will be broken down into sequences, I will engage in an extensive shot-by-shot analysis. This will enable me to identify and distinguish between different types and patterns of repetition operating in a film. Following Bellour, I believe it is important to explore layers of connections and repetitions from across a director’s body of work, down to individual films, sequences, scenes, and shots. This occurs in my analyses of Hitchcock’s Vertigo and Marker’s La Jetée, films I will show are connected through intertextual repetitions. The double is investigated as a repetition that operates on multiple levels within a text, across an auteur’s body of work, and across cinema. It is self-reflexive and intertextual in its repetitions both as an image within a film and as a trope that connects films by participating in larger circuits of repetition across cinema. This thesis draws attention to and extends Bellour’s acknowledgement that one can broaden his theorisation of textual repetition to include the cinematic remake as another type of repetition occurring on an intertextual level (1979, 66). A cinematic repetition-with-difference is produced as a narrative and its corresponding images are updated to address a new audience,
era, or setting. I explore how *Vertigo*, a Hollywood film, is considered to be ‘remade’ or repeated as *La Jetée*, a French art-house film (analysed in the fourth chapter) which was also subsequently repeated (with variation)—both by experimental avant-garde films such as *Primer*—and remade/returned into a mainstream Hollywood film as *12 Monkeys* (Terry Gilliam, 1995). Through exploring these repetitions, I demonstrate how it is the repeated figure of the double connecting these films and operating as a self-reflexive tool, thereby assisting the spectator/scholar in their reading and re-reading of these films both in themselves and as remakes, and as part of a broader pattern of repetition across cinema. I also posit films as syntheses in a series of syntheses across cinema. Films are connected, repeating each other and repeating ideas with difference, thereby transforming each other through synthesis.

Thus, this thesis extends and reworks Deleuze’s syntheses of time as an intertextual cinematic process occurring both within a film and across cinema. I also rework Deleuze’s idea of the time-image and its duality to include that of the viewer/character dynamic, making spectatorship an important aspect of understanding the double and its relationship to time (through repetition) (2005). Cinema operates as a time-machine revisiting form across films, enabling the spectator (who is always doubled with the character/s) to participate as a time-traveller as they watch and re-watch these interconnected films. The spectator therefore mirrors the temporal double character—who upon encountering their doubled self participates in both identification and dissociation—recognising both the sameness and difference emerging through repetition. I have chosen three main texts and a major theoretical framework, making connections and tracing threads between these films (and between Deleuze’s texts) and the images and concepts they give rise to in order to explore their shifting relations of sameness and difference, as well as unity and multiplicity.

Recognition of the temporal double highlights repetition as a self-reflexive and deconstructive cinematic technique. Following this figure, the spectator and scholar are able to participate in what I propose as a type of critical cinematic time-travel. Through this we are able to offer new meanings to texts by re-reading them through subsequent texts and their repetitions and references to earlier films. The three films investigated in this thesis are films which I show speak to each other and can be used to read each other, and demonstrate how the meaning of texts change through the difference produced by repetitions both within the film and of the film.
Chapter two offers a survey of the key literature employed in this thesis. It indicates the intersection of theories and research on the double, repetition, temporality, and how this thesis engages with Deleuze’s *Cinema II* and *Difference and Repetition* in order to posit a reconceptualisation of the filmic figure of the double and its relationship with cinematic repetition.\(^2\)

Chapter three focuses on *Vertigo*, a film that works with both the time-image and the syntheses of time. I identify it as a turning point in the cinematic portrayal of the double, an early iteration of the temporal double, as a synthesis of a classic double and a Deleuzian double whose relationship with temporality becomes increasingly complex (Sullivan 2016). I will argue *Vertigo*’s reworking of the double is innovative and influential in its exploration of the connection between temporality and identity in the sense that they are both layered—which is conveyed by the film’s unconventional manipulations of identification and perspective—and susceptible to fracturing—of both the identity/body of the double and the body of the film.

The fourth chapter explores *La Jetée* by Chris Marker, a film that repeats elements of *Vertigo* with difference. I will show how *La Jetée*’s repetition of *Vertigo*’s doubling effectively actualises the virtual temporal double proposed by *Vertigo* via cinematography, structure, narrative, and genre (Sullivan 2016). *La Jetée* repeats and revises *Vertigo*. We can regard it as *Vertigo*’s temporal double. *La Jetée*, however, crosses a threshold, by actualizing the virtual temporal double, further explicating the relationship between temporality and identity, as the protagonist double’s fractured and repeated body/identity determines the non-chronological structure of the film, which becomes apparent through repetition-with-difference. *La Jetée*’s production of this new type of type of double is a pivotal shift in the trajectory of the temporal double I trace in this thesis, both in terms of the cinematography/images depicting the figure and how it operates as an intertextual self-reflexive tool inviting the spectator/scholar to engage in a form of critical cinematic time-travel.

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\(^2\) This theoretical framework and argument also shapes my conference paper “Repetition and the Temporal Double in Cinema”, which presented aspects of my ongoing thesis research at the time (Sullivan 2016). The paper focused on the relationship *Vertigo* and *La Jetée* via the evolution of this new type of doubling.
The fifth chapter on Primer, extends, develops, and deconstructs the figure of the temporal double, constructing a contemporary science-fiction double that continues to destabilise cinematic chronology and reject the ‘presentness’ of cinema. Primer continues the destabilization of the interrelated elements of perspective, identification, and identity through the manipulation of temporality as explored in the two previous films, but further complicates this through unstable hierarchies of knowledge and power. Primer’s evolution of the temporal double, and the magnification of the multiplicities of the self and images and lines of time—which are fractured and in turn fracture the body of the film—create a ground-breaking non-chronological assemblage of visual and narrative temporal paradoxes. The concept of critical cinematic time-travel becomes further sophisticated when applied to Primer, in terms of both spectatorship of and the discourse surrounding the film, as non-chronological repetition determines both the structure of the film and its reception.

Each of the films examined are significant and subversive because they generate images and repetitions that disrupt chronology. I consider chronology in relation to both the structure or body of film and the discourse surrounding the film. This includes both narrative structure and cinematography (the order and arrangement of images comprising the film), and the realm of spectatorship and film criticism (how these films provide spectators/scholars with new reading strategies and how their experiences of these films change with time and repetition). Likewise, I also focus on intertextual repetitions, for example recognizing La Jetée’s repetitions of Vertigo. Such repetitions exist both internally within each film—comprising the formal components of narrative and cinematography—and externally to the film, which includes viewing conditions and discourse on the film, taking into account how texts are repeated by being re-watched and referenced. I consider how repetition destabilises chronology, exploring how the order in which we experience and re-experience texts can offer the spectator/scholar new readings. This destabilisation is embodied by the temporal double and occurs through the depiction of doubling as repetition. The pivotal evolution of the (temporal) double moves it beyond a trope into a self-reflexive visual manifestation of Deleuzian repetition that functions as a provocation into cinematic temporality and repetition (Sullivan 2016). It embodies and enables a non-chronological way of reading and re-reading texts.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Part 1: Deleuze and the Syntheses of Time

Deleuze and Cinema

This thesis aims to reconceptualise the filmic figure of the double and cinematic repetition via a Deleuzian framework grounded in difference and repetition. Following Deleuze (in *Difference and Repetition*), I understand *time as repetition* and extend this to reconceptualise cinematic time. In this thesis time (as repetition) is positioned as a destabilising, deconstructive cinematic technique. The temporal double operates as a time-image and manifestation of repetition. Its existence and relationship to time informs the structure and resonates throughout the body of a film on multiple layers. This is realised in each shot comprising the film, the film as a whole, and the film’s connection to other films. In this thesis I follow scholars including Williams and Pisters—who cross-read and make connections between *Difference and Repetition* and the *Cinema* volumes—in order to conceptualise the repetitions of the figure of the double and the films in which they emerge as both images and syntheses of time (2011; 2003; 2011). It is not only time-images in (a single) film that can expose multiplicities, duration and subjective time, but also the spectatorial experience of cinema, through which the spectator/scholar can identify and conceptualise self-reflexive and intertextual repetitions that forge connections between texts and new ways of conceiving cinematic temporality.

Deleuze’s work on film, developed in *Cinema II: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema II: The Time-Image*, is situated within and stems from his earlier and broader writings on the philosophy of time and repetition, drawing from the work of Henri Bergson to offer a specifically cinematic theorisation of time (2005; 2005). Deleuze engages with those theories in order to foreground the elements most fundamental to the cinematic medium; that a film unfolds in time and consists of continuously differentiating planes of movement (2005, 42-44). Deleuze considers particular signs and images as essential elements of the filmic medium that engenders a distinction between two main categories of cinema: movement-image films or classical cinema, which convey ‘indirect time’, and time-image films of the
modern cinema, which convey ‘direct time’- identifying the post-World War II era as the moment these types of films began to be made (2005, xvi; 35-37; 39-41).

Some key differences between movement-image films and time-image films can be identified through their relationship to causality and subjectivity and how this is expressed through both narrative and cinematography. In movement-image films time is subordinated to movement because movements (between shots for example) depend on physical actions. Time-image films, conversely, privilege subjective experiences of time and allow ‘aberrant movements’ to occur, giving rise to images of thought (such as memories, dreams, or premonitions) that can be ‘virtual’ or mental rather than ‘actual’ or physical, and disrupt the chronological ordering of time into past preceding present, preceding future (2005, 39-41). A crucial yet simple distinction between these types of films can be identified in patterns of cinematography and editing; how specific shots are positioned together and ordered to comprise a sequence within a film. As Laura Marks describes it, in movement-image cinema, ‘frame follows frame causally, according to the necessities of action’, whilst ‘time-image cinema…frees time from causality’ (2000, 27). Marks explains how following Deleuze’s theorization of time-image cinema, such films ‘[pull] the viewer between objective and subjective poles’ in how they ‘force the viewer to draw upon his or her subjective resources in order to complete the image’ and thus encourage them to question representation (2000, 42).

Time-image films follow a different cause-and-effect logic to movement-image films. This is engendered in time-image narratives via character motivation and movement throughout the world of the film, and further elucidated by depicting and dwelling upon the subjective perceptions of characters. It is not only the narrative structure and the cinematographic linking of shots—which comprise sequences and progress the story—that generate such subjective time-images. They also arise in plot, via characters’ individual struggles with time, and broader temporal paradoxes embedded in narratives. This subsequently encourages a reworking and interrogation of cinematic causality and temporality. Contrasting movement and time-image cinema, Richard Rushton points out that movement-image films, which focus on action and reaction, tend to be characterised by the emergence of a problem or set of problems and the necessary search for a solution, ‘[o]r in other words, they are defined by the prospect of the world being ‘out of joint’ so that ways of putting the world back in its proper shape can be found’ (2012, 4). Once a solution or stable order is established, further change is not necessary, and the future is closed off. In contrast, what distinguishes time-image films is
their *inability* to find such solutions, that problems ‘are not solved in determinate ways; rather, their solutions are left open’ (2012, 4). Rushton emphasises the openness of time-image films, emphasising this ‘has profound consequences for an understanding of time, for it means that, at a first level, the future remains open to change’, and stresses Bergson’s contribution to this conceptualisation of cinematic temporality and the cinematic, highlighting how Deleuze, following Bergson, considers time as *change* (2012, 5-6). Conceiving of time as change applies not just to the future or the present, but also to the *past*, which as Rushton points out, is a major innovation Deleuze adapts from Bergson, as he positions the direct image of time as ‘one in which the past itself will be malleable, not fixed and set for all time’ (2012, 6).

In making this distinction, Rushton draws attention to a time-image film’s ability to destabilise and rework temporality in relation to narrative by eschewing a structure comprised of a clear and closed ordering of events in favour of a configuration that is not as contained or certain as a movement-image film which would adhere to a problem-followed-by-solution format. It is also necessary to consider how it is not just the ordering or existence of a resolution to the problem, but the *nature* of the problem, and the significant effect a problem of a *temporal nature* can have on a film, extending beyond the narrative. Deleuze writes specifically about time being ‘out of joint’ in *Cinema II*, a notion he also discusses in *Difference and Repetition* (2005, 39; 2004, 111). ‘Time is out of joint’: it is off the hinges assigned to it by behaviour in the world, but also by movements of world’ (2005, 39).

Deleuze writes of time-image films being driven by ‘…characters, caught in certain pure optical and sound situations, [who] find themselves condemned to wander about or go off on a trip’… Such characters ‘no longer exist in the interval of movement’…, rather, a ‘reversal is produced: movement is no longer simply aberrant, aberration is now valid in itself and designates time as its direct cause’ (2005, 39). This description of cinematic time evokes Deleuze’s notion of difference-in-itself, as developed in *Difference and Repetition*, in the sense that difference exists in itself, not in relation to something else, that as ‘something which distinguishes itself’, difference ‘is made, or makes itself, as in the expression “make the difference”’ (2004, 36). Repetition serves difference, in how it creates the conditions allowing (already existing) difference to announce and affirm itself. Similarly, a film that mostly conforms to the classical narrative or movement-image structure, but does also feature glimpses or moments of ‘direct’ time or time-images (such as *Vertigo*, explored in the third
chapter), which is then repeated or remade as a time-image film in La Jetée (investigated in the fourth chapter) can still be read as a time-image film in itself, but it is repetition that draws attention to the pre-existing difference in the former film.

It is important to emphasise that the modern time-image cinema did not simply appear to replace the classic movement-image cinema, but to add to and enrich possible (re)readings of these films, to create not only new images and meanings through new films, but to encourage one to perceive such images and ideas in the re-reading of older films, thus in a way altering the chronology of the way a spectator uses a film as a tool to read another film. As acknowledged by Deleuze, time-images already existed in movement-image films, but ‘[i]t took the modern cinema to re-read the whole of cinema as already made up of aberrant movements and false continuity shots’ (2005, 39-40). As Deleuze puts it, ‘[t]he direct time-image is the phantom that always haunted the cinema, but it took modern cinema to give a body to this phantom’ (2005, 40). It is the repetition-with-difference or reworking of classic tropes and conventions that creates both new images and ways to interpret earlier cinematic images. An emphasis on difference within repetitions in and across the intertwined texts investigated in this thesis draws attention to and supports my argument for the transformative potential and emergence of novelty and change that come along with the more classic recurring cinematic motifs and tropes surrounding the figure of the double.

**Deleuze: Repetition and The Three Syntheses of Time**

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze speaks of time in terms of three syntheses rather than tenses. Although each synthesis is aligned closely with either the past, the present, or the future, these are inextricably interconnected processes. There is a line in *Cinema II* that serves as a simplified and succinct summary of Deleuze’s philosophy of time. For Williams, time is comprised of multiple intertwined dimensions, a concept Deleuze had developed earlier in his own original and complex theory of the three syntheses in *Difference and Repetition* (2011, 159). For Deleuze, ‘there is a present of the future, a present of the present, a present of the past, all implicated in the event, rolled into the event, thus simultaneous, inexplicable’ (Williams, 159; Deleuze 2005, 132).

Crucially, as Deleuze’s first synthesis emphasises, it is not necessarily a change in the film itself or in that which is repeated, but it is in the mind of the viewer who registers the
repetition (2004, 90). The first synthesis of time is that of habit, which as the true foundation of time, is occupied by the repetition of instants, and ‘constitutes the present in time’ (2004, 76). This first synthesis is grounded by the second synthesis of memory. This temporal framework gives rise to the contemplating individual within a temporal order that can be perceived as an arrow of time. In terms of cinema, it is productive to consider how Deleuze’s first synthesis of time creates expectancy through repetition, specifically how in the present an individual tends to anticipate future events in light of their past occurrence. As Deleuze emphasises ‘[r]epetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it’ (2004, 90). In terms of the filmic double—a manifestation of repetition as an ostensible sameness within which a hidden difference lies potentially to emerge and engender change—it is the emphasis on the recognition of this doubling-as-repetition within a narrative that brings about conflict and thus change. This realisation occurs on two levels, with the character/s within the narrative, and with the spectator. When the spectator re-watches the film, it is not the film that is changed with this repetition, but the meaning of the film to the spectator, who is watching the same film, but with new knowledge or prescience of what is to unfold in the narrative which alters their reading of the film especially prior to the revelation of the doubling in the narrative. In cinema the repetition of cinematic tropes, genres, narratives, and techniques are synthesised in the mind to establish certain expectations that will consequently influence future viewing experiences. The first synthesis can be considered as the process which engenders certain expectations, opening space for self-reflexivity and the subversion of expectations through repetitions that, as I will show, align closer with Deleuze’s second and third syntheses of time.

Deleuze’s second synthesis of time concerns memory and is thus aligned closely with the past (2004, 101). Difference becomes important in the second synthesis. Difference within repetition emerges here in how the ability to remember a past moment involves representing a difference between that past moment and the present moment to ourselves. As Deleuze explains: ‘The present and the former present are not…like two successive instants on the line of time’, rather, the present one necessarily contains an extra dimension in which it represents the former and also represents itself’ (2004, 80). Here, Deleuze borrows from Bergson and his concept of the pure past. Deleuze later draws from Bergson in a similar manner when developing the concept of the crystal, or the crystal of time in Cinema II, which as Williams observes ‘has antecedents in Difference and Repetition but in a lesser role’ (2011, 159). I expand upon this observation—considering cinematic moments where there is
a visualisation of time ‘split[ting] itself in two at each moment as present and past’ and perhaps temporarily indiscernible via the crystal image—showing how not only does the pure past co-exist with the present via the second synthesis, but how the future too exists as another co-existing level of time (Deleuze 2005, 79). This idea of co-presence is crucial to the cinematic visualisation of subjective time and its manifestation in the physical form of the body doubled, as I will employ it in my exploration of the multiplicity of time, and how it manifests in multiple selves.

Deleuze says it is the past which grounds the present, in that one’s memory corresponds to one’s ability to recall past presents and represent or repeat them to oneself (Deleuze 2004, 101-102). This thesis investigates how memory operates in various films in relation to the double. I will show how this figure, along with its illusion of identity, its present conditions, and its expectations for the future are produced via manipulation and repetition of memories of the past. In addition, I will show how such repetitions inevitably allow difference to emerge via the future, which can then potentially shatter such illusions.

I consider how cinematic repetitions of images and events can invoke involuntary memory, a concept Deleuze borrows from Proust, and which works closely with the pure past in Deleuze’s second synthesis of time. Such repetitions, I show, demonstrate how for Deleuze the sign of an involuntary memory is ‘an ambiguous sign of life; it has one foot in the pure past and one foot in the future’, a future closely tied to death and destruction (Ansell-Pearson 2010, 164). This is because, via either the crystal image or as a manifestation of the three syntheses of time, cinematic images that are repeated can visualise a simultaneous interference into the present by the past and the future. An image that may initially appear to be repeated from the past as a flashback—but which upon closer inspection is recognised as a repetition-with-difference—can be regarded as a both a virtual image of the past and a virtual image of a possible future.

It is the third synthesis of time that ‘is the future as such’ (Deleuze 2004, 113). ‘In this third synthesis, the foundation of habit and the ground of the past [defining the first two syntheses] are ‘superseded by a groundlessness, a universal ungrounding which turns upon itself and causes only the yet-to-come to return’ (2004, 114). I argue that the cinematic temporal double, particularly its internal differences, cause this ‘ungrounding’ and ‘throw[s] time out of joint’ (2004, 112). In each film investigated in this thesis I show how time is put ‘out of
joint’ by an event involving the temporal double and its repetition of difference which often concerns the future (2004). It is this third synthesis that cracks open the circle or patterns that habit and memory in the first two syntheses establish, and which this thesis shows, shatters the illusion of identity these syntheses have created for the double. I focus on the temporal double encountering their doubled self, a self that belongs to another time. Figures that belong to the future most dramatically put time ‘out of joint’ and challenge established ideas and illusions about identity and time. Deleuze describes the third synthesis as a break or a caesura in the order of time, tearing the image of time in two, causing a radical break, and shattering resemblance and identity (2004, 111-112). It is their interaction with and triggering of the third synthesis of time that positions them as figures of the future and images depicting the eternal return of difference. The third synthesis can be unsettling but also liberating as its relationship to the future emphasises a sense of openness and a possibility of change, ‘the condition of the new’ (Pisters 2011, 268). It can engender a conceptualization of a future that carries the potential of complete transformation, and encourage a reconsideration of the remembered events leading up to this realization. This thesis considers how the three syntheses are manifest in specific cinematic images, techniques, events, and concepts that through repetition manipulate and convey the multiplicity and non-chronological nature of temporality, especially of cinematic temporality, and affect the non-chronological way spectators/scholars read and repeat films. It is the temporal double that this thesis demonstrates to be the visual embodiment of a film as not a singular independent entity but comprised of intertextual syntheses of time, or cinematic images of time. Just as the double exists due to the identity of an other, or ‘original’ being, a film possesses an identity and exists because of and in relation to other films.

**Part 2: Cinematic Remakes, Self-reflexivity, and Repetition**

This thesis investigates how a film is composed of multiple types and layers of repetition, including cinematographic repetitions within the body of a film as well as intertextual repetitions across cinema including the recurrence and reworking of generic tropes and motifs, and repetitions within the spectator’s experience of film/s. I focus on how such repetitions are embodied by the temporal double, a figure I argue is both self-reflexive in how it draws attention to and disrupts filmic temporality, and intertextual in how it connects films by participating in larger circuits of repetition across cinema.
Raymond Bellour argues the narrative film is comprised of various types of repetition including spectatorial repetitions, intertextual references, and the remake as repetition (2012). He demonstrates how a film can be broken down into smaller elements to investigate how they operate together in a system composed of multiple circuits of repetition (1979; 2012). Bellour writes very specifically on cinema, clearly distinguishing the filmic text (and its constitutive repetitions) from 'the theatrical or musical production, whose repetitions vary with each performance', pointing out 'filmic representation is constituted by a printed text, the identity of which, ideally, is repeated, absolutely unchanged' (1979, 66). He acknowledges that '[t]his identity is not a pure one' in that the quality of the print of a film can vary and deteriorate and also that '[s]creening conditions...are in themselves infinitely variable', taking into account variations between cinemas, variations involved in transitions from one format to another and 'a transformation of the medium and of certain of the material conditions of the cinematic apparatus, as is the case with films shown on television' (1979, 66). Despite such variations, Bellour argues that overall, regarding film, 'an obstinate identity is maintained: that of a text', a fixed final product, like a book, which cannot be tampered with in the repetition of its unfolding (1979, 66). Similarly, this thesis is concerned with a specifically cinematic type of repetition both within the film and of the film. The spectator’s repeated experience of a film can alter the text in terms of its meaning; specifically, how they read and re-read it in relation to altered viewing contexts and to other texts.

Such repetitions are exemplified in the remake. Bellour acknowledges, albeit briefly, that his theorization of textual repetition can be extended to include the remake as another type of repetition occurring on an intertextual level (1979, 66). Bellour observes how ‘film repeats itself with its own improvements and successes’ and suggests that ‘…intertextual repetitions, are par excellence the subject of a remake, of its variation from one period to another, from one country to another’ (1979, 66). A cinematic repetition-with-difference has a dual function: it produces a new narrative and updates its corresponding images to address a new audience, era, or setting, whilst simultaneously addressing the original film and its viewers. It is a layered spectatorial experience for those who have seen both texts. The spectator draws on their knowledge from the earlier film to discern and appreciate intertextual references and their play on sameness and difference.
In *Film Remakes*, Constantine Verevis emphasises the importance of genre both in terms of repetition as intertextuality across Hitchcock’s oeuvre and within the many remakes and homages his films inspired (2006). Furthermore, Verevis draws from theories of genre and intertextuality, considering films on the levels of production, reception, and criticism in order to posit his reconceptualization of the film remake as a particular type of repetition and ‘as a specific example of a wider and more open-ended intertextuality’ (2006, 59). Verevis does not consider a Deleuzian theory of repetition in this book, but he does explore these same ideas and rework his argument within a Deleuzian framework in his brief entry, ‘Repetition + Cinema’ in *The Deleuze Dictionary* (2005, 226-228). This offers a condensed version of his position posited in *Film Remakes*, reframed through Deleuzian repetition. In both texts Verevis focuses on Hitchcock’s *Psycho* (1960), and the remakes/homages it inspired. He uses this as a specific case study to engage in close textual analysis, also taking into account spectatorship and criticism to argue for a new and productive conceptualisation of the remake as part of a process of intertextuality and to show how ‘each and every film is remade – dispersed and transformed – in its every new context or configuration’ (2006; 2005, 226-228). Like Verevis, I begin with Hitchcock to explore the significance of repetition in *Vertigo*, as well as Chris Marker’s repetitions in his ‘remake’ of *Vertigo*, *La Jetée* (Millar 2012). I suggest these films are connected in a chain of intertextual self-reflexive cinematic repetitions.

Verevis considers Hitchcock as both an auteur who continuously remade himself and filmmaker whose work is forever being remade by others. He shows how Hitchcock remade and repeated his own work, engaging in an ‘ongoing repetition of cinematic techniques (shots, transitions and sequences) and underlying themes (pursuit and rescue, guilt and punishment)’ as well as ‘loose’ remakings of his own films (2006, 60). Verevis also emphasises that ‘[t]he sense of cohesion across Hitchcock’s body of work is not only evident at the level of a particular shot or individual film, but at a broader, generic level’ (2006, 60-61). Verevis refers to Laura Mulvey’s comment on how Hitchcock repeats genre in the recycling of his own English thriller series in Hollywood with *Psycho* ‘in a way that is shocking both in its novelty and its strange familiarity’ (2006, 62). He explores *Psycho’s* ‘legacy to the horror genre’ and the specific films it inspired, arguing these serve as ‘reminder[s] both of Hitchcock’s place as a major figure in theories of film authorship and of his ongoing influence in and through (popular) film and (high) art, and the exchange between the two’ (2006, 59; 76). Verevis argues Hitchcock ‘continually remakes or recombines a
limited number of personal themes and cinematic techniques’ suggesting that ‘there can never be a simple original uncomplicated by the structure of the remake’ (2006, 63). Drawing from the work of John Frow, Verevis argues that at whichever level the intertext is situated, for example ‘shot, sequence, entire film…every remake is simultaneously a remaking of the conventions of the genre to which it belongs, and (for those viewers unfamiliar with the presumed original), the genre may be the only point of reference’ (2006, 63). He emphasises that repeating the conventions or ‘rules’ of a particular genre each film also ‘transforms and expands’ the generic formula (2006, 64).

*La Jetée* and *Primer* are science-fiction and time-travel films that repeat and rework conventions of the genre. This has the effect of both expanding this genre and producing self-reflexive texts and images that draw attention to and alter the patterns of repetition in which they participate. Thus, repetitions alternately affirm and destabilise generic tropes and motifs and in doing so offer up new images and ways of reading films within these genres. Each film investigated in this thesis in some way repeats, remakes, or updates other films (and/or genres) and in so doing participate in an intertextual exchange across different eras and genres, reviving but also reworking particular tropes/conventions from classic films, including those of Hitchcock. Specifically, the figure of the double, and repetition as both technique and aesthetic, are reworked and tie these films together. They participate in an intertextual dialogue exploring the connection between temporality, repetition, and identity in cinema in new and interesting ways.

Verevis makes crucial distinctions between the texts and reception of two remakes of Hitchcock’s *Psycho* to highlight and challenge the hierarchy appearing to have been constructed between the two films. He argues Gus Van Sant’s 1998 ‘shot by shot, line by line’ remake has typically been regarded as a revision that added nothing, and accordingly ‘dismissed as a degraded copy’ (2005, 227; 2006, 58). In contrast, as Verevis asserts, it is easy to see how Douglas Gordon’s radical remake of *Psycho, 24 Hour Psycho* (1993)—an experimental video installation replaying the film at two frames per second over 24-hours—via this manipulation of temporality does not intend ‘to imitate *Psycho* but to repeat it-to change, nothing, but at the same time to allow an absolute difference to emerge’ (2006, 75). Verevis argues *Psycho-1998* should be reframed in light of Gordon’s remake as, rather than ‘a perversion of an original identity…the production of a new event, one that adds to (rather than corrupts) the seriality of the former version’ (2005, 228). This is because, as he
contends, Gordon’s strategy succeeds in demonstrating how ‘each and every film is remade—dispersed and transformed—in its every new context or configuration’ (2005, 226-227).

Extending Verevis’ argument, both Hitchcock’s films and others’ remakings of his films can be regarded as intertextual repetitions-with-difference. As Verevis points out, the acknowledgement of Hitchcockian themes and motifs allowed other filmmakers to ‘recalculate’ the Hitchcock formula (2006, 62). My focus, as explored in the Vertigo chapter, is on the Hitchcockian motif of the double and how it is connected to the theme and technique of repetition and (retrospectively) enables the spectator/scholar to experience a type of critical cinematic time-travel encouraging a rethinking of the relationship between temporality and identity. This trope is reworked and repeated-with-difference and as a visual manifestation of repetition. The figure draws attention to other patterns of repetition occurring in a film, highlighting how they disrupt temporality, chronology, genre, and assumptions about identity—both the identity of the individual character/s—and of the film. The repeating temporal double participates in and highlights broader circuits of repetition that give rise to new iterations of this figure and through repetitions, re-readings, and remakes, adds new and different meanings to the older ‘original’ incarnations of the double and the texts it inhabits.

Corinn Columpar reflects on the medium of cinema itself as a type of ‘time machine that works by way of mediation’ in its ability ‘to transport a viewer to the past or future through a convincing mise-en-scène, to accumulate discontinuous moments through elliptical editing, and to compress or expand the flow of time through optical effects’ (2006, n.p.). She argues this is taken a step further by the science fiction genre, in particular the time-travel film, which fascinates spectators/scholars through its self-reflexivity, literalizing what cinema does virtually (2006). Gerald Alva Miller also writes about cinema as possessing ‘the properties of a time machine’, emphasising the self-reflexivity of the time-travel film and science-fiction genre (2012, 130). Miller notes that whilst cinema has always played with the spectator’s ideas about time and perception, having ‘the power to undermine our concepts of time and memory by revealing their inherently fragmentary nature’, it is the science-fiction genre and time-travel films that are particularly interesting in the insights they offer about the cinematic medium (2012, 130-131). Miller observes how science-fiction ‘has always been a genre obsessed with time’ and ‘also developed a self-conscious plot archetype that allows it to more
fully reflect upon the nature of time- the time-travel narrative’ (2012, 130). Time-travel narratives are not a recent phenomenon, Miller emphasises, but ‘one of the major strands of science fiction as early as the nineteenth century’ and ‘have proliferated far beyond the bounds of science fiction proper’ (2012, 130). Miller suggests the time-travel narrative is a particularly cinematic one. He draws from Paul Coates who argues ‘the emergence of time-travel as a literary theme at the end of the nineteenth century is a phenomenon one may suspect to be linked to the simultaneous emergence of cinema, with its capacity to manipulate the illusion of time’ (1987, 307 in 2012, 130). Miller creates a literary category, ‘science fiction of the present’, to explore texts he suggests eschew the typical estranging effects of science-fiction such as settings within alternate or future worlds, and are instead set in ‘worlds that seem indistinguishable from the real world in which the audience and the author dwell, yet… still concern the growth of technology in a manner akin to science fiction’, unfolding in the present, or even the past, and ‘pursue a predominantly realistic narrative mode’ (2012, 12; 2012, 13). Miller also creates the category of ‘documentary science fiction’ film, defining this as ‘the cinematic equivalent of science fictions of the present’, possessing ‘a realistic aesthetic to comment upon our present world or to interrogate the manners in which we perceive reality’ (2012, 133). Miller argues filmmakers working in this category ‘eschew spectacle in favor of creating films that not only problematize the genre of science fiction but that comment upon the nature of cinematic expression itself’ (2012, 133). Time-travel films tend to be self-reflexive in their focus and reflection on cinema’s ability to capture and manipulate time and how they repeat and rework the tropes of science-fiction. In this thesis I identify and explore patterns of repetition and self-reflexivity in films about time-travel or temporal paradoxes and posit the temporal double— as it emerges via processes of time (and time-travel)— as a self-reflexive tool that as a cinematic image of time and embodiment engenders a deconstruction of filmic repetition.

John Sears’ writing about doubling as ‘a manifestation of repetition’ in cinema is pertinent to my argument and reframing of such repetition via Deleuze’s syntheses of time in terms of how I connect the image of the body doubled to intertextual relations (or broader circuits of repetition) between films and across cinema and to ideas about identity, both in relation to the individual/character’s identity and the identity of the film (2003, n.p.). Sears explores science-fiction films, focusing on the doubling of bodies and ‘the processes in which doubling becomes apparent or significant’ (2003, n.p.). He extends this notion to the structure of film, suggesting it involves doubling in the form of self-reflexivity and intertextuality
Sears considers various types of repetition, including structural, in the form of generic, intertextual, and self-reflexive functions of the figure of the double. He highlights that doubling operates in cinema ‘in a variety of ways, from repetition of words, phrases, sounds, music, images and actions, to wholesale reiteration of plot structures; from character doubling to the thematic imbedding of repeated motifs; from the re-use of shots (for economic or narrational reasons) to allusion, reference, quotation and other intertextual devices’ (2003, n.p.). He suggests ‘[n]otions of return…reiteration, repetition, re-enactment, imitation, disguise, revelation, recognition, recollection and resolution characterise the rhetoric of doubling’ in cinema (2003, n.p.). The double, as this thesis will show across the following chapters, is both produced by and productive of temporal processes and structures of repetition in cinema; it is a figure that can drive but also disrupt and deconstruct a film’s narrative and temporality. This thesis also explores Sears’ suggestion that the doubled body evokes:

...anxieties about selfhood...identity, the authenticity of experience, the uniqueness of personal history, and, most graphically in the physical presence of the actor...an anxiety about the possibility that the human body can itself be reinvented, reconstructed, reworked into a form which is identical to but different from its own form...(2003, n.p.).

The filmic figure of the temporal double gives rise to images and ideas about the connection between temporality and identity, both in terms of the identity of the individual and in terms of the identity of the film. It is self-reflexive and intertextual in how it is repeated with variation across cinema and how in its participation in multiple circuits of repetition it disrupts and deconstructs chronology.

The connection between the body doubled, temporal manipulation, and genre is discussed by D.N. Rodowick in reference to the time-travel film and classic paradox and trope of the “two-body” problem (2007, 116). This describes a scenario in which two versions of a character, each aligned with a different temporal realm, encounter each other as a result of time-travel.

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3 In relation to intertextuality, and to support his exploration of doubling-as-repetition, Sears also focuses on the body/star persona of Arnold Schwarzenegger, arguing that ‘doubling is central to this actor's oeuvre’ (2003, n.p.). He observes how Schwarzenegger’s films ‘become increasingly self-referential’, arguing that [s]elf-consciousness, itself a form of doubling, becomes one of the mechanisms through which doubling is articulated’ (2003, n.p.).
Rodowick observes how most time-travel films try to avoid this paradox by prohibiting the meeting of a past and present self, insisting that there can only be a single consciousness in time (2007, 116). He emphasises there tend to be ‘gruesome consequences’ if this rule is violated (2007, 116). The intense cinematic event of encountering one’s doubled self is an important issue in this thesis and one I consider in the *La Jetée* chapter in particular. Rodowick points out that most time-travel films attempt to avoid this problem by ‘sending protagonists out of their own duration, that is, before their birth, or after their death’ exemplified by *The Terminator* (James Cameron, 1984) (2007, 116). Such a confrontation is evident in two of the three films I investigate in this thesis. In *La Jetée* this confrontation is portrayed as a dramatic event which encapsulates the notion of doubling as an important type of repetition, specifically as a repetition of bodies through and across time. This sequence—which is in itself a repetition and also comprises repeated images of the body doubled—complicates the connection between time and identity and the notions of repeating and reordering time.

**Part 3: The Double**

**Theorists on the Double**

The figure of the double, a classic cinematic trope, has been extensively written about as a fascinating cultural icon from within the context of ancient mythology and folklore to contemporary literature and cinema studies. Seminal theoretical work on the double was developed within a psychoanalytic framework by Otto Rank (1941, 1971) and also Sigmund Freud, who reworked and expanded upon Rank’s conceptualization of the double in relation to his own theory of the uncanny (1919, 1920). Baudrillard has also written about the figure of the double in regards to his theory of the simulacra (1994, 2000). However, in this thesis I take a Deleuzian approach, rather than a psychoanalytic approach. I engage with Deleuze’s work on cinema and his broader philosophy of time to conceptualise the double, and specifically, my definition of the temporal double as a filmic figuration of repetition; a being re/produced by the processes of time. (Sullivan 2016). In addition, I wish to note that whilst a Baudrillardian approach, engaging with his theory of the simulacrum, is also a perfectly valid and interesting approach, my thesis focuses on the doubling of the body across *time* (with difference), (through Deleuze) opposed to the copying of bodies or images across space.
I wish to acknowledge that the new type of double I propose in this thesis, the temporal double, is certainly related to the classic double as developed by these theorists (especially Rank’s brief discussions of cinema and time) and is foreshadowed in their work, which is why I shall give a brief overview of their work.

**Otto Rank on the Double**

In *The Double*, one of the earliest studies of the phenomenon of the double within literature and culture, Rank investigates the figure as a cultural concern. Rank was the first to develop this concept in psychoanalysis and is quoted extensively by Freud in *The Uncanny* (1919), who developed the psychoanalytic explanations in more depth in developing his theory of the uncanny (1919).

In *The Double*, Rank is concerned with notions of identity, narcissism, the fear of death, and the potential for immortality; issues central to the very nature of human existence (1971, 7). He explores how the idea of the double, both in stories and in cultural practices and beliefs, embodies and provokes questions about these ideas. As Harry Tucker points out in his introduction to *The Double*, ‘Rank, the real pioneer, apparently found the impetus for his work in a motion picture of his day, *The Student of Prague* [Stellan Rye & Paul Wegener, 1913], prompting him to study the literary, psychological, mythical, and ethnological sources and illustrations of the double’ (1971, xiv). Rank wanted to investigate ‘in what sense a subject based upon an ancient folk-tradition, and the content of which is so eminently psychological, is altered by the demands of modern techniques of expression’ (1971, 4).

Emphasising the importance of film, he suggested it might be ‘that cinematography, which in numerous ways reminds us of dream-work, can also express certain psychological facts and relationships— which the writer often is unable to describe with verbal clarity—in such clear

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4 Freud writes that "The 'uncanny' is that form of terror that leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar", but has become terrifying because it corresponds to something repressed that has returned” (1919, 219-220). Also relevant to this thesis is Freud’s crucial assertion that what makes a situation, event, thing, or artwork uncanny is repetition. ‘The constant recurrence of the same thing’ (1919, 356) Freud tells us is the main factor that engenders the feeling of the uncanny. Freud discusses one’s inner compulsion to repeat in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) as a component of the human psyche that induces feelings of uncanniness. The thing that recurs is something that has been repressed. However, in this thesis I am taking a Deleuzian view on repetition. In his book *Body Shots*, Jonathan Auerbach points out that Deleuze ‘turns Freud on his head’ in *Difference and Repetition*, by insisting that ‘We do not repeat because we repress, we repress because we repeat’ (1994, 105; 2007, 165). Following Deleuze in this thesis I emphasise that it is repetition (with difference) that comes first and is the most important and powerful force.
and conspicuous imagery that it facilitates our understanding of them’ (1971, 4). This description of the ability to convey subjective psychological states via cinematic images evokes Deleuze’s time-image, a specifically cinematic concept I employ to investigate the filmic double’s essence, which I believe lies in its relationship to time and repetition. Rank’s approach takes into account the double’s position as a figure that is both repeated and altered by cinema, suggesting ‘[t]he film attracts our attention all the more readily since we have learned from similar studies that a modern treatment is often successful in reapproaching, intuitively, the real meaning of an ancient theme which has become either intelligible or misunderstood in its course through tradition’ (1971, 4). Following Rank, I am interested in how the double is not only repeated, but repeated differently. Specifically, how new stories featuring the double not only rework this figure, but return to old ideas about the double in search of both its essence and new ways to convey it. I investigate how this figure continues to be produced, repeated, and reworked in cinema, tracing it across time from the classic double posited by Rank to the contemporary science-fiction double which I show manifests in films like Primer.

As Rank emphasises, the double harks back to primitive civilizations, and is also exemplified in literature and cinema (1971, xiv). Rank observes that many superstitions are connected with one’s mirror image or shadow, which he demonstrates is an important initial stage in the development of the double as a psychological, cultural, and artistic concept (1971, 48-49). Rank divides his examples of the doppelganger into multiple categories, describing a variety of doubles, including literal doubles, souls, shadows, reflections, portraits, psychological projections, twins, fathers/brothers, past/future selves, and one’s conscience (1971).

Following Rank, I believe it is important to recognise the existence of many variations on the figure of the double as well as the notion that all individuals are already doubled (at least virtually) via their shadows, souls, and dream selves, and that these doublings are both internal and external. Such doubling is then actualised, specifically meaning it is made overt, literal, or physical in cinema. Similarly, the cinematic tool of time-travel can be made actual rather than virtual within the narrative of a time-travel film. Both cinematography and narrative, it will be argued, visualise such virtual, imaginary, or mental images and ideas. The following chapters will explore how time-travel is a temporal process that brings the (temporal) double into being. This thesis will also show how in specific films an innate duality (which in some cases extends to multiplicity) (that of the self, and also that of time) is expressed and actualised via physical bodies doubled as a result of a manipulation of
temporality. This means the figure comes about through and is able to physically express an idea or problem of a temporal nature.

The origin of the double can be traced back to classic tales that are interested in and combine the double, narcissism, and death, such as the Greek myth of Narcissus, and famous works of literature including *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Rank 1971, 69; 71-72). Rank alludes to both temporality and the self-reflexive function of the double when discussing the connection between the double, narcissism, and death. Rank proposes multiple layers and types of doubling, including the self-reflexive doubling of the creator in the text, which this thesis demonstrates occurs in cinema and is exemplified in *Primer*, explored in the fifth chapter, in which the writer/director also acts in the film as a character who is further doubled in the narrative and body of the film. Rank writes about the double (and the killing of the double) as an expression of an individual’s ‘ineradicable past’ (1971, 80). Like Rank, I also regard the double as an expression of individual’s attachment to the past but reframe this consideration of temporality from a Deleuzian (rather than psychoanalytic) perspective and privilege the future, rather than the past. Thereby, I argue that the cinematic figure of the double embodies the multiplicity of time, or a Deleuzian co-existence of realms or syntheses of past, present, and future, as developed in *Difference and Repetition* (2004).

Rank identifies how the double can express an internal conflict between repetition or sameness and difference surrounding the self, an idea which I will extend to include one’s relationship with time. As Rank argues ‘[a]t the same time, the double points up ‘a man’s eternal conflict with himself and others, the struggle between his need for likeness and his desire for difference’, ‘a conflict which leads to the creation of a spiritual double in favour of self-perpetuation and in abnegation of the physical double which signifies mortality’ (Rank, 1941, 99-100). Such references to the double’s striking, conflicting dual expressions of sameness or repetition, and difference or mutation, in addition to allusions to a possible affirmation of difference and its potentialisation of change or becoming, have led me to adopt a Deleuzian approach in my own conceptualisation of the double. In the following chapters I develop a conceptualisation of the cinematic double as a manifestation of repetition-with-difference in order to focus on and understand the double’s relationship to filmic time and repetition.
In *The Double*, Rank and Tucker do make brief allusions to temporality in reference to the double’s origin, i.e. as belonging to or representing another temporal realm—the past or the future—but do not dwell on or elucidate these ideas (1971, xiii, 6, 24). Tucker who, citing Richard M. Meyer’s description of E.T.A. Hoffman’s engagement with the double-theme as stemming from his “longing for a more exalted existence”, draws attention to Meyer’s statement that the doubles themselves, “unsure of their identity, are sometimes inhabitants of this earth and sometimes belong to some unearthly region” (1916, 630; 1971, xiii). This notion, as I will demonstrate throughout this thesis, allows a conceptualisation of the double as a figure existing outside chronological time or ‘actual’ time, as a being that despite sometimes being tied to an ‘actual’ human or identity is something possessing a different relationship to time and mortality. Therefore, it is a subjective and irrational image, a Deleuzian time-image.

Thus, in this thesis I explore the above ideas from a Deleuzian viewpoint in my conceptualisation of the double as a time-image and employ the terms ‘actual’ and ‘virtual’ in a Deleuzian sense (2005). I understand the double’s duality as a being comprised of images both virtual and actual, and one that goes through a process of ‘actualisation’ when they are physically manifested in the body of a film (2005). I also understand and argue for the double’s duality (or rather, multiplicity) through Deleuze in terms of it ‘belonging’ to or being associated with the past or future, which intrudes on or co-exists with the present. In the introduction to *The Double*, Tucker acknowledges “[a]lthough Meyer does admit here that the double may be interpreted as a figure from the past, as does Rank…the reference is casual and carried no further’ (1971, xiii). Thus, through Deleuze I want to extend this idea and show how this notion of a persistent past is embodied and visually manifested in cinematic images of the double, particularly the temporal double, which also has an important relationship with the future.

I consider the Deleuzian co-existence of the actual and virtual in the cinematic image and in relation to the double as a cinematic time-image. The following chapters investigate the actualisation of multiple virtual selves that the cinematic double embodies. Actualisation here refers to actualisation of the double as a projected image on the screen and within the narrative of a film, its movement from a virtual spectre to a physical, material being within the diegesis of the film.
Reflecting on doubling in *The Student of Prague*, Rank suggests ‘The “basic idea” is supposed to be that a person’s past inescapably clings to him and that it becomes his fate as soon as he tries to get rid of it’, but he does not dwell on the temporal aspect of this occurrence, focusing more on the conditions of the double’s manifestation and their correspondence to the protagonist’s psychological disturbances (1971, 6). Nor does he consider the figure’s relationship to the realm of the future in film beyond the idea of ‘fate.’ Rank does draw attention to the issue of identity raised by the cinematic double, arguing:

> The uniqueness of cinematography in visibly portraying psychological events calls our attention, with exaggerated clarity, to the fact that the interesting and meaningful problems of man’s relation to himself- and the fateful disturbance of this relation- finds here an imaginative representation.

However, Rank does not make a connection between identity and temporality, a connection I do make in this thesis and argue is particularly pertinent to cinematic images of doubling. *The Student of Prague*’s double can also be conceptualised in this way. The double of the protagonist came into being as a mirror-image, appearing first as a (virtual) reflection, and through the magic of the film’s antagonist, being yanked out of the mirror into the real physical world, actualised. The double’s identity is tied to the protagonist as he was at that moment looking at his reflection in the mirror, and thus represents his past self. A mirror image is an image from the past, and cinema, through narrative and image, is able to emphasise and exaggerate this. Cinema possesses a unique ability to express temporality as a medium that unfolds in time and its capacity to convey subjective Deleuzian time-images for example through play with actual and virtual images, which is exemplified in this cinematic example of the actualisation of a virtual mirror-image into the material figure of the double. Rank investigates the double by tracing the motif back through time, comparing examples in literature to those in ‘folkloric, ethnographic, and mythical traditions’ finding it ‘originating in primitive man and his concepts’ (1971, 7). Following Rank, I trace patterns and repetitions of the double across time and consider how films are reworking and repeating this figure with difference, depicting it in new and specifically cinematic ways, but emphasising the temporal aspect of this motif, expanding upon the brief references he made to this aspect of the double. Thereby, I find time to be an essential problem that creates and connects these figures, and the future to also be an important realm of time.
I have been inspired by and aim to focus on elaborating on an idea only briefly mentioned by Rank. This is a passing moment where he alludes to a connection between the double and time by contemplating the mirror image as something that might remind oneself of one’s fragmented existence across time. Rank briefly draws from and quotes J.E. Poritzky’s story *One Night*, in which a character perceives via mirror images himself as a young boy and subsequently muses on ‘the division in our consciousness, ‘that division in which one sees one’s own person passing by, like a shadow, in all of the shapes in which he ever existed’, as well as the existence also of the possibility ‘for us now and then to catch sight of our future modes of existence’ a ‘view of our future self…sometimes so vivid that we think that we see alien persons as independent entities physically detaching themselves from us, as a child at birth’, (1971, 24). This brief acknowledgement inspired me to explore more closely and expand upon the double’s complex relationship to temporality and the role the *future* plays alongside the present and past. I consider how this filmic figure conveys the multiplicity of the self in relation to time, in that it can evoke not only the past but also the future, with images that speaks from the future being explored in the following chapters via Deleuze’s syntheses of time. I use Deleuze to respond to and expand upon Rank’s conceptualisation of the double and its duality and both re-imagine the classic double that Rank proposes and posit and argue for new iterations of the double. This extends to the contemporary cinematic science-fiction double, and what I argue connects them is their complex relationship to temporality and repetition (with *difference*).

**Jean Baudrillard on the Double**

Baudrillard’s ideas about the double are also relevant to my conceptualisation of this figure and its variation, the temporal double. However, these concepts are beyond the scope of this thesis, so I wish to only briefly touch on his perspective in order to show how they connect to but also differ from my Deleuzian reading of the double. Like Rank, Baudrillard also reflects on the double’s relation to the uncanny, a concern intersecting with my interest in how the figure evokes dual feelings of familiarity (or *repetition*) and an unsettling latent *difference*. Baudrillard states ‘the imaginary power and wealth of the double- the one in which strangeness and at the same time the intimacy of the subject itself are played out (*heimlich/unheimlich*)- rests on its immateriality, on the fact that it is and remains a phantasm’ and that whilst everyone dreams of ‘a perfect duplication or multiplication of being…such copies [usually] only have the power of dreams, and are destroyed when one
attempts to force the dream into the real’ (1994, 95). This thesis focuses on instances in
 cinema where the double is or appears to be actualised and considers the images and concepts generated when the spectre of the double becomes realised or physically manifest(ed) in the
 space-time or diegesis of a film, in the sense that it moves from being virtual and imaginary to actual and physical. It is important to reiterate here that this thesis does not conceptualise
 the double in relation to the Baudrillardian or psychoanalytic concept of ‘the real’, but rather,
as previously stated, in terms of the Deleuzian concept of the actual and virtual, as
 components of the cinematic time-image and in relation to the double as a cinematic time-
 image.

Across both Baudrillard and Rank’s conceptualisations of the double, it is apparent how, (like
the time-image), it is characterised by a duality, by its multiple, often contradictory effects
and functions, for example, how it can both signal and ward off death. In Baudrillard’s
exploration of this idea he emphasises the significance of the moment when the physical
figure of the double appears, or as this thesis describes it, is actualised. Baudrillard considers
the double as an ‘imaginary figure’ that ‘just like the soul, the shadow, the mirror image,
haunts the subject like his other, which makes it so the subject is simultaneously itself and
never resembles itself again, which haunts the subject like a subtle and always averted death’
(1994, 95). ‘This is not always the case,’ Baudrillard warns, because ‘when the double
materializes, when it becomes visible, it signifies imminent death’ (1994, 95). Both
Baudrillard and Rank demonstrate that the desire to evade death, or for immortality, which
brings about such doubling, ironically often leads to the death of both the self and others (1971, 18; 2000). This striking scenario in which two versions/doubles of a character, each
aligned with a different temporal realm, encounter each other is also essential to my
conceptualisation of the temporal double, especially a particular iteration of this figure in
time-travel cinema, the contemporary science-fiction double, which also aligns with
Rodowick’s conceptualisation of ‘two body problem,’ discussed earlier (2007, 116). There
tend to be ‘gruesome consequences’ if this occurs, a notion that will be explored in the
chapter on La Jetée (in itself and in relation to Vertigo) through a Deleuzian lens in terms of
both a focus on the significance of the function of repetition (with difference) and the crucial
function of the future intruding on the present and disrupting chronology, such as a
foreshadowing of the repetition of death.
The double is not unique to cinema but is realised and expressed in new ways in this time-based medium through repetition-with-difference, which I argue for by adopting a methodology shaped by Deleuze’s non-chronological conceptualisation of time and cinematic temporality. This thesis posits the temporal double as an iteration of the cinematic double identifiable by its complex relationship with time. I will argue that this figure is a provocation in terms of the questions it raises about time and repetition, and how it can operate as a self-reflexive tool, drawing attention to and deconstructing the function of repetition and the manipulation of temporality in film (Sullivan 2016). Subsequently it influences how the spectator can read films through re-watching, repeating, and re-ordering various connected texts.

Time (and time as repetition-with-difference) is a major concern for temporal doubles and operates as a productive force which creates, divides, multiplies, deteriorates, and recreates these beings and bodies. Sears’, Baudrillard’s, and to an extent Rank’s work on the double suggest that repetition, especially repetition-with-difference, is a critical component bringing the doubled figure into being and drawing attention to its significance and potential intertextual and self-reflexive function, which as Sears and Columpar highlight is common to science-fiction and time-travel cinema (Sears 2003, 104-114; Columpar 2006, n.p.).

This thesis asks: what the temporal double’s relation is to patterns of repetition and images of time and how this figure continues to be produced (and repeated differently) in cinema. To answer these questions, I primarily draw from Deleuze to investigate this figure’s important function of disrupting chronology in cinema. This disruption, I argue, is embodied by the figure of the double and occurs through the depiction of doubling as repetition. I work predominantly with two of Deleuze’s concepts in my theorization of the temporal double, that of the time-image from Cinema II and that of the syntheses of time, from Difference and Repetition, as these texts are both in a way about or can help in identifying disruptions to chronology. I will argue that the temporal double is both a Deleuzian time-image and an embodiment of the syntheses of time. I argue it is important to look to both the past and future and also to consider the re-ordering of time or chronology in investigating this figure, how films look both backwards and forwards and how earlier depictions of the double anticipate the temporal double proposed by this thesis. Both the temporal double as character
and time-image, and the spectator/film scholar destabilize chronology through various repetitions-with-difference.
Chapter Three: The Cruelty of Time in Hitchcock’s *Vertigo*

*Vertigo* exemplifies an important connection between temporality and identity embodied in the cinematic double and its repetitions. The double here refers to the body doubled, and its repetitions are explored in relation to both narrative and structural processes which rework this trope into a new iteration I term **temporal doubles** and highlight this figure’s cinematic significance. This privileging of the temporal double’s relationship with temporality is what distinguishes my approach from others exploring the cinematic double. As opposed to simply considering the copying of bodies or images across space, this thesis uses a Deleuzian framework to argue that what is more significant is how the body is doubled across *time*. The temporal double is a specifically cinematic and self-reflexive manifestation of time as repetition. Viewed through Deleuze’s philosophy of time, the temporal double critically engages concepts of being and time. This results in contemplation of notions of identity, knowledge, and obsession, and how these closely relate to memory, repetition, difference, and the challenge of reconciling with one’s position in space and time.

*Vertigo* creates what this thesis posits as an early iteration of the temporal double. The temporal double is a figure that evolves as it is repeated across cinema. It is a precursor to another reimagining of this figure, the contemporary science-fiction double, explored in chapter five. *Vertigo*’s double is significant because of how it repeats and is repeated with difference and its unique and complex relation with temporality, due in part to the way in which its repetitions affect both the identities of characters and the identity of the film. *Vertigo* is distinguished from classic depictions of this trope, such as those explored by Rank (1919), firstly through its doubled figures of femininity, secondly through this characters’ position as other opposed to protagonist and thirdly through the double’s highly personal relationship with time and repetition. Conventions and assumptions about how the double is depicted and repeated are overturned, along with its position in a chronological order. This thesis argues that *Vertigo*’s significant reworking of the double has highly influenced subsequent cinematic depictions of this trope.
**Vertigo and Film Scholarship**

*Vertigo* occupies an extremely important place in film criticism and scholarship as a film held up as an exemplar of a broad range of innovative approaches and theories. A wealth of literature exists on the legacy of the film, including its remakes, references, and the film as meta-cinema, a film about film, highlighting its self-reflexivity and intertextuality. As John Belton points out, Hitchcock studies remains a thriving discipline, highlighting the continuous publication of Hitchcock-centred texts and their enduring popularity in university film theory courses (2003, 16). Belton draws attention to Robin Wood’s influential book, *Hitchcock’s Films Revisited* (2002), emphasizing how its multiple revisions ‘document crucial shifts in films studies as a discipline and provide an important portrait of Hitchcock's role, as a figure of study, in the development of critical paradigms from early *auterism*, to psychoanalysis, feminism, semiotics (of a sort), and queer studies’ (2003,16). Belton suggests that as Hitchcock studies has developed along with cinema studies as an academic discipline; ‘Hitchcock's films have been repeatedly instrumentalized to exemplify the trendiest critical method *du jour*’ (2003, 21). The reasonably recent and ever-expanding turn to philosophy, and in particular Deleuze and his philosophy of time, in cinema studies, certainly suggests I am employing Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* in a similar manner as I revisit *Vertigo* to explore recent rethinking of Deleuze’s broader philosophy of time in relation to cinema. This is nothing new for *Vertigo*, which more than fifty years after its release continues to play ‘a role unmatched by any other film’ in film theory and criticism, having been canonised and continuing to occupy a central place in this critical discourse (Ravetto-Biagioli 2010, 101; Wexman 1986, 33). This approach exemplifies the critical cinematic time-travel I posit and participate in across this thesis.

It is clear that many of Hitchcock’s films, including *Vertigo*, have contributed to the increasing incorporation of philosophy in cinema studies, which prominently employs Deleuzian theory and the philosophy of time. Deleuze’s brief and somewhat contradictory remarks about *Vertigo* and Hitchcock in his *Cinema* volumes initially intrigued me. *Vertigo* is a film that I believe beautifully exemplifies and brings to mind many crucial concepts developed in Deleuze’s philosophy of time, which also lend themselves to exploration via the art of cinema and its manipulation of temporality.
Deleuze draws from Bergson and novelist Marcel Proust when he suggests that ‘[t]ime is not the interior to us, but just the opposite, the interiority in which we are, in which we can live, move and change’ (2005, 82). Curiously, whilst Hitchcock’s films are crucial to the development of Deleuze’s film philosophy there is only a cursory consideration of *Vertigo*’s significance in Deleuze’s cinema work. In *Cinema II*, Deleuze describes *Vertigo* as one of ‘perhaps three films which show how we inhabit time, how we move in it, in this form which carries us away, picks us up and enlarges us’ (2005, 80). He does not expand on this notion and it is his sole mention of *Vertigo* in *Cinema II*. In this chapter I revisit such comments made by Deleuze on Hitchcock and *Vertigo* in relation to temporality in his *Cinema* volumes, expanding upon these ideas by applying his theorisation of temporality/repetition from *Difference and Repetition*. This chapter investigates the relationships between both the characters’ and the spectator’s conceptualisation of temporality to explore how cinematic time-images might encourage a re-evaluation of our understanding of time and its powerful component of repetition.

In *Cinema II* Deleuze writes, ‘The direct time-image is the phantom which has always haunted the cinema, but it took modern cinema to give a body to this phantom’ (2005, 40). In *Cinema I* Deleuze suggests Hitchcock is ‘at the juncture of the two cinemas, the classical that he perfects and the modern that he prepares’ (2005, xii). As Sam Ishii-Gonzales observes, for Deleuze, Hitchcock ‘is at the juncture, or is the juncture, between the two representational systems that characterize the ninety-year history of cinema and which he calls the movement-image and the time-image’ (2004, 128-129). *Cinema I* focuses on classical cinema and its presentation of ‘indirect time’, while *Cinema II* explores how in modern cinema filmmakers ‘experiment with aberrant (unconstrained) movement and new modes of duration’ that allow ‘direct’ images of time to emerge (2004, 133). Techniques, both cinematographic and narrative in nature, can be observed in *Vertigo*—a film that hinges between the movement-image and the time-image—that work to offer powerful glimpses of direct time, fleetingly giving a body to the phantom of time via the repetition manifest in the doubled figure of “Madeleine”/Judy. It is possible to discern in *Vertigo* multiple signs and images as described by Deleuze in *Cinema II*, working together to render visible the time-image and, fleetingly, its crucial and complex component of the crystal-image, a powerful circuit of images exposing the spectator to ‘direct’ time (2005, 67).
In developing his concept of the crystal-image Deleuze likens its components of the actual image and the virtual image to an actor and their role (2005, 69-70). The actors within *Vertigo* play roles within roles. “Madeleine” is the role played by Judy the actor, both portrayed by Kim Novak, exposing a repetition and layering of identity and memory embodied in a singular figure. Looking back upon the redwood forest scene, “Madeleine”/Judy’s strange behaviour evokes a type of crystal-image. Once the spectator possesses the knowledge that “Madeleine” was a role played by Judy it is impossible to tell how much is “Madeleine” and how much is Judy herself. The actor/role dynamic becomes apparent and increasingly complicated through repetition and duality in and of narrative, dialogue, and image.

Deleuze discusses the ‘circuit’ of actual and virtual images, drawing from Bergson’s description of how memory is immediately consecutive to perception (2005, 77-79). This circuit describes the crystal-image, a coalescence of the ‘actual-image’ and the ‘virtual-image; ‘The present is the actual image, and *its* contemporaneous past is the virtual image, the image in a mirror’ (2005, 76-77). Thus, this is a circuit, ‘where the past is present, but is in fact altered by its present state’ (Colman 2011, 137). There are glimpses of this circuit and its actualisation of the past via ‘various temporal/recollective states, including ‘paramnesia’ (the sense of déjà-vu), memories and dreams (often technically constructed…as ‘flashbacks’ or ‘flash forwards’ (Colman 2011, 137; Deleuze 2005, 76-79). All of these are visible in *Vertigo* via characters fraught with perturbing perceptions placing them beside themselves in time. In the cinematic pure optical situation (the circuit/crystal-image), actual and virtual images (subjective/objective, mental/physical, imaginary/real) alternately ‘run after each other’ and ‘tend ultimately to become confused by falling into the same point of indiscernibility’ (Deleuze 2005, 44; 52) Duality and indiscernibility is a defining characteristic of *Vertigo* when it comes to time, perspective, identity, and how these concepts intersect and are conveyed by images and the repetition of images.

In *Vertigo*, an important exchange can be identified between the actor/role—a split or doubling that emphasises the relationship between repetition, the body, identity, and memory. Sears writes about doubling-as-repetition in relation to the body of the character/actor, which he extends to the concept of the actor’s star persona (2003, n.p.). He argues ‘[s]elf-consciousness, itself a form of doubling, becomes one of the mechanisms through which doubling is articulated’ in films that focus on the doubling of a character played by an actor
associated with a type of duality or previous roles also involving doubling (2003, n.p.). Parallels have been drawn between the “Madeleine”/Judy characters and the star persona of Novak as well as the concept of the ‘Hitchcock “blonde.” Virginia Wright Wexman writes ‘[i]n Vertigo, Kim Novak's position as a manufactured romantic idol is a crucial component of the film's power’ (1986, 35). She observes how ‘the story of an ordinary young woman who is transformed into a celestial beauty by a controlling man recreates the director's relationships with his female stars, many of whom were also transformed into erotic ideals under Hitchcock’s own tutelage' (1986, 34). Scottie’s transformation of Judy Barton into “Madeleine” thus quite remarkably reflects the process Hitchcock went through with his famous “blondes” (Brown 1986, 39). Wexman describes the conditions of Vertigo’s production, including the control over Novak’s image and experience exercised by not only Hitchcock but by the president of Columbia Pictures, Harry Cohn, who arranged to have her constantly watched, forced her to live in her studio dressing room and eat only food prepared by the studio chef, and called her “the fat Polack” (1967, 35). Wexman states that like Judy, Novak was primarily “docile enough to accept this bullying…while occasionally fighting for a modicum of recognition of her own identity” (1967, 35). Wexman also suggests that in Vertigo the Judy role is associated with certain aspects of Novak’s persona while other qualities are aligned with “Madeleine” (1967, 35). For example, ‘Madeleine is associated not with the part of the Novak image that speaks of the ordinary young woman chosen for greatness, but with the star's etherialized, aestheticized beauty’ (1967, 35).

Wexman points out how the repeated profile shots of “Madeleine” bring to mind Novak’s then well-publicised and familiar classic profile (1967, 35). This recurring shot, however, is not restricted to “Madeleine”, as this image is also repeated when Scottie gazes upon a silhouette of Judy in her hotel room before her transformation into “Madeleine.” Such repetitions foreshadow and emphasise the layered nature of identity and temporality embodied by the double of “Madeleine”/Judy and the crucial and convoluted connection between ‘actor’ and ‘role’ it invokes. In Vertigo, this actor/role relation draws our attention to the repetition and layering of identity as actors play roles within roles, and the film’s self-reflexive nature embodied by its doubles onscreen and off.

This actor/role idea can be aligned with the figure of “Madeleine”/Judy by considering how actual/virtual images coalesce in the image of a single body. This actor/role or actual/virtual cycle of doubling as repetition becomes increasingly muddled as the narrative continues and
reaches the point of indiscernibility—at least for Scottie—via a fleeting but pure crystal-image that occurs later in the film. In the redwood forest scene, the spectator is invited to witness a visualisation of the layering of identity, memory, and time via the characters’ contemplation of the trees and the double meaning discernible in nearly everything “Madeleine”/Judy says. In the cinematic pure optical situation (the circuit/crystal-image), actual and virtual images (subjective/objective, mental/physical, imaginary/real) alternately ‘run after each other’ and ‘tend ultimately to become confused by slipping into the same point of indiscernibility’ (Deleuze 2005, 44).

As “Madeleine” and Scottie wander amongst the ancient trees, “Madeleine”/Judy, Scottie, and the spectator are all invited to see time, each in various ways, as different spaces, objects, and words conjure up feelings about both the past and future. Scottie tells “Madeleine” that the trees’ “true name is sequoia sempervivens” meaning “always green, ever living”, evoking the notion that the past persists not only in the present, but will haunt the future too. This deeply affects “Madeleine”/Judy; “I don’t like it,” she murmurs, “knowing I have to die”. Looking back on this moment, it is possible to discern the double meaning in how it foreshadows both “Madeleine” and Judy’s fate, and their repetition of death. This moment points to the imminent doubling of the past, and if Carlotta is factored into the equation, the tripling of death invoked in the present moment—via the threefold body and frequently indiscernible identity of Carlotta/”Madeleine”/Judy.

The spectator, along with “Madeleine”/Judy, is invited to see an image of time—and its layered nature—in the form of another sequoia tree. This occurs when Scottie and “Madeleine” examine the massive cross-section of a tree and its rings, which serves as a material marker of time and its multiple layers. There is a close-up of the cross-section and sign explaining how the white rings of the tree indicate the width of the tree when various significant historical events took place. This is followed by a closer point-of-view shot (seemingly from the dual perspective/s of both “Madeleine”/Judy and Scottie) as they each take it in; realizing that at this moment they see time before them, visualised by the tree’s rings. The camera then moves to the outer part of the segment, and as “Madeleine” moves forward, her hand is captured in close-up as she touches it with her finger, tracing her position in time. “Somewhere in here I was born.” She moves her finger a smidgeon—“…and there I died. It was only a moment for you. You took no notice”—she
melancholically muses. It is unclear to whom these words are directed. At this moment “Madeleine”/Judy appears to be beside herself—as she sees her position in relation to the great span of time visualised by the tree segment—she seems to realise her insignificant existence within the multiple sheets of time; just a small trace within the immense lifetime of a tree. This moment also evokes time’s threefold present in her premonition of her own death. “Madeleine”/Judy simultaneously sees before herself the past/present/future. She looks to her past—“here I was born”—and to her (near) future—“and there I died”—which she speaks of as if it were the past. This foreshadows “Madeleine’s”—and unbeknownst to her—her own predetermined death (as Judy). This visualization of her brief duration in time clearly affects her as both “Madeleine” and as Judy. Indeed, as McKenzie Wark points out, when Judy playing “Madeleine”, ‘possessed’ by the deceased Carlotta, expresses her distress over “knowing I have to die”, the spectator can never be sure who exactly is speaking this line (2000). Is it “Madeleine”, Carlotta, Judy, or perhaps Novak, or even Hitchcock? This moment powerfully conveys the layered, cyclical, and repetitive nature of time and identity, which is manifest in the shape of and markings of the rings of the tree and in the doubled body of “Madeleine”/Judy.

**Vertigo: The Double**

As emphasised in much of the discourse on Hitchcock, the filmmaker continuously remade and repeated himself, his techniques, and themes across his oeuvre. His repetitions included and revealed a ‘lifetime obsession with [the] effects of doubling’ as observed by DM Nobus, who pointed out that ‘from *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) to *Strangers on a Train* (1951), from *Rebecca* (1940) to *Vertigo* (1958), and including *The Wrong Man* (1956), *Spellbound* (1945) and *North by Northwest* (1959), Hitchcock’s films contain a kaleidoscopic array of doubles, replicas, duplicates, lookalikes, copies, surrogates and substitutes’ (2011, 69-70). *Vertigo* however, is his most memorable and innovative instance of doubling, featuring what initially appears to be a slight variation on the classic Rankian double, but which soon reveals itself to dramatically rework this trope through its relationship with time.

*Vertigo*’s “Madeleine”/Judy is a new and unique type of cinematic doubling that is significant due to its complex relationship with temporality, influence on cinema, and further participation in broader intertextual circuits of repetition. It is striking and innovative as a
character and motif in terms of its imagery and role in the narrative, but also as a tool or provocation that through repetition disrupts the film’s chronology. Essentially it highlights the film’s striking and unconventional narrative temporal order and broader position within a chain of repetitions across cinema. Drawing from Rank’s approach in *The Double*, I investigate how the figure is not only repeated, but repeated differently and demonstrate how new stories featuring the double, like *Vertigo*, not only rework this figure, but return to old ideas about the double, in search of its essence and new ways to convey its functions and affects. In terms of classifying the doubling, *Vertigo’s* double is a synthesis of a Rankian double and a Deleuzian double (Sullivan 2016). Just as *Vertigo* was a turning point in cinema through its depiction of images of time, giving a body to the phantom of the direct time-image, *Vertigo* reworked the cinematic double, giving a body to the phantom-like figure that previously existed only abstractly or in literature, the figure this thesis posits and defines as the temporal double, a double ‘belonging’ to another temporal realm that is produced by and productive of temporal processes and structures of repetition in cinema. *Vertigo’s* double does share traits with the classic double explored by Rank, its manifestation tied to the characters’ complexes concerning death, identity, and most crucially a fixation with the past. As Rank does, this thesis explores the double as the expression of an individual’s attachment to the past, but reframes this consideration of temporality from a Deleuzian perspective. Thus, instead of privileging the past the temporal double posited by this thesis works to emphasise the multiplicity or co-presence of the realms of time and demonstrate how the future too interferes with and alters the present (and sometimes past). Whilst Rank made allusions to temporality and the self-reflexive function of the double, these are the crucial defining characteristics of my definition and theorisation of the temporal double. Through exploring specifically cinematic techniques using Deleuze’s conceptualisations of temporality and repetition, it becomes apparent that in *Vertigo*, and in further reworked iterations of the temporal double, the essential constitutive element is time as a problem, specifically time as a manifestation of repetition. *Vertigo’s* double initially emerges as a result of characters (firstly Gavin Elster, and then Scottie) attempting to control time through controlling the body (and identity) of “Madeleine”/Judy, to repeat the past. However, with each repetition “Madeleine”/Judy’s place in time becomes more uncertain and complicated.

Another significant difference between Rank’s double and *Vertigo’s* double is the nature of the identity of and spectatorial identification with the doubled character. In the case of the classic double narratives explored by Rank, it is always the protagonist or self that is doubled.
Vertigo’s doubling, conversely, is of the ‘other’, another character. Pilar Andrade classifies this kind of doubling as an ‘objective double’, defining it as ‘external from the perceiving subject’ as distinct from the more common subjective double, which is of course ‘the subject with two or more identities’ (2008, 2). In Vertigo’s case, the person doubled is technically ‘a secondary character’ (Andrade 2008, 4). Whilst this is an important distinction to make, I do not consider the doubling of “Madeleine”/Judy to be ‘objective’ at all, besides technically in the sense that the narrative provides an objective, rational explanation of her existence. This plot point, however, isn’t immediately known and is revealed to the spectator well before Scottie learns the truth. Whilst Judy’s subjective flashback reveals the objective facts, providing a logical narrative explanation of the doubling, this moment also adds to the film’s sense of duality and muddled subjectivity, creating a split in the film as the spectator from this point onwards has access to two subjective lenses through which to view the events: that of Judy and that of Scottie. The figure is able to convey multiple characters’ subjective problems with, and experiences of, time and repetition.

Films following Vertigo that also double the ‘other’ (in some cases doubling both the ‘self’/protagonist and the ‘other’) tend to share these traits, as in the films of Brian De Palma, Martin Scorsese, and David Lynch, filmmakers who repeat and refer to such Hitchcockian tropes throughout their work, and who put their own twist on this figure (Auiler 182, 1998). As Andrade highlights The Student of Prague (also discussed by Rank) as ‘the classic and first film story of the Doppelgänger’ and considers it as a ‘hypotext’— in the sense that it becomes ‘the reference text to create visual double stories’, and ‘hypertext’ in how it ‘takes and mixes together elements from…literary works and fixes them in a very convincing narration’— this thesis positions Vertigo as another hypotext and its double specifically as a crucial element that both connects to and differentiates it from previous and subsequent films.

Vertigo, Repetition, and Self-reflexivity

Vertigo’s repetitions are structural, including repetitions that are specifically thematic, self-referential, and intertextual. As John Conomos points out, the film possesses a ‘characteristic “vertigo of time” aesthetic of self-referentiality’ (2000). The repetitions experienced by Vertigo’s characters give them the sensation of being beside themselves in time, this
unsettling feeling of viewing oneself in abstraction that comes with particularly potent memories being visually embodied in the filmic figure of the double.

Charles Barr describes Scottie and “Madeleine” as ‘caught up in complex layers of deceit, as if playing out in intense form a proof of the saying that there are six people involved in every encounter: the two people as they see themselves, the two as they are seen by the other, and the two as they really are, whatever that is’ (2002, 57). To this I propose the addition of at least another two to take into account Scottie and “Madeleine” as perceived by the spectator. It would make sense to add another two on top of this, to take into account the spectator’s altered perception of the characters on a repeat viewing. This equals a total of ten people involved in an encounter between two people, each character as one of five potential doubles.

As Barr observes '[e]ven on a first viewing, the complex layers of this Scottie/Madeleine encounter are palpable, and when we know the plot they become dizzying' (2002, 57).

Vertigo is indeed a film to be watched over and over. As Deleuze emphasises ‘Repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it’ (2004, 90). Spectatorial repetitions of Vertigo shape how the film and its repetitions and doubling can be understood (differently). Vertigo is permeated with duality and doubling that manifests in the structure and narrative of the film as well as in the complex presentation of the central characters and their layers of memory and identity. Further layers of repetition and knowledge are added with the spectator’s (possible) repeat viewings of the film as they read the first half of the film with the insight gained from the revelations and repercussions in the second half of the film.

**Temporality and Reflexivity**

Cinematic temporality and self-reflexivity are consistently closely intertwined. As Columpar suggests, the medium of cinema itself is a type of ‘time machine that works by way of mediation’ in its ability ‘to transport a viewer to the past or future through a convincing mise-en-scène, to accumulate discontinuous moments through elliptical editing, and to compress or

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5 Chris Marker writes about Vertigo as a film that repeats and that we repeatedly re-watch and remember. At the end of his essay on Vertigo he tells us ‘Obviously, this text is addressed to those who know Vertigo by heart. But do those who don’t deserve anything at all?’; Marker, Chris. “A Free Replay (notes on Vertigo).” In Projections 4 1/2: Film-makers on Film-making, edited by John Boorman and Walter Donohue, 123–130. London: Faber and Faber, 1995.
expand the flow of time through optical effects’ (2006, n.p.). In *Vertigo*, the cinematic syntheses of time facilitate an experience of time-travel for both the audience and the characters. This visualization of time-travel renders the processes of time visible and as productive of beings and bodies. The productive potential of temporal manipulation that I investigate affirms and stems from the duality inherent in the cinematic experience and amplified by *Vertigo*’s thematic and structural emphasis on doubling. The recognition of multiple gazes within the diegesis that exist separate to, but often aligned with, the external point-of-view of the spectator reinforces the split or doubling that the narrative and characters repeatedly enact.

*Vertigo* presents characters who *feel* as if they travel in time through the means of their overwhelmingly potent memories and their actions which seek to relive and revive past events and identities. In some instances, this feeling is literal, such as when “Madeleine” touches her timeline on the cross-section of the tree. Insight into the characters’ states of mind and fraught relationship with memory and time is gained through dialogue, subjective images (including flashbacks, memories, and dreams), and camerawork via both positioning and movement. *Vertigo* engenders an experience of the notion that every individual possesses the potential to time-travel (at least mentally) via repetition as understood via Deleuze’s syntheses of time, and, I believe exemplifies a particular relationship between temporality and identity revealing repetition and duality—in relation to the experiences of both character and spectator—to reshape our understanding of the productive potential of memory and cinematic time.

Via *Vertigo* a close relationship between cinematic intertextuality, self-reflexivity, and the double as a manifestation of repetition can be identified. It is easy to discern multiple types of repetitions in the body of the film, both structural and thematic. Varieties of cinematic repetition, as Sears observes, include the ‘repetition of words, phrases, sounds, music, images and actions…character doubling…repeated motifs…the re-use of shots’ (2003, n.p.). As Sears suggests ‘[n]otions of return…reiteration, repetition, re-enactment, imitation, disguise, revelation, recognition, recollection and resolution characterise the rhetoric of doubling’ in cinema (2003, n.p.). In *Vertigo*, each of these different types and stages of doubling-as-repetition are discernable. *Vertigo* can be regarded as comprised of a series of repetitions which structure its narrative as well as the spectatorial experience. Both the characters and
the spectator are defined by a duality deriving from repetition and layers of memory and knowledge.

**Vertigo and Space and Time**

It is memory, both real and fabricated, and the re-performance of past events that construct an illusion of the identity of “Madeleine” in the mind of Scottie and the spectator. Scottie ‘repeats’ “Madeleine” by revisiting various locations across San Francisco. He experiences shock when he involuntarily glimpses images of the past emerging in the present in different ways via figures classifiable as, following L. Lelaine Bonine, “near-Madeleines” (2012, 163). Here, both past and future emerge as repetition-with-difference.

In *Vertigo*, bodies spiral and fall within and across time and memories, rather than memories being restricted to moving within the mind. This argument adheres to the Deleuzian notion that an individual inhabits more of a significant place in time than they do in space. Bodies and identities, which initially appear to be doubled across space, are eventually found to be doubled across time. Places and spaces are certainly pivotal in *Vertigo*’s narrative and aesthetic. Hitchcock draws attention to and exploits the San Francisco setting by following Scottie in his pursuit of “Madeleine” along a path leading the spectator to, and dwelling upon these many memorable and iconic locations. There is a duality in how these sites—including the Palace of the Legion of Honour Museum, the Portals of the Past, the Mission San Juan Batista, and the ancient redwood forest—are tied not only to the story of Carlotta and “Madeleine” but to the history of San Francisco itself.

However, as Henrik Gustaffsen suggests, ‘The locations that [Scottie/Vertigo] traverse are never firmly anchored in time but feature rather as vehicles of time travel’ (2012, 179). The sites Scottie visits repeatedly both with and without “Madeleine”/Judy are associated not only with memory and the past via the Carlotta hoax and its intersection with San Francisco history but also with the future. The force of repetition present at several locations mentally transports Scottie, “Madeleine”/Judy, and the spectator to both the past and future by revealing the layered and intertwined nature of the realms of time. This is most clearly articulated in the scene in the redwood forest sequence where the layers of time and memory are visually linked to the rings of the tree. A striking moment occurs when “Madeleine”/Judy points to a time beyond the scope of the tree’s timeline, to a space in the air external to the
circular cross-section, what can only be the future. “And there I died” the double murmurs, blurring the boundaries between past, present, and future as she speaks of a repetition yet to come as if it happened long ago. The recurring circular and spiral images in *Vertigo* emphasise the characters’ relationships to, and movement within, space and time. Ishii-Gonzales points out ‘[r]ather than master time and memory Scottie finds himself ensnared in their vertiginous effects’, highlighting how the film’s spirals are ‘spatial and temporal signs of the delirium experienced by the protagonist’ (2004, 140). Spirals visually emphasise the characters’ disorientation in time and their sensation that they are continuously spiralling into the past.

*Vertigo* and Deleuze’s Three Syntheses of Time

Crucial to *Difference and Repetition* and its relation to *Vertigo* is how Deleuze writes of time in terms of three syntheses rather than tenses. Although each synthesis is aligned more closely with either the past, present, or future, these are inextricably interconnected processes. Each synthesis is a different mode of repetition (Deleuze 2004). In *Vertigo*, it is the first two syntheses that bring cinematic bodies into being in time, and the third synthesis that creates a crisis concerning identity and time via an event involving the temporal double.

The first synthesis of time is that of habit, considered by Deleuze to be the true foundation of time, and occupied by the passing present. It ‘constitutes the present in time’ (2004, 76). This first synthesis is, as Deleuze states, grounded by the second synthesis of memory. Turning to cinema, and specifically *Vertigo*, one can see how Deleuze’s first synthesis of time creates expectancy through repetition. In the present, both spectators and characters tend to anticipate future events in light of past occurrences. In *Vertigo* the central themes of fate and destiny, stemming from the Carlotta story, shape the characters’ and initially the spectators’ misguided beliefs about time, the future, and identity. In *Vertigo*, habit manifests itself in both the narrative and the structure of the film. Disruptions begin with the doubling of a secondary character that is a woman, as opposed to a male protagonist.

The first synthesis creates expectations and thus opens space for self-reflexivity and the subversion of these expectations through repetitions with difference. Such expectations are established by the development of rules, formulas, and signs of classical cinema, or as Deleuze posits in the *Cinema* volumes, movement-image cinema (2005). As mentioned
earlier, in *Vertigo* Hitchcock breaks with conventions of movement-image cinema and presents what Deleuze calls time-images or ‘direct’ images of time, manifest in sequences featuring subjective temporal states such as ‘paramnesia’, memories, flashbacks or flash-forwards, and dreams (2005, 77).

In terms of narrative and genre, *Vertigo* subverts audience expectations of how events will be repeated. Initially presented as a ghost story, the spectator, along with Scottie, fear that the possessed “Madeleine” will repeat the tragic fate of her great-grandmother Carlotta. Scottie, and also by extension the audience, are presumably shocked when expectations are overturned, and a murder plot replaces the ghost story. The doubling of the female secondary character, which already breaks with convention, is further complicated when temporal problems become apparent. Various disruptions to conventions coalesce to contribute the film’s construction of a world comprised of time-images in which nothing is in its regular order.

Through this first synthesis Deleuze shows that his major concern is with the *mind* of the person who contemplates a repetition (2004, 90). Following this line of thought, I thus argue that it is not necessarily a change in the film itself or in that which is repeated, but it is in the *mind* of the viewer who registers the repetition. Repeated viewing/s of the film are very different to the initial spectatorial experience. Once the spectator is aware of the twist, they are invited to see everything differently; they now possess the ability to notice new things and re-evaluate the first half of the narrative. Similarly, within the narrative, once Scottie knows the truth it is clear that he looks back on the events of the past in a new light.

In terms of the perspective of protagonist Scottie, it is the first two syntheses that are operating in the production of the illusion of identity and doubling of (who the spectator/Scottie perceive as) “Madeleine” across time. *Vertigo*’s temporal doubles are striking and unsettling in how the emergence of their internal *difference* upsets ideas about how time, memory, and repetition operate, in the end shattering an identity constructed out of forced repetitions. It is in Deleuze’s second synthesis of time that *difference* becomes important. Difference within repetition emerges here in how the ability to remember a past moment involves representing a *difference* between that past moment and the present moment to ourselves. As Deleuze explains: “The present and former present are not…like two successive instants on the line of time; rather, the present one necessarily contains an extra dimension in which it represents the former and also represents itself” (2004, 102). In
*Vertigo,* many moments can be identified which support this Bergsonian notion of every instant being doubled, or mirrored by other types of doublings and repetitions, most frequently and vividly through images of bodies.

Deleuze’s analysis of Proust’s exploration of memory and the past in *In Search of Lost Time* is crucial to his conceptualisation of the syntheses of time (2004). A Proustian ‘pure past’, as Keith Ansell-Pearson emphasises, tends to manifest in an ‘attachment …to materiality, for example, such as a face or a place’ (2010, 170). In *Vertigo,* this can be extended to other material matters of appearance/semblance, including “Madeleine”’s clothing, hair, and jewellery. Temporality and identity are intertwined via images of material objects purported to embody a piece of this pure past. Elster describes to Scottie how when “Madeleine” puts on the necklace inherited from Carlotta and gazes into the mirror, she “becomes someone else.” Although this tale is obviously part of Elster’s fabricated story designed to manipulate Scottie through the idea of “Madeleine”’s doubling and repetition of Carlotta as a form of ghostly possession, it reflects the important relationship between temporality, repetition, and identity characterising *Vertigo.*

These doubles also demonstrate how, as Ansell-Pearson emphasises, for Deleuze the Proustian sign of an involuntary memory is ‘an ambiguous sign of life’, in that ‘it has one foot in the pure past and one foot in the future’ (2010, 164). Through such a Proustian pure past, these near-doubles embody Scottie’s hope for “Madeleine” to return as a ghost, and later as a ghost that possesses Judy, just as Carlotta supposedly possessed the original (but never seen alive) Madeleine. Scottie soon meets Judy who bears an even stronger resemblance to “Madeleine.” He takes her to dine at Ernie’s restaurant where he first saw “Madeleine”. However, Judy’s difference is emphasised when a “near-Madeleine” (blonde and wearing the distinctive grey suit) enters the shot, doubled with Judy in the same frame. She is contrasted against her double and against Scottie’s memory of the ‘original’ “Madeleine”.

Even though, as the spectator/Scottie learns, Judy and the woman he knew as “Madeleine” share the same body— they are both played by Novak—Scottie cannot recreate or repeat her identically. Along with Scottie, the spectator will learn that external resemblance is not the only component of a successful repetition, although he initially believes this is the key to reviving the ghost of “Madeleine” via the body of Judy. Despite her uncanny resemblance to “Madeleine”, Scottie finds Judy to be an inadequate substitution, her brown hair and plain
clothes establishing her as a repetition-with-difference, and so he is inspired to repeat “Madeleine”’s exact appearance and identity as he remembers it. Scottie enforces his memories of “Madeleine” onto Judy’s body by restyling her wardrobe and hair. Whilst repetition via the first two syntheses work to construct “Madeleine’s” and Judy’s repetition of “Madeleine’s” identity, the third synthesis emerges to unground and shatter Scottie’s seemingly successful revival of “Madeleine”.

In *Vertigo*, the temporal double and its affirmation of difference shatters boundaries between past, present, and future, exposing a crucial and complex connection between the body doubled, identity, memory, and the future. It is Deleuze’s third synthesis of time that concerns and privileges the future. It is complex and has multiple forms and functions. Deleuze describes the third synthesis as a ‘caesura’: a break in the order of time, which tears the image of time in two, and shatters resemblance and identity, throwing ‘time out of joint’. Reworking Nietzsche’s doctrine of the eternal return, Deleuze states that ‘the third repetition…this time by excess, [is] the repetition of the future as eternal return’ (2004, 90).

In this third synthesis, the foundation of habit and the ground of the past [that define the first two syntheses] are ‘superseded by a groundlessness, a universal ungrounding which turns upon itself and causes only the yet-to-come to return’ (2004, 114). As Pisters emphasises:

> The third synthesis is complicated since it does not simply repeat the past and the present, but instead cuts, assembles and orders from them, to select the eternal return of difference in a series of time: ‘Identities, or the same, from the past and the present, pass away forever, transformed by the return of that which makes then differ- Deleuze’s pure difference in itself’ (Williams 2011, 268).

In *Vertigo* cuts, edits, and narrative form and order provide a filmic variant of the third synthesis. Sequences featuring revelations or repetitions via flashback or dream are positioned and edited in such a way to convey the characters’ subjective temporal experience and knowledge. The ordering of sequences within the narrative and scenes and images within certain key sequences is crucial. That Judy’s subjective flashback/confession sequence occurs so early in the narrative and before Scottie becomes privy to this information is important as a dual gaze upon Judy/“Madeleine” is introduced, that of the knowing spectator and that of the ignorant Scottie.
Time can be put *out of joint* by a specific dramatic event involving the temporal double and its repetition of difference. The third synthesis is a *condition* for such a drama or event to take place (Williams 2011, 90, 95). Its emergent dramatic events render apparent the productive force of time that positions the body doubled as a figure of difference or the embodiment of the eternal return of difference. The emergence and affirmation of the cinematic double’s internal difference thus *ungrounds* and throws *time out of joint*, exposing a complex relationship between temporality and identity and its illusions. As Andrade observes, filmic double narratives are able to make ‘use of specific cinema resources to solve identity problems’, which in *Vertigo* includes such subjective flashback sequences (2008, 7). However, rather than resolving the problem these sequences complicate the film’s identity issues by introducing and later reinforcing a duality of perspective.

There are several moments in *Vertigo* when time can be said to be thrown *out of joint.* Deleuze might lead one to believe— in his brief analysis of Hamlet—that in a narrative there is typically *one* major disorienting event or crisis that punctuates and upsets time (2004, 111-112). However, in *Vertigo* the same shattering realisation is repeated and occurs on multiple levels, first for the spectator and then from the perspective of Scottie. Such a dramatic event induces the caesura, a moment that simultaneously determines a past and future as a pure form of time that is oriented around that gap. The past is the act that is ‘too big for me’, or rather for Scottie (2011, 112). The present, as Ronald Bogue describes it is ‘a metaphoric becoming-equal to the act, and the future is the disintegration of the self in the emergent action’, or rather Scottie mistakenly believing he can resolve his crisis, but whose future actions result in the disintegration of both himself and Judy as “Madeleine” (2010, 79). In addition, as Bogue observes, whilst it seems ‘Deleuze envisions this synthesis as a positive ‘un grounding’ of time, as the necessary concomitant to any creative unfolding of the new’, the events that unfold in *Vertigo* are far from positive (2010, 79). Their unfolding engages the third synthesis in a dramatic and complex manner. Indeed, as Bogue points out, ‘[t]here is, of course, already an ominous residue in Deleuze’s exposition of the third synthesis, for Deleuze models it on the crises of tragedies. The third synthesis’ pure form of time is ‘time out of joint’, and Hamlet is the actor for whom the task is too big’ (2010, 79).

As I have stated I believe there are multiple caesuras in the order of time in *Vertigo* but I will first focus on one crucial event. As Williams emphasises, it is the *depth* of an event that ensures the drama required for such a dramatic division in time’ (2011, 90). The event I am concerned with exposes the multiple intertwined layers of time, helping Scottie realise that he
has been implicated in a vertigo of time (rather than space) via his interaction with the doubled women. Time is thrown out of joint for Scottie when he temporarily believes he has succeeded in repeating the same, remaking Judy as “Madeleine”, as she emerges into the hotel room as a glowing ghost-like figure, her embrace with Scottie bringing forth a surge of mental images from his perspective, muddling boundaries between past, present, and future. The phantom of the direct time-image is given a body by the doubled figure of Judy/ the second iteration of “Madeleine” as this being emerges and is presented as a spectre, returned from the dead. Judy/“Madeleine” re-enters the hotel room bathed in a glowing green fog. As Ishii-Gonzales suggests, this image can be read as an ‘opsign’, a pure optical moment which opens itself to and brings the spectator closer to direct time via the crystal-image, as he asks ‘who watching the film ever forgets the green light that bathes Judy in a shimmering silhouette?’ (2004, 139). At this point the spectator knows the truth about “Madeleine”/Judy but Scottie remains ignorant. Thanks to Judy’s ‘confession’ scene the audience is aware that the Carlotta possession story is a hoax and is no longer asked to believe in the supernatural or ghosts. Thus, this image can be identified as a ‘pure optical moment’—an ‘opsign’ that emerges in a break from the sensory-motor schema and its logical cause-and-effect narrative—also soon to be shown in Scottie’s subjective hallucinatory vision.

In this scene Scottie has transformed Judy into his memory of “Madeleine” via her clothing and hair, and this magic moment occurs when she emerges from the bathroom having added the final touch, fixing her hair to exactly resemble “Madeleine’s”. As Scottie turns to watch her step into the room, there is a powerful surge of music, and a cut to Scottie’s point-of-view shot of “Madeleine”/Judy. This is a most striking image as she appears from Scottie’s perspective as a ghost. She soon steps forward and the green fog surrounding her dissipates but this fleeting image will forever haunt Scottie and possibly the spectator. Peter Wollen emphasises the significance of this ghostly image (1997, 14-19). He finds the motivation for this image in Donald Spoto’s biography of Hitchcock which recounts Hitchcock’s ‘first memory of going to the theatre, when he was five years old: “I remember the green light – green for the appearance of ghosts and villains” (1997, 16). Hitchcock achieves this effect through lighting and a fog filter (1997, 14). This image emphasises the potency of Scottie’s subjective memories as Hitchcock deviates from the crime-narrative to indulge in a powerful moment of supernatural spectacle in which Scottie is ungrounded in time. This image and the

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6 A further elaboration might be made of this image as a “crystal of time,” put forth in *Cinema II: The Time-Image.*
surge of muddled memory and actual images that succeed it contrast with the series of clear memories and a different kind of ungrounding triggered when Scottie recognises the necklace and realises the truth.

The ghostly image indicates how Judy’s ostensibly now perfect resemblance to “Madeleine”—invoking Scottie’s memory-image of “Madeleine”—will not only give rise to a series of virtual images of this figure from the past, but will also make Scottie’s imminent uncovering of the truth and his inability to repeat the same all the more traumatic.

Immediately following this ghostly encounter, the spectator/Scottie are exposed to direct time via the crystal-image and the spiral of time in which actual and virtual become indiscernible. Scottie and “Madeleine”/Judy embrace and when they kiss Scottie/the spectator experience what Marker calls ‘the most magical camera movement in the history of cinema’ as the camera does a 360 degree turn around them and becomes a spiral of time (1995, 124). It is clear that it is not only the camera moving but the background, as the scenery surrounding them transforms and exposes Scottie and the spectator to a pure crystal-image. As the camera encircles them the backdrop morphs from the hotel room and suddenly seems to situate Scottie and “Madeleine”/Judy in the past. As Marker describes it, Scottie ‘discovers another set around him, that of the stable at the Dolores Mission where he last kissed Elster’s wife whose double he has now created’ (1995, 124). The actual image of the present “Madeleine”/Judy figure is followed by and confused with the virtual image of Scottie’s memory of “Madeleine”. There is temporarily, from Scottie’s perspective, a final merging of the doubles of Judy and “Madeleine” in the one body; Scottie/the spectator can see the actual/virtual form a circuit, which exposes a crystal-image. The images of the past/present or virtual/actual run after each other and the gushing forth of time is rendered visible in this moment; for a second moving Scottie/the spectator toward a point of indiscernibility, as Scottie becomes truly immersed in memory. Images of the past/present are temporarily muddled; as the camera continues to encircle them it is difficult for the spectator too to discern exactly what time they are seeing; along with Scottie they momentarily can’t tell where they are and which version of this woman Scottie is with.

For Ravetto-Biagoli this scene is ‘so unsettling’ in how the camerawork ‘simultaneously visualizes vertigo…and reveals Scottie’s realization that their embrace transports them not to the eternal sea (where they first kiss) but to the site where Madeleine died’ (2010, 131). She also emphasises the virtual nature of the backdrop, suggesting this is ‘not a purely melancholic vision on the part of Scottie (a conjuring up or inhabiting of the past)’ because
the image of the stables is darker, seemingly captured at night-time opposed to the daylight of the previous scene in this same location and thus ‘does not forewarn an ominous future to come because Judy and Scottie will not return to the stables’ (2010, 131). They will only be seen revisiting the church tower on the night of Judy’s death. Thus, she argues this is ‘both an actual and a virtual image of a potential past and a potential future’ (2010, 131). This moment of ‘spectacular embrace’ is so powerful as the characters/spectator are subjected to ‘the swirling image of vertigo that simultaneously spins inward around the characters and turns outward onto the virtual past or the virtual future’ which temporarily leaves Scottie and the spectator ‘without any sense of grounding’ (2010, 131).

Later within the same sequence, during Judy-as-“Madeleine”’s post-coital preparation to go out for dinner, a different type of ungrounding occurs when she asks Scottie to fasten her necklace whilst gazing into a mirror, prompting a flashback that alludes to Elster’s description of how when Madeleine wore Carlotta's necklace and stared into the mirror, she became “someone else.” This imagery, however, allows Scottie to figure out the truth by piecing together the series of repetitions of appearance on bodies across time. He realises that whilst the multiplied women comprising of Carlotta, Madeleine, Judy, and Judy as “Madeleine” appear to repeat the same, they do not inhabit the same levels of time. As Pisters points out Scottie finally must distinguish between the multiple layers of time that these doubled bodies inhabit (2003, 46). The reappearance of the necklace shatters “Madeleine’s” identity—both the first “Madeleine” Scottie knew and this repetition of Judy as “Madeleine”. He realises that “Madeleine” and Judy share the same body. Judy was playing a role all along, and was always different to the original Madeleine whom Scottie never met. Vertigo’s doubles enact a ‘Nietzchian’ repetition whereby their ‘similitude and identity’ are produced by a ‘fundamental disparity or difference’ (Verevis 2005, 227). Scottie’s recognition of Carlotta’s necklace in the mirror image allows Judy/ “Madeleine” to ‘become someone else’ again, but in this case, her becoming-Carlotta via this doubled mirror image occurs from the point of view of Scottie and serves as an unmasking of identity, rather than creation of a false identity.

Carlotta’s necklace and portrait are indeed key manifestations of difference or signifiers of an emergent repetition of difference in a chain of resemblance and repetition. As Wark observes, Scottie’s revelation that Judy does not simply resemble Madeleine, but was ‘an instrument of her death’ occurs via his recognition of the necklace that originally belonging to Carlotta, was next owned by Madeleine, and now turns up on Judy, allowing him to ‘arrest…the procession
of resemblances’ and uncover the truth (2000). It becomes apparent how Carlotta’s necklace and portrait embody the issue of class difference that Wexman identifies in Vertigo, emerging through the differentiation between the doubles of Madeleine/ “Madeleine” and Judy, (1986, 37-38). When Scottie traces the full connection between Carlotta, Madeleine/ “Madeleine”, and Judy via the recognition of the necklace, his uncovering of the truth is truly traumatic and shocking. Similarly, his realisation that Judy was always playing the part of the woman he knew as “Madeleine” appears to undermine his perception of Madeleine and his ostensibly perfect repetition of “Madeleine”. As Wexman observes, an opposition exists between Madeleine’s upper-class image and the lower-class Judy, and despite Scottie spending a large amount of time and money attempting to turn this working-class woman into the upper-class figure he has fetishised and idolised, ‘the fruitlessness of his attempt is ultimately exposed when he sees Judy's telltale necklace’ which [u]nlike the clothes Scottie buys Judy…cannot be duplicated' (1986, 37). This necklace is clearly crucial; as something that cannot be repeated it helps Scottie understand the chain of repetition and deceit he has been embroiled in, recognizing the process of the repetition-of-difference that Judy playing “Madeleine” has participated in, and thus he begins disentangling the layers of identity, memory, and repetition that have swept him into the vertigo of time.

The recognition of the necklace obliterates one layer of difference whilst allowing another to become apparent to Scottie. Bodies, identities, and their multiplicity (or perceived multiplicity) convey the multiple processes and repetitions of difference that are taking place. Scottie realises that the difference he has been dealing with—and which he fleetingly believes has overcome—only gives way to reveal another layer of difference. Scottie is not simply removing or reconciling the difference between two women or two bodies (that inhabit two different times and spaces, one from the past, one from the present), but confronting multiple layers or repetitions of difference inscribed within a singular body across time rather than space.

It is curious that a material object in the form of the necklace destabilises Scottie’s material makeover of Judy into “Madeleine”, this achievement of over-sameness revealing the woman’s body to be comprised of external resemblance and internal differences. Scottie realises that he is now differentiating not between an original Madeleine and Judy as “Madeleine”, but between Elster’s construction of Judy as “Madeleine”, and Scottie’s own repeated version of Judy as “Madeleine”, as well as Judy, the woman behind both incarnations. Scottie’s “Madeleine” is different to Elster’s “Madeleine” who is different to
not only Judy but to the absent original Madeleine. Scottie and Judy’s reconstruction of “Madeleine” is a repetition-of-difference masked within resemblance. Scottie and the spectator have only known “Madeleine” as played by Judy. As Bronfen observes, in some narratives “[t]he reciprocity of original and copy is such that while the copy may be the first presence of the model, she can appear within the process of repetition, subsumed under the representation of the first [woman], who in turn may be just a copy of an original absent feminine body’ (1992, 26).

Elster’s “Madeleine” and Scottie’s “Madeleine” enact a ‘Nietzschean repetition’ in how they are connected through difference more than sameness (Verevis 2005, 227). The fact that they share the same body, both portrayed by actress Novak, emphasises how resemblance masks difference; the crucial difference is not just that the two “Madeleines” that the spectator/Scottie knows are different to each other (which they are), but that they are and have always been different to the original Madeleine. Scottie’s misguided notion that the difference inscribed in repetition can be eradicated when the distinction between original and copy becomes blurred is temporarily humoured when he appears to have finally successfully made over Judy as “Madeleine”. Difference is fleetingly effaced for Scottie first when he completely matches Judy and “Madeleine’s” appearance. Difference, or specifically corporeal difference between the ‘doubles’ is obliterated when, triggered by his recognition of the necklace, Scottie finally figures out that Judy and “Madeleine” have always shared the same body. It is no longer predominantly the external material appearance of the “Madeleines” but Scottie’s now-altered perception and memories of the doubles that differentiates the “Madeleines” from the perspective of both Scottie and the spectator.

To return to Deleuze, ‘Repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it’ (2004, 90). Upon his uncovering of the truth Scottie perceives not only Judy and “Madeleine” differently but revisits and revises his memories of, and relationship with, Judy and “Madeleine.” In the final sequence as Scottie forces “Madeleine”/Judy up the tower, he reveals his knowledge of Elster’s hoax to Judy, demanding she admit what she has done, “He made you over, didn't he? He made you over just like I made you over. Only better. Not only the clothes and the hair. But the looks and the manner and the words. And those beautiful phony trances”. Scottie reveals that this woman is an inadequate substitution for her previous incarnation of “Madeleine” now that he knows the truth, and realises there are elements of Madeleine’s identity/story that he cannot repeat despite possessing the same body/actor who played the role.
As Bogue observes in the texts employed by Deleuze to exemplify such a crisis that punctuates time, all stories result in ‘tragedies, death and loss’ (2010, 79). He says: ‘[i]t would seem that if the eruption of a disorienting event can open possibilities, then, it can also annihilate and destroy (2010, 79). The third synthesis is a moment of danger, a cosmic throw of the dice with a potential for creation and renewal but also for failure and collapse’ (2010, 79). This event for Scottie is both disorienting in that it blurs boundaries between his reflections upon and actions in the past/present/and future, yet also ostensibly orienting, in that his revelation inspires his misguided plan to free himself (and supposedly “Madeleine”/Judy). Scottie’s mistaken belief is to free himself and overcome the past. In order to do this, he must repeat the past. And so he violently makes Judy as “Madeleine” retrace her footsteps up the tower which had led to her staged death. The major difference in this repeated event is that this time Scottie makes it to the top of the tower, overcoming his vertigo. Tragedy and death ensues via another repetition-with-difference. When startled by the emergence of a nun, Judy steps back and falls to her death, this same body that has been doubled across time finally dies an authentic death.

This brings to mind Williams’ observation of Deleuze’s ‘third synthesis of time [as] both an irreversible series and a cyclical return’ in that it is ‘an order for everything remaining the same, where nothing can return, but it is a cycle for pure difference, the only thing returning each time’ (2011, 122). This event embodies Deleuze’s notion that such a ‘duality of time leads to…violence and perhaps cruelty towards those wishing to preserve an identity against the passing of time’ (Williams 2011, 122; Deleuze 2004, 381). Deleuze is harsh when he suggests that ‘those who repeat identically will be eliminated’ (2004, 381). This occurs in Vertigo when Scottie comes too close to a brute repetition of the same via the doubling of “Madeleine’s” body across time. Whilst it is Judy who is eliminated, Scottie is made to suffer in knowing that his inability to overcome the past and his compulsion to repeat caused this woman’s death. Scottie too might eventually be eliminated, for the last shot of the film presents an image evoking an open ending, Scottie standing over the ledge gazing down after “Madeleine”. Will he move forward towards an open future free of Vertigo or will he repeat her fall? Either way Scottie is punished by the unforgiving nature of time, and the cruelty and violence of which cinematic time is capable. The lesson learnt through Scottie’s encounter with the temporal double that it is never the same—but only difference—that returns eternally, enacting violence and cruelty on the body of the double and on those who try to repeat the past.
Vertigo’s doubles, along with their repetitions, generate a series of striking images that give a cinematic body to the phantom of Deleuze’s time-image and to a new type of double in film, a temporal double, a figure that is produced by and productive of temporal processes. The doubles are created and connected through repetitions-with-difference (2005). These occur both within the body of the film, i.e. the different iterations of “Madeleine”, and across cinema, as this filmic trope is reworked. Vertigo’s doubling is innovative in how it conveys the characters’ complex relationship with time, which is crucial to both the creation and shattering of their identities. Deleuze’s three syntheses of time are reflected in the trajectory of Vertigo’s double across the narrative (2004). The emergence and affirmation of difference within repetition destabilises both the identity of characters and the identity of the film. The double evolves into a figure that can drive but also disrupt and deconstruct a film’s narrative and temporality, becoming an early iteration of the temporal double that prefigures the contemporary science-fiction double, and is explored in subsequent films that repeat and refer to Vertigo. The characters move through the places and spaces of Vertigo, which acting as vehicles for time-travel render visible the temporal processes that produce and multiply bodies and beings across and through time, breaking down boundaries between past, present, and future. As the spectator of Vertigo, I mirror this time-travel, and participate in critical cinematic time-travel as I repeat with difference by re-reading the film in relation both to itself and to other later films which ‘remake’ and repeat Vertigo (such as La Jetée), altering the chronology of how the spectator/scholar uses film as a tool to read another film.
Chapter Four: *La Jetée. Là, j'étais.*

*La Jetée* is a film that repeats, is repeated, and through repetition participates in and encourages a reworking of cinematic temporality and the significance of the filmic double. This chapter will identify and demonstrate how the (doubled) protagonist’s subjective relationship with time informs the structure of the film, which is arranged so attention is drawn to circuits of repetition from small to larger circuits. By small circuits I mean within specific shots or sequences and by large I mean across the body of the film, as well as the film’s position in a series of intertextually intertwined films concerned with memory and repetition.

This thesis begins, in Chapter Three, with a discussion of Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* and its relationship to repetition. In this fourth chapter, I explore how *Vertigo* is repeated and remade via Marker’s *La Jetée*. Marker cites *Vertigo* as his inspiration for *La Jetée*, calling it his ‘remake in Paris’, reflecting on his references and repetitions of images and themes from the film (Coronel 2007, 27). *La Jetée* is in itself a complex and innovative film, and while it repeats aspects of *Vertigo*, it repeats with *difference* which allows the new to emerge.

The double emerging in *La Jetée* can be classified as a temporal double, a concept following on from the *Vertigo* chapter. However, it diverges and can be differentiated in several significant ways. Similar to my conceptualization of *Vertigo*’s double, I interrogate *La Jetée*’s double in terms of its characterization, aesthetic, and narrative functions. This double is in itself a corporeal repetition-with-difference that manifests within a film, the structure of which is also composed of layers of repetition and difference. I am concerned with a specifically cinematic and self-reflexive manifestation of time as *repetition* that—viewed through the framework of Deleuze’s philosophy of time—critically engages key concepts about identity, memory, temporality, and cinema.

Unlike *Vertigo*, *La Jetée* features a multiple body double, at least visually in the form of the protagonist as a young boy and embodiment of the past, and the protagonist as a grown man, a figure of the future. A crucial development in *La Jetée*’s reworking of the double is the fact

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7 ‘There I was’
that these different iterations of the protagonist physically exist in the same time and location as opposed to merely existing in abstract thought and memory. Each iteration of La Jetée’s doubles are further characterised and complicated by a temporal duality. In the first sequence the boy belongs to the present, while the man is of the future. In the final sequence it becomes apparent—if the multiple perspectives present in this repeated sequence are taken into account—that the man is of both the future and the present, and the boy exists simultaneously in the past and the present. This will be expounded on further in the film analysis section. In the film, tense is signified through identification—who we are aligned with as the protagonist—which is signified through voice-over narration.

In La Jetée two bodies (that of the boy, and that of the grown man) have been assigned to the same character construct—the time-travelling protagonist—but neither protagonist nor spectator are privy to this information until the closing sequence, which repeats the opening sequence but with some answers to the narrative omissions of the film’s opening. In La Jetée the temporal double comes into being through the narrative device and temporal tool of time-travel. La Jetée’s narrative actualises time-travel, and time-travel actualises the temporal double. This means these virtual concepts are made real and physical by cinema’s ability to convey them through both the time-travel narrative and the images which express this narrative through structure and sequences ordered by cinematography and editing.

The structure and style of the film works with the narrative to produce a multilayered and provocative cinematic experience evoking the multiplicity of time, its paradoxes, and its productive potential. La Jetée is often described as a ‘ciné-roman’ a ‘film-novel’, or ‘photo-roman’ (photo-novel) comprised almost entirely of still images and accompanied by a voice-over (Harbord 2009, 1). It is also available in book form as a ‘ciné-roman’ (cine-novel), which presents the images of the film along with the dialogue printed in both English and French (another kind of repetition or doubling) (Marker 1992). As Sarah Cooper describes, ‘the cinematic, photographic and novelistic weave through one another suggestively here to question the boundaries between them’ (1992, 2). From the beginning of the film, La Jetée’s cinematography establishes a duality (or rather, multiplicity) pervading the entire film, arising from the tension(s) between photography and film, image and sound, time and movement, and the multiple selves that comprise memory and identity.

Background and Significance of La Jetée
Whilst *La Jetée* is set in a post-apocalyptic, post-World War III future, it is easy to identify the significance of the recent past and the current social and cultural climate of 1962 and how this has clearly shaped Marker’s projections and predictions of the future. As Nora Alter observes, *La Jetée* is:

> a product of the cold war raging in the early 1960s, the scientists communicate in German, evoking the previous World War …[and]…the still photos of a bomb-devastated cityscape bear an uncanny resemblance to the immediate postwar imagery of Germany, especially Berlin, as captured in films by Wolfgang Staudte, Gunther Lamprecht, and Roberto Rosselini (2006, 93).

*La Jetée*’s post-war setting and allusions to Germany ‘is significant’ for Alter ‘because it points to the traumatic rupture of World War II and the Holocaust in the history of the twentieth century’ (2006, 94). It is also a powerful prediction of history being repeated in the future.

Whilst the narrative’s temporal trajectory seems to avoid the present, preferring to travel to the past or future, I suggest it is through these other temporal realms that Marker is able to allude to contemporary concerns. As Lupton astutely observes, not only does the film’s past ‘corresponds to the present in which it was made’, but ‘its fictional present is both the future and an evocation of past memories of World War 2, and a metaphorical displacement of tabooed aspects of the present (the extensive use of torture by the French authorities during the Algerian War)’ (2013, n.p.). *La Jetée*’s evocation of traumatic historical events within a futuristic setting contributes to the multi-layered structure of the film. *La Jetée* is multi-layered in its intertextuality and crucially in its temporal structure; it is a film in which the realms of the past, present, and future are all inextricably intertwined, looking backwards and forwards simultaneously.

*La Jetée* is Marker’s most successful film in terms of both its influence on film and cinema studies. As Alter points out, it has ‘generated the greatest amount of critical attention of all of Marker’s films and has achieved the status of a cult classic, largely because of the theoretical discussions it has provoked’ (2006, 92). Alter describes *La Jetée* as ‘at one and the same a film theorist’s film, a philosopher’s film, and a cultural critic’s film’ in light of the focus of
discussion on its ‘multilayered formal and thematic problems’ (2006, 92). Alter suggests the film’s ‘appeal also derives from the fact that it is the only work of narrative fiction in Marker’s oeuvre thus far’, thereby addressing a much larger audience than Marker’s previous texts and leading to Terry Gilliam’s adaptation of La Jetée’s plotline as the basis for his Hollywood feature film 12 Monkeys (2006, 92-93). La Jetée is not only a film that is remade but one that can be considered a type of remake itself. A remake is a cinematic repetition-with-difference. Marker himself describes La Jetée as a remake of Vertigo, referring to it as ‘his remake in Paris’ (Coronel 2007, 27). Marker repeats Vertigo in La Jetée and again repeats Vertigo, whilst also repeating his own repetition of Vertigo in La Jetée in Sans Soleil (2007, 27). Both La Jetée and Vertigo are later repeated by Terry Gilliam’s film 12 Monkeys (2007, 27) which remakes La Jetée and pays homage to Vertigo in several ways, most explicitly by portraying its characters watching and discussing Vertigo in a theatre in Gilliam’s film. This scene repeats La Jetée’s repetition-with-difference of this same significant scene in which the two main characters admire the lines of time on a segment of a redwood tree, prompting a reflection on their own position in time in relation to these temporal markings. In both films intertextual repetitions of repetitions can be identified. It is possible to discern layers of repetition and time both within as well as surrounding and connecting these films.

Like Vertigo, La Jetée occupies a pivotal position in a chain of repetitions that starts with Vertigo and continues to influence the cinematic science-fiction genre today via films like 12 Monkeys (1995), Primer (2004) and Looper (2012). This chain of repetitions is intertextual; it repeats across texts, and is a repetition of repetition, and of doubling as repetition which is manifest in the cinematic figure of the body doubled, or what I term the temporal double. La Jetée not only responds to but reworks the temporal double proposed by Vertigo. Thus, I suggest that La Jetée is more than a film, it is a provocation that encourages the spectator to ask questions about cinematic repetition and temporality. Vertigo, a text which existed prior to La Jetée, is able to be opened up and re-examined with the reading strategies and conceptualization of time provided by La Jetée through the device of time-travel and the temporal double; this is critical cinematic time-travel. Looking backwards, while also looking forwards, La Jetée repeats Vertigo with difference. Vertigo’s doubles, the “Madeleines” portrayed by Judy, are explained away as a hoax, as part of a crime narrative rather than a ghost story. However, temporarily in Vertigo, before the true nature of the double is revealed to Scottie and the spectator, both possible readings, spectral possession or time-travel, are
equally valid because both are equally false. However, time-travel in the narrative world of *La Jetée* is real and is what directly produces this film’s temporal double.

*Vertigo* also provides the precursor to a type of temporal double, meaning a being which appears to be doubled by memories, temporal abnormalities, or the ostensible manipulation of time, and manifests in a narrative in which repetition is an issue. However, *La Jetée* is the film that introduces the ‘two-body’ paradox, (Rodowick 2007, 116), or what I consider to be a ‘true’ temporal double, the temporal double confronted with the physical presence of the doubled self belonging to another realm of time (i.e. the past-self or future-self). This figure is a manifestation of repetition, having come about through temporal processes or manipulation in a multi-layered cinematic space-time in which repetition and memory shape not only the narrative but the temporal structure of the entire film.

It is apparent in both Marker’s writings and in several of his films a deep connection, bordering on obsession, with *Vertigo* that extends notions of repetition, doubling, memory, and time into a larger circuit or conversation between texts. While *La Jetée* and his later film *Sans Soleil* (1983) engage with *Vertigo* via playful intertextual references, Marker’s dialogue with Hitchcock exceeds superficial intertextuality to reveal a keen interest in key philosophical concerns surrounding time, memory, and repetition pervading Hitchcock’s films.

In relation to *Vertigo*, I regard *La Jetée* as a repetition-with-difference in a Deleuzian sense. Verevis writes about repetition and the cinematic remake in *Film Remakes*, exploring films on the levels of production, reception, and criticism to posit his reconceptualisation of the film remake as a particular type of repetition and ‘as a specific example of a wider and more open-ended intertextuality’ (2006, 59). Whilst Verevis does not consider a Deleuzian theory of repetition in this book, he does rework his argument within a Deleuzian framework in his brief entry ‘Repetition + Cinema’ in *The Deleuze Dictionary* (2006, 226-228). Extending on this latter approach, I draw from Deleuze’s Cinema volumes, and in particular *Difference and Repetition*, to argue that *La Jetée* features multiple types of repetition. These repetitions occur on the levels of film production, spectatorship, and scholarship and position the film within a network of intertextuality in which a new cinematic event is enabled.

Like Hitchcock, Marker is a filmmaker who continually remade himself and his own work.
Marker’s films are characterised by their self-referential and introspective style. The films seem to speak to each other, creating and continuing a dialogue across time. Marker revisits his obsession with Vertigo in Sans Soleil and references his own ‘remake’ La Jetée. As Cooper points out, throughout his work Marker persistently and repeatedly explores ‘the relationship between time and the photographic image’ which ‘finds its apotheosis in La Jetée’ (2008, 45). Cooper observes that after La Jetée Marker returns to exploring similar concerns in Sans Soleil and Level 5 (1996), the latter of which ‘has been read as his own remake of the early film’ (2008, 35-37). Cooper suggests ‘[t]hese three works thereby constitute a loosely bound trilogy across the decades’ (2008, 45). Marker’s films are indeed connected and speak both to each other and to other texts across time.

It is also important to consider how Marker repeats and references not only Vertigo but its source material, the novel D’Entre les morts by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac (Truffaut 1983, 206-207). That the novel is set in France and features a man and woman who walk together through the Jardin du Luxembourg and Galeries Lafayettes prefigures Marker’s couple’s rendezvous in a garden and department store, and suggests that La Jetée is not only a remake of Vertigo, but also a remake of D’Entre les morts. As Millar suggests, ‘[i]f Madeleine and Flavières visit the Louvre rather than the museum d’Histoire Naturelle, then this only confirms that Marker’s film is not simply the memory of an event recalled but rather an event created’ (2012, 4). Such repetitions with difference allow novelty to emerge within a film preoccupied with repeating, referencing, and remaking past texts. Repeating with variation allows Marker to make the past new, or at least help one see it in a new light.

Remembering to look simultaneously backwards and forwards, it is interesting to observe how La Jetée also has roots in Marker’s own earlier creative work. Nora Alter observes that in 1949 and 1950 Marker made several radio broadcasts, one of which “Jusqu’a la fin des temps” (Until the End of Time, 1949) was transmitted via the program “Club d’essai” (Essay Club) (Alter, 2006, 11). Alter suggests ‘[t]he text of this radio broadcast, published two years earlier in the journal Esprit, in many ways anticipates La Jetée (2006, 11). Marker’s innovative development of certain formal cinematic techniques along with a fascination with particular concepts—surrounding time, memory, and what constitutes cinema—can be traced back to his very early work, even as far back to his childhood forays into film-making. Marker recounted a childhood memory in which he began creating a still-image film about a cat, but was deterred from finishing the film by his friend, Jonathan, who convinced him that
films needed moving images (Cooper 2008, 46). 30 years later Marker proved Jonathon wrong when he made *La Jetée*. As Cooper points out ‘His friend Jonathan's reaction takes us back to the definition of film as a succession of images moving at the pace of twenty-four frames per second’ (2008, 46). In contrast, as Peter Wollen suggests, the effect of *La Jetée*'s photographs is to show that 'movement is not a necessary feature of film.' Cooper argues that *La Jetée* ‘projects photographs into the space of cinema, showing how 'movies' can be made from them but also how their stillness is never static or lifeless, in spite of their difference from the filmic image' (2008, 56). Later Marker repeats *La Jetée*’s concepts in *Remembrance of Things to Come* (2001) which as Alter observes, ‘bears a close formal and thematic resemblance to *La Jetée*’ (2006, 90). Both films ‘investigate the nature of the relationship between static pictures and moving images and propose a paradoxical, seemingly unrealistic, theory of memory that extends beyond the past into the future’ (2006, 90). Marker’s investigation into the relationship between time and the photographic image throughout his work and *La Jetée* in particular raises questions about the definition of film, as well as the fundamental relationship between time and movement in film.

**Theory and *La Jetée***

*La Jetée*’s exploration of time and memory inspires a rethinking of cinematic temporality and the key function of repetition as both a cinematographic and narrative technique. Through employing terminology and concepts from Deleuze’s work on time, repetition, cinema, and cinematic temporality, and Bellour’s work on cinematic time and repetition, this chapter explores how *La Jetée* is comprised of self-reflexive cinematic images of time that disrupt the temporal flow of the chronology that constitutes a film.

The temporal double is an image of time that manifests differently in different films. The figure has been doubled across not only space, but across time, and is repeated with difference. Its identity is intrinsic to its relationship with time. In *La Jetée* the double is constituted by two series of images of a person/face (that of the woman, and that of the protagonist), which are repeated throughout the film and each associated with a particular identity. *La Jetée*’s protagonist is initially presented as an uncertain but presumably stable singular identity. However, in a crucial culmination of repetition this character construct is shattered into fragments, or images, of difference that are revealed to have constructed the figure’s ostensibly coherent ‘identity’ in the first instance. It is at this point in the film that
the spectator is able to realise that each temporal double ‘belongs’ to a different temporal sphere, and it is the temporal double’s aberrant movement in time that leads to a splitting open of the temporal ‘presence’ of the cinematic image revealing it consists of planes of multiple temporal zones. The multiple selves associated with multiple times differ and through being repeated (even when initially presented as the same) embody a repetition-of-difference. It is the critical, climactic event of the repetition of the opening sequence in the closing sequence that draws out the difference which shatters notions of identity and the present.

Deleuze regards Bergson’s notion of co-existence to be crucial to his conceptualization of time and the relationship between the past and present (Williams 2011, 66). The co-presence of the temporal doubles in the climactic scene of repetition embodies the co-existence of multiple realms of time or repetitions that comprise time aligning with Bergson’s use of the term ‘multiplicity’ to describe duration and Deleuze’s conceptualization of time as syntheses/intertwined multiple realms or repetitions, of the present involving repetitions of the past and future (Williams 2011, 66). Co-existing cinematic temporal doubles are time-images, and presented as bodies doubled or multiple selves, embody the multiple co-present realms of time. Deleuze finds it important to explore the paradoxes that emerge in Bergson’s writing on the relationship between the pure past and the present. As Williams observes, ‘one of the most distinctive features of Deleuze’s philosophy of time is to embrace paradoxes for their productive power’ (2011, 63). The filmic figure of the temporal double possesses much productive potential. La Jetée’s ‘two-body’ paradox, (Rodowick 2007, 116) or co-presence of its temporal doubles is crucial to its reworking of cinematic temporality. The protagonist’s travels in time and recognition of the existence of fragmented multiple selves across time reveal the multiplicities from which his memories and identities are composed and enable a reflection on the nature of time and repetition.

It is the temporal double as cinematic time-image that embodies an actualisation of virtualities intrinsic to how one might perceive memory and the passing of time, and how time and memory shape identity. As Jean Louis Schefer observes, ‘the destruction of cities and the devastation of the earth’s surface have threatened the very reality of the present and have thus let loose temporal virtualities normally locked up or held captive in the past’ (1995, 140). The temporal double is a virtual self, i.e. one’s past self or future self that is normally imagined or virtual but in La Jetée is actualised, meaning moved into the immediate physical
realm of the present through time-travel and placed beside the present self. The temporal double embodies the multiplicity of the self, its repetitions rendering visible the workings of the cinematic image, and how it conveys the multiplicities of time. As Schefer suggests, the narrative of La Jetée is concerned with ‘the paradoxes of memory, concerning the inclusion of the past that lives on within the hero as an image’ (1995, 140). This image (of time) described by Schefer as a ‘secret’ which the experimenters work to make the protagonist ‘confess’ accounts for the organization of the film and its temporality. This ‘obsessive image’— that of the woman’s face— (Schefer 1995, 40) is initially positioned in La Jetée as the incarnation of memory/time as repetition.

However, the woman’s face comes to reveal itself as a mirror that will reflect for the protagonist his own fragmented position across time. Following Schefer’s assertion that ‘[w]hat ‘constitutes the subject’s secret is always the image of a personal event, a mystery of his “self” that’s supported and guaranteed by recourse to recollections of a person he once loved’, it becomes apparent how the identity of the protagonist is both composed of and subsequently shattered by repetitions and the differences that manifest through repetition (1995, 141). It is through La Jetée’s recurring images of the woman (and eventually also the protagonist as the temporal double) and attention drawn to the differences intrinsic to such repetitions that the cinematic present (and subject) is split open to reflect the co-existence of multiple intertwined realms (or repetitions) constituting the cinematic image of time and the multiple selves comprising the cinematic subject as an image of time.

The cinematic ‘present’ unfolding in La Jetée is never presented as a distinct singular realm of time, but rather a complex space-time/diegesis within which the past and/or future intrudes and re/directs the arrow of time. La Jetée’s arrangement of time brings to mind Bergson’s notion that there is no such thing as the present. Bergson argues ‘[p]ractically, we perceive only the past, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future’ (2007, 194). La Jetée’s protagonist/temporal double as a time-traveller appears to never truly experience the present, rather existing outside time or able to move between and experience multiple realms of time at once, a Bergsonian present containing a ‘pure past’ or a Deleuzian present as a temporal complex or synthesis of multiplicities in continuous flux. Whilst cinema usually tricks the spectator into thinking they are viewing the present, La Jetée is a film that rejects the present, focusing alternately between the past and future. The time-travelling protagonist’s rejection of his position in time and compulsion to repeat leads to the
doubling/fracturing of the self, and to the non-chronological structure of the narrative. It is a precursor to Primer in this sense.

As Bellour explains, narrative film is comprised of various types and layers of repetition—including cinematographic and narrative repetitions—and can be broken into smaller elements to see how these repetitions are tied together in a system (2012). As he suggests and as made apparent in La Jetée, it is productive to consider an auteur’s body of work to identify over-arching patterns, which can then be brought back into the investigation of individual films in order to pinpoint repetition as a significant—and dually constitutive and deconstructive—technique of cinema (2012, 194). Cinematic repetition and alternation occurs on multiple levels that structure and give meaning to a film, ranging from the individual shot to larger events and concepts conveyed by images. Through a close textual analysis drawing from Bellour’s categories of repetition it is possible to identify and distinguish the different types of repetition comprising La Jetée. One of Bellour's sub-categories of internal repetition is 'strictly speaking, textual repetition' (2012, 69). This repetition encompasses all levels and elements comprising a film, including for example, ‘a narrative segment, a gesture, a sound, a frame, a colour, an exchange of sentences, a decor, an action, a camera movement, or any of [these things] together' (2012, 69). Such specific repetitions (and repetitions-with-difference) can be identified in the closing sequence of La Jetée.

The closing sequence repeats the opening sequence, linking the film’s beginning and ending, and giving rise to a multitude of images as repetitions-with-difference. For Bellour, it is the combination and arrangement of such specific textual repetitions—within the shot, sequence, and the body of the film—that create distinguishable series congruent with criteria, including ‘authors, genre, period, [and] studios…within more or less homogenous cultural and stylistic spaces, most often corresponding to national boundaries' (2012, 69). Such small circuits of repetition can be connected to larger circuits of repetition, including the relationship between the opening and closing sequences, repetitions as intertextual references to other films, and critically, the remake as a repetition. As mentioned, Marker himself refers to La Jetée as Vertigo’s ‘remake in Paris’ (Coronel 2007, 27). The notion of La Jetée as a film that repeats with difference resonates through the multiple layers of the text and also those texts which have been generated in response. Through identifying such patterns of repetition defined by Bellour and in La Jetée’s relationship to other texts, it becomes apparent that along with these
repetitions certain differences are rendered visible and can be further understood through a Deleuzian conceptualisation of circuits of the repetition of difference.

Deleuze’s work on cinema is situated within and has developed from his broader writings on the philosophy of time and repetition. Like Bellour, Deleuze focuses on the many signs and images that comprise a film and provides a taxonomy of cinema in order to classify and differentiate these various signs and images (2012; 2005; 2005, xvi, 251-252). Deleuze also distinguishes between two main categories of cinema classical cinema and modern cinema, or movement-image films and time-image films (2005, xvi, 16-17). Deleuze’s investigation involves comparing and contrasting both types of cinema, while Bellour’s major interest is in the classical Hollywood narrative film. The majority of films deconstructed by Bellour can be categorised, using Deleuze’s taxonomy, as movement-image films. The crux of Deleuze’s film work is his explication of what he identifies as the shift from movement-images to time-images in cinema. La Jetée shatters established notions of how cinematic temporality might be restricted by movement or the absence of movement, as a film comprised of time-images, and in which time (as repetition) is positioned as a destabilising and deconstructive cinematic technique. The temporal double operates as a time-image and physical manifestation of repetition whose existence and relationship to time gives rise to the structure and resonates throughout the body of the film on multiple layers—as a whole and in each shot that comprises the film.

Deleuze’s conceptualization of cinematic time in Cinema II in particular, especially the time-image and the crystal-image concepts, reiterate and connect to his theorization of temporality in his earlier text, Difference and Repetition, his broader philosophical investigation into the nature of time (2005; 2004). Both Bellour and Deleuze connect cinematic images and repetitions with time and movement. Combining their work, time, and specifically cinematic time, can be regarded as comprised of and experienced as the repetition of difference, and as layered, multiple, and intertwined. Connections between Bellour and Deleuze’s writings on repetition and temporality can be identified in Bellour’s chapter ‘The Film Stilled’, which specifically refers to La Jetée amongst a category of films in which the relationship between time and movement is rethought (2012). This work can be further explored by engaging Deleuze’s theorization of cinematic images of time so as to consider the significance of interrupted movement.
Whilst Bellour cites Deleuze’s work on cinema as an inspiration for his own work on cinematic temporality, he criticises Deleuze for the ‘one category not considered…in his dynamic taxonomy of images: the interruption of movement’ (2012, 130). Bellour identifies two types of movement that must be considered: ‘the movement in the image as well as the movement of the image itself” (2012, 131). He argues that the instant in cinema tends to have its difference effaced, suggesting that they are collapsed into the very thing from which they derive their difference ‘when they become part of the film as a whole’ (2012, 131). Bellour considers whether it is ‘possible to pull or lure the film, cinema, toward the point they designate’, leading him to suggest bringing ‘the second side of movement back around to the first, which has now become immobile movement’ (2012, 131). Bellour points out that this is what Peter Wollen does in his analysis of La Jetée, a film in which ‘precisely the opposite happens- the woman half-opening her eyes- breaks the series of photographs’ (2012, 131). Wollen therefore concludes that ‘movement is not a necessary feature of film,’ that ‘in fact, the impression of movement can be created by the jump-cutting of still images’ (2012, 131). La Jetée’s elimination of traditional cinema movement draws attention to the time-traveller/temporal double’s aberrant ‘movement’ within time and space, or disruption of chronology, resulting in the co-existence of temporal doubles, the ‘two-body’ paradox (Rodowick 2007, 116) which poses questions about the multiplicity of the self in time.

Lupton observes that whilst La Jetée is ‘certainly not the only film to be comprised out of still images, but its triumph is to harness them, using the classic grammar of the narrative fiction film…to the ultimate spare, stripped down storyline’ (2012, 4). The film is self-reflexive in its ‘remarkable meditations on its own nature as a medium despite, or rather because of its being comprised almost entirely of still photographs’ (Lupton 2012, 4). The temporal double operates as a direct image of time in how its ‘movement’ draws attention to the workings of time, disrupting the filmic present to reveal the multiple layers co-existing within a given realm of time, the ‘now’ or ‘present’ presented to the spectator. Bellour invokes Deleuze when he writes about the cinematic stilled image, suggesting ‘the stilled image has acted and still does act as a medium for the relentless search for another time, for a break in time into which modern cinema’, i.e., Deleuze’s time-image cinema, ‘has perhaps fallen while searching for its most intimate secret’ (2012, 134). Bellour points out that whilst in Cinema II, Deleuze, continuing ideas from Cinema I ‘is opposed to anything that tends to immobilize the film’ (2012, 134), he explains “a direct presentation of time does not imply the stopping of movement, but rather the promotion of aberrant movement”
(Deleuze quoted in Bellour 2012, 134). Bellour understands this to mean ‘a very autonomous movement, one that testifies directly to a time anterior to ‘all normal movement defined by motivity’, pointing out how Deleuze adds ‘the movement-image already contains within itself this aberrant movement that is brought to light and worked by modern cinema’ or time-image cinema (2012, 134). The temporal double in La Jetée is a time-image within a series (or synthesis) of time-images.

Rodowick describes La Jetée as an important embodiment of time-image cinema. Specifically, he highlights how it demonstrates the crucial shift between movement-image and time-image cinema as described by Deleuze in the Cinema volumes (2007, 4). Rodowick emphasises how the narrative device of time-travel and the ambiguity of whether the protagonist’s journey is ‘actual and physical’ or ‘mental and spiritual’, as well as how Marker’s distinctive use of still images, ‘liberates…the imaging of time…from its subordination to movements linked with physical actions’ (2007, 4). Rodowick describes how ‘the image of time is no longer reduced to the thread of chronology where present, past, and future are aligned on a continuum’ and how ‘[o]nce chronology is pulverized, time is fragmented like so many facets of a shattered crystal’, evoking Deleuze’s theorization of time as developed not only in the Cinema volumes but in Difference and Repetition (2007, 4). He illustrates that the narrative sections in La Jetée are ‘disconnected spaces, divided into blocks of time linked in a probabilistic manner: the park, the museum, the quay at Orly’, with ‘the spectator’s apprehension of what comes next [being] equivalent to a dice throw’ (2007, 4-5).

As Rodowick demonstrates, La Jetée’s conceptualization of time can be investigated through Deleuze’s development of his theory of time-image cinema in the Cinema volumes. Although Rodowick doesn’t explicitly make reference to Difference and Repetition in relation to this film, his brief analysis of La Jetée does bring to mind notions of temporality developed in this text. Such a Deleuzian reading of La Jetée can be extended and enriched if his theorization of time—as composed of repetitions of difference and existing within a structure of syntheses of time—is taken into account and connections are drawn between concepts developed in the Cinema texts and Difference and Repetition, in addition to Bellour’s work on cinematic repetition. The narrative device of time-travel necessitates a re-ordering of narrative time as something other than a chronological procession of past, present, and future, and generates images that open up the cinematic present to reveal the operation of multiple, intertwined, and co-existing realms.
Bellour looks at cinematic repetitions in great detail in order to argue that films are made up of multiple kinds of repetition (1979, 65-72). He identifies and defines two main categories of repetition: 'external repetition' and 'internal repetition', and within these two main categories, multiple sub-categories (1979). There are multiple categories and layers of repetition that structure our experience of the film. These include external invisible behind-the-scenes repetitions involved in the production of the film; however here I am exploring the repetitions that the spectator is able to perceive whilst watching the film, namely the repetition of figures, forms, and elements in the film’s diegesis.

Difference also emerges through repetition in La Jetée’s narrative. Information is withheld and gaps are formed and then (partially) filled when the event in question is repeated. When the opening sequence is repeated as the closing sequence, it is repeated with a variation in perspective, allowing more detail and new information to become apparent. The temporal double as manifestation of repetition becomes discernible as a repetition-with-difference through the crucial difference in perspective from which the events of the opening sequence are repeated as closing sequence. The temporal double as protagonist is both a subject and image of time, and regulates the film’s organization of and relationship to temporality, which is conveyed by and emerges through the film’s circular structure.

Bellour identifies and insists on ‘three determinants, the conjunction of which seems…because it has been confirmed on many occasions, to outline a type of global apparatus by which the narrative in the classical American cinema, is given as a scenography of repetition' (1979, 69). La Jetée subverts the classical cinematic relationship to time through its direct time-images, primarily through its critical function of repetition. La Jetée advances its own ‘scenography of repetition’ (1979, 69) in which the temporal double embodies a difference within repetition via both cinematographic and narrative repetitions. The temporal double’s movement in space and time generate images that comprise circuits of repetition which are discernible within the film as a whole structure down to the individual shot.

In a film, frame to frame differences are never very large, except, as Bellour emphasises, ‘in films which play on visual acceleration and 'denaturalise' the unfolding process, even going so far as to have a different shot for every frame’ as he observes occurs in the second part of T-wo-men (1972) by Werner Nekes', and also occurs in La Jetée, which Bellour emphasises.
as a film that reworks the relationship between time and movement (1979, 69). *La Jetée* is composed almost entirely of still images, which can be regarded as another particular type of denaturalization. A denaturalization of cinematic temporality occurs in *La Jetée* via the film’s construction out of still shots for each frame, with one striking exception—that of the woman as analysed by Wollen and Bellour—which in turn denaturalises *La Jetée*’s own temporal logic. This draws attention to the temporal double’s ‘movement’ in and across time, as well as his relation to/perception of his doubled self in contrast to the other/other image of time (the image of the woman’s face). As Bellour and Rodowick have argued, through Deleuze we can understand the film as time-image cinema via its direct presentation of time and ‘aberrant’ movement, (1979; 2007; 2005) set in motion by the protagonist’s obsessive attachment to an image (the woman, as the face of time) that enables him (the subject of time) to time-travel and thus perceive time not as a simple singular present, but a complex amalgamation of repetitions aligned with past, present, and future.

Bellour first identifies ‘the effects of micro-repetition which, on the basis of a process of serial repetition, structure the minor units (the shots) of the narrative within most of its major units (segments and fragments)’ (1979, 70). There are multiple repeated shots in *La Jetée* both within specific significant sequences and across the body of the film, especially within the opening and closing sequences. The entire film is littered with micro-repetitions. The most prominent and frequently repeated images are two faces—that of the protagonist/time-traveller and his obsessive image of the woman’s face—which is the film’s central image—the ‘face of time’—for the protagonist, the very image setting the narrative in motion, providing the protagonist with his desire, obsession, and grounding in time (and subsequent ungrounding in time). This image of the woman’s face, a close-up point-of-view shot from the protagonist’s perspective, first appears for the man and spectator in the opening sequence and is repeated when the man reunites with her via time-travel in the second act/middle of the film, and again most poignantly in the closing sequence, featuring both micro and macro-repetitions and operating as a repetition-with-difference of the opening sequence.

Bellour points out ‘the effects of macro-repetition (often consisting of micro-repetitions at a remove) which assign to the space of the film the form of a trajectory at once progressive and circular, between a first event and a second one repeating it’ (1979, 70). In *La Jetée* a major example of a macro-repetition is the repetition of the opening sequence as closing sequence. The closing repetition is a macro-repetition-with-difference of the opening. The crucial
difference that emerges within the macro-repetition of the opening as closing sequence is the realisation, conveyed by both voice-over and image, that we are not distinguishing between two people but between two *versions* of the same person, between temporal doubles which are connected through difference. Whilst the boy is presented physically, visually, in the narrative and the body of the film, distanced and distinct from the grown man, the two beings/bodies are inextricably intertwined, which becomes apparent with time and repetition-with-difference.

Bellour posits a third requirement, arguing that it is necessary to also consider ‘the way resolution (positive, negative) acts on these effects of macro-repetition and circumscribes the subject of the narrative like the differential circularity between beginning and end’ (1979, 70). He insists that ‘[t]he narrative is repeated because it is resolved' (1979, 70). He stresses that this principle regulates the narrative’s fate, pointing out the film is comprised of segments or fragments constituting multiple ‘micro-resolutions where the major resolution of the narrative seems to be echoed and reflected through an effect of continuous-discontinuous reverberations, through an interlocking mechanism of the whole back with the part' (1979, 70). Bellour suggests it is also important to consider other ways ‘repetition works as an explicit principle in films in which it shapes entirely from beginning to end', a notion exemplified by the cyclical structure of *La Jetée* (1979,70). The closing sequence as a repetition-with-difference, comprised of both micro and macro-repetitions of the opening becomes a resolution through the repetition-of-*difference* as perceived by the temporal double.

**Film Analysis**

The opening sequence of *La Jetée* presents images of the protagonist doubled, appearing as both a child and adult. Whilst two bodies have been assigned to the same character construct, and are technically co-present in the same temporal realm, they never appear in the same shot, and the spectator does not become privy to this information until the closing sequence when the protagonist himself has this revelation. No indication is given that the young boy, whose story is being told, and the man, whose death the child later realises he witnessed, are the same person. It is only through *repetition* that the protagonist and spectator are able to have this realization. On a first viewing of the film, the spectator would have no reason to suspect that the boy and man share the same identity. It is when one re-watches the film,
possessing knowledge from one’s previous viewing/s, or when one looks back on the beginning of the film at its conclusion does one realise that the boy and the man are each other’s temporal doubles. The ‘true’ identity of the boy/man lies in the repetition of images and events and the differences which emerge along with these repetitions. The opening is repeated as the sequence, but with difference, the major difference, as I have noted, being perspective; the opening is presented from the perspective of the boy, whilst in contrast the closing is presented from the perspective of the man. Repetition-with-difference occurs on one level simply through the ordering of sequences and the cyclical structure of the narrative; the film begins where it ends, on the jetty with the death of a man witnessed by a child and woman. However, it is not the same as the first time the spectator/protagonist witnessed this event unfold, with further difference being conveyed and reinforced by voice-over and camera-work, specifically the introduction of different angles and new, more detailed shots, fleshing out some of the uncertainties of the opening sequence.

It is the image of the woman that first transfixes the protagonist, and with which he continues to obsess across the narrative, driving him to the point at which his identity is split into two. Hers is the most repeated image throughout the film. It is the film’s image, or face of repetition, that seems to hold the ‘secret’ to time (as the time-travel experimenters seem to believe), and also to the protagonist’s ‘true’ identity. Her face was for the protagonist “the only peacetime image to survive the war” prior to his travels in time. The experimenters, able to spy on the dreams of their subjects, selected the protagonist “from among a thousand for his obsession with an image from the past” reasoning that if men were prone to strong mental images, “if they were able to conceive or to dream another time, perhaps they would be able to live in it.” It is his obsession with and mental repetition of the woman’s face that enables the man to travel back in time and repeat a version of the past with difference, a past (which the protagonist as a time-traveller experiences as a present) before the war, in which as a grown man he is able to become acquainted with the woman. This results in a proliferation of new images of the woman, and an increasingly stronger desire to return to her once they are torn apart by the experimenters, who satisfied with his time-travel abilities attempt to eliminate him.
The above stills depict the first close-up shot presented from the point-of-view of the protagonist from the opening and closing sequence, respectively. The shots are alike, featuring similar framing, positioning of the woman, of her hand and her gaze, directed towards the corner of the frame. The major difference is that in each of the two shots she is facing the opposite direction, and if the shots are compared side to side, the woman appears to stand back to back with herself. This shot is an example of a minor repetition-with-difference or micro-repetition. There are also two ‘sides’ to the woman that obsess the protagonist and are repeated throughout the film, with a particular emphasis in the closing of the film and its repetition of the opening. Although the protagonist speaks as if it is one image of the woman that obsesses him, upon closer inspection of the opening and closing sequences it is possible to discern two versions of the woman’s face that are revered and repeated; that image of the woman captured in the above two stills, of a woman swept up in thought, whose beauty captures the attention of the protagonist as a boy, and the subsequent image of the woman reacting, appearing shocked by the murder unfolding before her eyes, which gains incredible significance when repeated. The subtle duality of the figure of the woman foreshadows and draws attention to the more complex duality of the protagonist and his own fragmented identity. There is a foreshadowing of the man’s physical doubling in the sequence when the two characters go shopping in a department store, which is itself also a repetition-with-difference of a scene in *Vertigo*. There is a shot of the woman doubled in a mirror, gazing at her reflection. This is followed by a repetition-with-difference in the form of a shot of the man doubled in the same mirror, but facing away, preferring to gaze at the woman than contemplate his own reflection. The man’s doubling is deferred as both protagonist and presumably spectator are distracted by his obsessive doubling and repetition of the woman.
It is the repetition of the image of the woman and the act of watching her watching that ties the two sides of the temporal double as time-image together. With the repetition of the events of the opening sequence, omissions left in the opening sequence are addressed, and the spectator becomes privy to two sides of the same memory (that of the protagonist as a boy and that of the protagonist as a man). It becomes apparent that there are two sides of an image of time, connected by the image of the woman and the repeated act of watching her watching. The images comprising the dramatic closing sequence are positioned from multiple angles and seem to convey split multiple perspectives, although this only fully makes sense once the spectator, along with the protagonist, through repetition, realise the nature of the protagonist’s multiplicitous, fragmented identity. Throughout the film the point-of-view of the protagonist is privileged primarily as movement is made towards the revelation that the protagonist, the man who dies, and the boy who witnesses the man’s death are all the same person. Point-of-view shots, a repetition with slight difference of the shot-reverse-shot pattern, where the shots cut between the subject and the object(s) of the vision convey the change in perspective in the closing compared to the opening sequence. The new shots and images within these shots fill gaps in the opening sequence, with a pivotal new figure being that of the killer, recognised by the protagonist as “the man who had trailed him since the underground camp”, a revelation only made possible through repetitions-with-difference.

The presence of the protagonist’s temporal double, his past self as a boy is also made apparent, but through thought and conveyed by voice-over, never visually revealed in any shot in this sequence, although other child plane-spotters are depicted, mirroring and reminding the spectator of the image of the protagonist as a boy. While following the protagonist down the jetty at the beginning of the closing sequence, the presence of the boy is evoked when the voice-over notes, “Once again on the main jetty at Orly, in the middle of this pre-war Sunday afternoon where he could now stay, he thought in a confused way that the child he had been was due to be there too, watching the planes.” This is said over a close-up of the protagonist gazing down the jetty, followed by a shot of children wandering down the jetty with their parents. The notion of temporal doubling and split identity seems to be briefly contemplated, but this thought is immediately brushed aside by the protagonist’s persistent fixation on the woman. “But first of all he looked for the woman’s face, at the end of the jetty…He ran toward her,” the narrator says. Whilst the perspective of the boy is acknowledged and implicit in this repeated sequence and the doubling of bodies is proposed, the spectator, along with the protagonist (as a man) continues to follow his arrow of time, and
this ‘present’ version of the protagonist/temporal double is clearly privileged over the other in this version of the sequence.

In the repeated sequence the protagonist is a futuristic figure, doubly so, having returned from not only the future ‘present’ of the film but the present future’s future, where he temporarily resides before choosing to return to the past. There is a sense of temporal duality conveyed by the voice-over narrator, serving as a reminder that the spectator is not only watching the man watching the woman, but watching the man watching the woman whilst recalling his past child self’s memory of watching the woman.

The repetition-of-difference emerges not only in the shift of perspective but is also emphasised by editing via variation in angles, framing, ordering of shots, and significantly through the insertion of additional images in this sequence, particularly the shot/reverse-shot pattern cutting between the protagonist, killer, and woman. The relationship between voice-over and images, including which words align with which shot, and how they fill in narrative omissions also convey the protagonist’s revelation regarding his own fragmented identity and position within time. The image of the woman, which sets the narrative in motion, enables the device of time-travel which guides the structure of and is repeated throughout the film, and also in its final repetition enabling the film’s ‘resolution’ as the protagonist uncovers his true identity. The protagonist’s own doubled self and the repetition of what he realises is his own, or rather (in the first instant) his temporal double’s death, is in a critical moment of repetition and reflection, reflected back to him (the subject of time) through the repetition-with-difference of this image of the woman (the face of time) and her position within a shot/reverse-shot sequence cutting between the protagonist, woman, and killer.

Both the protagonist’s obsession with, and obsessive repetition of, the image of the woman’s face (the ‘face of time’) within both micro and macro-repetitions led him (the ‘subject of time’) to his realisation of the co-existence of his multiple selves across time. The co-presence of the temporal doubles in the same sequence and realm of time embodies a Deleuzian/Bergsonian theorization of temporality, conveying how the past stays with an individual and is a part of them (the protagonist and potentially the spectator), a notion embodied by the co-existence of temporal doubles, of past/present/future selves within realms of time in which past/present/future can temporarily become indiscernible. The opening line of the film, “This is the story of a man, marked by an image from his childhood”
conveys this notion of the past continuing to live on in the present.

The closing sequence, as a macro-repetition of the opening, featuring a number of micro-repetitions in the form of a succession of repeated shots (with slight difference), and a striking series of shot/reverse-shots, connecting the protagonist, woman, killer, and boy. Accompanied by the voice-over relaying the protagonist’s revelation, the identity of the protagonist is finally uncovered and shattered to reveal itself as comprised of multiple fragmented selves or repetitions-with-difference. Both the presence of and the man’s realisation of the doubling in the closing sequence visualises the virtual multiple selves that exist across time in the mind and memory, and which La Jetée brings into being and unites in this cinematic ‘present’ via time-travel.

Fig. 3 La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1962)  Fig. 4 La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1962)

Fig. 5 La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1962)  Fig. 6 La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1962)

The difference that manifests through the repetition of the events of the beginning of the film at the end of the film surges forth in several ways in the critical, climactic moments conveying the protagonist’s revelation just prior to death, addressing the audience through voice-over accompanying a rapid series of shot-reverse-shot images. The voice-over narrates a rapid sequence of images focusing on the protagonist running along the jetty towards the woman, each image cutting closer to the man and his face. Next there is a cut to a shot (featured above) positioned behind the protagonist, who features in the foreground, running
straight ahead down the jetty. Further down the jetty and to either side of the protagonist in
the shot stand a man to the left (the killer), and the woman to the right, forming a triangular
shape connecting the three figures. It is with this shot that the voice-over registers the
protagonist’s recognition, and is followed by a cut to a point-of-view close-up shot of the
killer’s face, appearing to make eye contact with the camera/protagonist behind his futuristic
eyewear, succeeded by a close-up of the woman, holding her hand to her face, reacting with
shock as she witnesses the events unfold. The next cut is to a point-of-view mid-shot of the
killer pointing a gun directly at the camera/protagonist. The words spoken by the voice-over
accompanying each shot depicted above are striking and significant. With the shot depicting
the protagonist running towards both the woman and man, the voice-over says, “And when
he recognized the man…”, which is followed by the close-up shot of the killer, as the voice-
over continues, “…who had trailed him since the underground camp…’, which is then
followed by the close-up shot of the woman, as the narrator says, “he understood…”, which
is proceeded by the shot of the killer pointing the gun, as the voice-over says, “…there was
no way to escape Time…”8

Fig. 7 La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1962)   Fig. 8 La Jetée (Chris Marker, 1962)

The protagonist’s repetition of watching the woman watching differs in that he pays attention
to what she is looking at this time, with the shot/reverse-shot pattern moving between the
protagonist and woman, revealing the presence of the killer, and his new positioning between
the woman and killer with the gun. This allows him to become beside himself in a sense and
realise that what he is experiencing is a repetition of his own death that his past self
witnessed, and which is now being witnessed by (another version of) his past self/temporal
double, whose co-presence he this time senses. It is this repetition which splits open the

8 “Time” is capitalised as such in the captions accompanying the film stills in the ciné-roman version of La Jetée
(Marker, 1992).
cinematic ‘present’ and shatters the protagonist’s identity into multiple temporal selves.

The series of three shots depicting the protagonist’s moment of death are each subtle repetitions-with-difference. One shot from the opening has become three in the closing sequence, giving the effect of time being further slowed down allowing for the protagonist’s moment of revelation. Difference emerges not only in the form of quantity and perspective of the shots, but in the detail in their mise-en-scène. The first two are medium shots of the protagonist positioned in the foreground in the centre of the frame, strikingly frozen in space and time the moment he has been struck by a bullet and began to fall back, his left arm extended outwards and up towards the sky. The woman appears in silhouette form in the background of the shot, just out of reach at the end of the jetty, but clearly looking on and the closest witness. The only difference between these first two shots is that the second cuts back to a wider shot (pictured above on the left), emphasizing the distance between the man and woman and opening up space in the frame for a witness to the death and the woman’s reaction.

The next shot (pictured above on the right) again repeats with difference, as it has cut back further this time to reveal the partial figure of the killer, viewed from behind, and positioned in the foreground and to the left side of the frame, arms crossed, watching the protagonist die. The positioning of the three figures in this shot forms a diagonal line across the frame and jetty connecting the woman, protagonist, and killer in this frozen moment of time. The third shot, through detail and structure exemplifies the difference in the closing sequence’s repetition of the opening, providing the information key to unlocking the protagonist’s identity. The composition of the shot also—forming a line between the woman, man, and killer—serves as a reminder that there is an other (or rather another self) witnessing this moment, and visualises the protagonist’s realisation that the moment he is experiencing is one repeated from multiple perspectives, including his own. The accompanying voice-over confirms this revelation.

The new watching figure, presumably the killer also, I propose, stands in for the co-present but not-depicted temporal double of the protagonist, who stands beside himself to witness his own death. From the moment that introduces the idea of the potential presence of the protagonist’s past self as a boy on the jetty—conveyed via the voice-over—the spectator is positioned to take into account the co-existence and perspective of this version or temporal
double of the protagonist.

From the moment the protagonist contemplates the co-presence of his past self, the spectator is positioned to regard this sequence from a dual perspective. Difference is introduced by new shots and angles within the shot/reverse-shot sequence from the adult protagonist’s perspective that reveals the killer and his murder of the man, allowing the protagonist to realise the death he witnessed as a boy was and is his own. It is through repetition-with-difference and the multiple perspectives presented that he and the spectator are able to realise this duality and co-existence of the two temporal doubles in this scene of repetition. The repetition-as-resolution that reveals the co-presence of the protagonist’s multiple temporal selves is inseparable from the repetition of the image of the woman. It is both the protagonist’s obsessive repetition of and his returning to the woman that leads to his unlocking of the ‘secret’ of his own identity and position in time. The repetition of the protagonist’s watching of the woman watching, but with variation, reflects back to him his own image and the co-presence of his multiple temporal selves. When the voice-over utters the film’s last line, revealing the protagonist’s realisation “that this moment he had been granted to watch as a child, which had never ceased to obsess him, was the moment of his own death.” The words “was the moment of his own death” align with the last close-up of the watching woman’s face, followed by the final shot of the film, a medium shot of the protagonist lying dead in the foreground of the frame, with the woman in the background looking on (which is similar to the shot forming a diagonal line between the woman, man, and killer), that can be perceived from the perspective of the protagonist’s temporal double. The co-presence of the protagonist’s temporal double is affirmed by the repetition of events as perceived by his past self and the inclusion of his perspective amongst the multiple angles and perspectives offered in this sequence.
In his final moments preceding death, the protagonist is able to perceive himself as a temporal double, realising that he is beside himself in time in a dramatic moment which opens up the cinematic ‘present’ revealing the intertwined realms of time and shattering the identity of the protagonist into multiple fragmented selves. Ostensibly, nothing in the closing sequence is different to the opening, the events appear to unfold predominantly in the same way, with the exception of the protagonist’s new knowledge that comes with his fleeting glimpse of his killer—an omission which is filled in—as a difference emerging through repetition and a shift in perspective. This new knowledge appears to trigger a difference in the mind of the protagonist as his attention shifts away from the face of the woman briefly to reflect on his own position in time and the problem of his own identity.⁹

The protagonist, as a temporal double, is both an *image* of time and *subject* of time. The temporal double’s identity is intrinsic to its relationship with time, with time understood in a Deleuzian sense as comprised of repetitions-with-difference and a layering of past/present/future. The protagonist’s identity is comprised of multiplicities, of repetitions-with-difference, and is at first obscured and subsequently becomes discernible by the obsessive repetition of images of the woman’s face, whose watching of the protagonist’s death reflects back to him his own past self/temporal double’s co-presence and perception of this event, or rather of the woman reacting to the event. The protagonist’s identity, which is initially presented as an uncertain but presumably singular one is shattered into fragments of time or difference, which are visually manifest in the form of temporal doubles, multiple selves which together function as the genesis for that ostensibly coherent ‘identity’ in the first place, at the film’s beginning. The notion of multiple selves is connected to the multiple realms of time. Each temporal double ‘belongs’ to a different temporal sphere. It is the protagonist’s movement in time, which results in his experience of repetition and realization of the co-presence of his temporal double and its difference, that leads to a splitting open of the temporal ‘presence’ of the cinematic image to reveal its consistency of planes of concurrent, multiple temporal zones.

⁹ As Deleuze argues in *Difference and Repetition*: ‘Repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it’ (2004, 90.)
Looking Backwards and Forwards with La Jetée

La Jetée is structured by repetition and the manipulation of temporality and occupies an important position in a chain of intertextual repetitions that begins with Vertigo and continues to influence science-fiction and time-travel cinema today. The critical filmic figure of the temporal double, proposed by Vertigo, is actualised by La Jetée, and reworked by subsequent contemporary time-travel films, enabling and embodying the film’s deconstructive manipulation of cinematic temporality and chronology. La Jetée starts as a ‘remake’ or repetition of another film, but becomes completely innovative, original, and transgressive.

La Jetée evolves and differs from Vertigo in its actualisation of time-travel, which in turn actualises the virtual figure of the temporal double. The temporal double is a virtual self that is actualised in film to varying degrees. La Jetée is transgressive in how it allows two selves or temporal doubles to co-exist in the same realm of time, albeit briefly and not within the same shot. Despite conforming to convention in the sense that this confrontation ultimately ends in death, La Jetée’s use of the narrative tool of time-travel allowed an exploration and reworking of the ‘two-body problem,’ (Rodowick 2007, 116) which is further reworked in more radical ways in the film Primer, explored in the next chapter of this thesis.

This chapter has investigated La Jetée’s innovation and influence in terms of its arrangement of time, demonstrating how the non-chronological structure of the film reflects the protagonist’s subjective experience of time. In this sense the film embodies what Deleuze defines as time-image cinema (2005). The film is comprised not only of images, but layers of images that evoke a cinematic space-time which I believe necessitates a Deleuzian enquiry into the structure of time, and its composition of multiple intertwined realms, syntheses, or repetitions.

La Jetée is multi-layered in both its intertextuality and in its temporal structure, a film in which the realms of the past, present, and future are all inextricably intertwined. The film looks backwards and forwards simultaneously. It rejects a stable chronology. La Jetée is for this reason an important film in the field of cinema studies, having generated an immense and invaluable body of critical work investigating film’s multi-layered formal and thematic problems and the theoretical questions and discussions it has generated. La Jetée is more than just a film. Rather, it is a provocation that encourages the spectator and cinema scholar to ask
questions about and to investigate cinematic repetition and temporality, inviting an engagement with what I term critical cinematic time-travel. *La Jetée*, through its intertextual references, and through time-travel and the temporal double, encourages a revisiting of *Vertigo*, a text which existed prior to *La Jetée*, enabling and opening up a re-examination of this earlier film through its proffering of possible reading strategies via its fascinating (re-)conceptualization of time and repetition. The film’s Deleuzian repetitions-with-difference allow the new to emerge within a film preoccupied with repeating, referencing, and remaking past texts, and inspires a rethinking of cinematic temporality and the critical function of repetition as a cinematographic and narrative technique (2004).

*La Jetée*’s ‘two-body’ paradox (Rodowick 2007, 116) or co-presence of temporal doubles is crucial to its reworking of cinematic temporality. The protagonist’s travels in time and recognition of the existence of fragmented multiple selves in time reveals the multiplicities from which his memories and identities are composed, engendering a reflection on the nature of time. Co-existing cinematic temporal doubles are time-images that—presented as bodies doubled or multiple selves—embody the multiple co-present realms of time. These images (and repetition/s of such images) are, as I have shown through employing terminology and concepts from Deleuze on time, repetition, cinema, and cinematic temporality, and Bellour on cinema, cinematic time, and specifically cinematic repetition, self-reflexive cinematic images of time that serve to disrupt the temporal flow of instants that constitute a film (2004; 2005; 1979; 2012).

It is the temporal double as a cinematic time-image that embodies a type of actualisation of virtualities intrinsic to how one might perceive memory and the passing of time and the connection between temporality and identity. The multiplicity of the self is embodied by the figure of the temporal double which as a time-image renders visible the workings of the cinematic image and how it conveys the multiplicities of time. The multiple selves associated with multiple times differ and through being repeated (even when initially presented as the same) embody a repetition-of-difference. The critical, climactic event of the repetition of the opening sequence in the closing sequence, and the *difference* drawn out shatters seemingly stable notions of identity and the present. The cinematic ‘present’ (and subject) splits open to reflect the co-existence of the multiple intertwined realms (or repetitions) constituting the cinematic image of time and the multiple selves comprising the cinematic subject as an image of time.
Chapter Five: The Temporal Double: Slipping Between the Seams of Primer

In Primer, the manipulation of temporality and significance of the filmic figure of the temporal double show how repetition forms a crucial component of cinema. This thesis investigates how from the cinematic image or shot to cinema as a medium, repetition is a productive self-reflexive element that establishes and interrogates connections between time and identity. This fifth chapter repeats and reworks the cinematic double’s role as a manifestation of repetition. Primer continues this evolution, introducing another new kind of temporal double in the form of a contemporary science-fiction double. Primer’s temporal double/s are different to other doubles explored in this thesis so far. Primer extends and expands the earlier discussion of the double in how it highlights the connection between the body of the double and the body/structure of the film, as it uses repetition and the cinematic tool of time-travel to visualise how the duality, or rather the multiplicity, of the self and of (cinematic) time can potentially proliferate endlessly and thus become more complex.

The temporal double posited by this thesis is a specifically cinematic figure that operates as a Deleuzian image of time embodying time as comprised of multiplicities and repetitions (Sullivan 2016). The temporal double functions as a manifestation of time as Deleuzian repetition-with-difference and illustrates the implications, paradoxes, and potentials of (cinematic) repetition in relation to subjectivity, coming-into-being, or ‘becoming’, and the actualisation of possibilities and identities (2005; 2004). Primer’s iterations of the temporal double and their positions within and affect on the narrative and body of the film align with how it relates to science-fiction and time-travel cinema and show how it is itself a self-reflexive film that repeats with difference in order to rework and create new approaches to the genre. Primer operates as a ‘science-fiction of the present’, a category posited by Gerald Alva Miller10 in which the temporal double plays a significant part in the film’s ability to reflect the world and the self back to the spectator/scholar in an uncanny fashion (2012). In this chapter I argue that Primer’s temporal doubles embody the film’s destabilization of cinematic chronology and rejection of the ‘presentness’ of cinema. I will show how Primer’s proliferation of temporal doubles and multiple timelines work with and magnify the

10 I will return to this concept in more detail later in this chapter.
multiplicity of such a cinematic image of time and its ability to convey the multiplicity of
time and multiplicity of the self in and across time. This chapter positions Primer as part of
a pattern of repetition across cinema in which films are connected by their manipulation of
temporality and use of repetition as a critical component of time and the body of a film. This
is manifest in the figure of the double whose presence in a narrative disrupts notions of stable
temporalities and identities as it continues to evolve, being repeated and reworked with
difference. Primer is also striking in its ability to convey and visualise the past and the future.
The film engages with the past to produce a text that becomes significant and influential and
thus changes the future of science-fiction and the science-fiction double.

Primer follows Aaron and Abe, two engineers who inadvertently invent a time machine
allowing them to travel back into the recent past. The protagonists find that a side effect of
time-travel is the co-presence of multiple selves in the same temporal sphere, one which
‘belongs’ there and one which has time-travelled there to repeat (and sometimes change) the
past. At least this is how it begins. These temporal doubles continue to proliferate as the
protagonists repeatedly travel back in time, and Primer reworks the concept of the ‘two body
problem’ and the image of the double that I will show creates a new and innovative cinematic
event conveying the multiplicity of the self in and across time (Rodowick 2007, 116). The
familiar two-body problem trope is complicated and expanded by Primer and becomes a
multiple body problem.

Background and Significance of Primer

Primer was shot over a 5-week period on a miniscule budget of $7000 by first-time
filmmaker Shane Carruth (Taubin 2004, n.p.). As noted on the official Primer website, ‘The
story of the making of Primer is as unusual as the movie itself.’ (Tinch 2004, n.p.). Carruth, a
former engineer, spent three years teaching himself filmmaking, and ‘conceived, wrote,
directed, edited, and scored Primer’ and played one of the lead roles (Tinch, 2004, n.p.).

Whilst Primer has been lauded for its innovation and individuality, it has also been identified
by Kevin Maher as part of a cinematic movement ‘turning away from the dull vacuity of
Hollywood Space Opera to the threadbare energy of no-budget sci-fi’ (2005, n.p.). Maher
points out that ‘[s]urprisingly, and despite years of blockbuster evidence to the contrary, No
Budget sci-fi isn't exactly a new phenomenon' (2005, n.p.). He looks back to Georges Méliès’s ground-breaking 1902 film *Le Voyage dans la Lune*, observing ‘the primal thrill of sci-fi has been deeply implicated in a fundamental act of faith on behalf of the viewer’ (2005, n.p.). Maher argues, ‘[t]raditional sci-fi has long required an overriding belief in the material that denies the conceptual gap between fantastical intent and shoddy effects. Like a 2-D Chinese lantern show, or the delicate interplay between lifeless marionettes, here it's the conviction of the story that matters’ (2005, n.p.). Similarly, *Primer*, whilst classifiable as a science-fiction film about time-travel, focuses not on the technological side but on the human experience and consequences of travelling through time.

Maher observes, ‘[s]imilarly, shoestring sci-fi from the Fifties and Sixties thrived off this same simple rubric’ (2005, n.p.). He suggests ‘[t]he paranoid narrative energy and stony-faced integrity’ of films like *The Man from Planet X* (1951) and the later *Quartermass* series allowed such films to succeed ‘because of, rather than despite, their flimsy production values’ (2005, n.p.). Seventies science-fiction films like *THX 1138* (George Lucas, 1971) and *Death Race 2000* (Paul Bartel, 1975) managed to hide budgetary constraints ‘by avant-garde technique in the former and sheer propulsive energy in the latter’ (2005). However, next came the science-fiction film that set in motion a series of changes in science-fiction conventions and spectator expectations, *Star Wars* (1977) (2005, n.p.). Following the success of *Star Wars*, Maher notes, ‘the sci-fi goalposts seemed to shift’ (2005, n.p.). *Primer* is a film that is innovative and different in multiple ways, including as a time-travel/science-fiction film and as an independent film, and in how it looks forward and conveys new ideas, whilst also looking back to the past and reworking and reinvigorating science-fiction conventions and film-making practices. Through both narrative and style *Primer* shows how it looks to the past in order to predict and change the future. This includes Carruth’s deliberate, stylistic use of 16mm film, (Taubin 2004, n.p) which contributes to the effect of both shifting focus onto the human rather than the technological side of time-travel, and *Primer*’s interest in temporal confictions and contradictions.

*Primer*, to an extent, fits Miller’s definition of a ‘science fiction of the present’, a literary category he created to explore texts eschewing the typical estranging effects of science-fiction including settings within alternate or future worlds, instead set in ‘worlds that seem indistinguishable from the real world in which the audience and the author dwell, yet…still concern the growth of technology in a manner akin to science fiction’, that unfold in the
present, or even the past, and ‘pursue a predominantly realistic narrative mode’ (2012, 12; 2012, 13). Miller describes Primer as a ‘documentary science fiction’ film, defining this as ‘the cinematic equivalent of science fictions of the present’, employing ‘a realistic aesthetic to comment upon our present world or to interrogate the manners in which we perceive reality’ (2012, 133). Whilst I agree with Miller that Primer can be described as a ‘documentary science fiction’ film in regards to its realistic ‘counter-spectacle’ aesthetic, which contributes to its ability to ‘not only problematize the genre of science fiction but comment upon the nature of cinematic expression itself’, and its deconstruction of ‘the relationship between time and memory in a way that [allows] us to reconsider the struggle between the modalities of spectacle and narrative in cinema’, I prefer to employ Miller’s broader category of ‘science fictions of the present’ to describe Primer because of this term’s reference to temporality and Primer’s complex relationship with the present (2012, 133).

There are multiple ‘presents’ interrogated by Primer, from its contemporary setting to the narrative’s depiction of temporal realm of the present. Whilst, as Miller observes, ‘Primer’s austere cinematography and lack of special effects create a startlingly realistic mise-en-scène, almost as if we are watching a documentary about entrepreneurs instead of a science-fiction film’, this is where similarities to documentary cinema end (2012, 145). The film’s realism and anti-spectacle aesthetic need not necessitate any alignment with the documentary genre. Rather, Primer’s interest in ‘the cinema's ability to seemingly preserve time and depict reality’ and exploration of ‘the implicit desire of cinema to relive the past or to reorder it according to our whims’ can be attributed to its self-reflexive tendencies (2012, 133).

Both Carruth’s production of Primer and the finished product are incredibly self-reflexive, from ex-engineer Carruth’s casting of himself as one of the two engineer protagonists, to the film’s narrative and realist, lo-fi aesthetic. In interviews Carruth discusses his casting decision as influenced by a desire for a naturalistic style and authenticity, and having as much control as possible in order to fulfil his vision (Taubin 2004, n.p.). Repetition and restraint shape both the production and the finished film in terms of both narrative and aesthetic. As noted on the official Primer website, in pre-production Carruth ‘conducted month-long rehearsals, going through each scene hundreds of times before the camera started rolling because there was no room for retakes in his frugal budget’, a practice of repetition in pre-production and production vastly different from big-budget Hollywood films, like almost everything about Primer (Tinch 2004, n.p.). Primer, a film about repetition, subverts and
reworks repetition as a practice, as well as cinematic technique and aesthetic. This begins in the film’s infancy, during pre-production, as the above anecdote demonstrates. Hence, repetition is embedded in every stage of the filmmaking process, albeit not in the traditional way. Carruth thus derives inspiration from early filmmaking practices and technology, reworking and reimagining them to create a radically new iteration of the double, while also providing a new blueprint for the science-fiction time-travel aesthetic. In this way Carruth has drawn from the history of cinema in order to expand the future scope of the medium, into one alive with new possibilities. By simultaneously looking to the past and future, Carruth alters the present and future, imbuing existing tropes of science-fiction, time-travel, and the double with the potential to evolve.

As demonstrated above, ostensible limitations became productive through their contribution to achieving Carruth’s desired aesthetic, to the film’s appeal in how it was marketed and received, and to its recognition as an important turning point in cinema. As Nessa Johnston argues, the story behind Primer’s production, which ‘exemplifies that of the ultra-low-budget, underdog auteur’ in addition to its “lo-fi” stylistic approach, particularly in regards to its distinctive soundtrack ‘is configured as a marketable identifier of the film’s “indie-ness”’(2012, 2; 1). Positioning Primer within broader work on American independent cinema, Johnston suggests it is ‘both industrially and stylistically as an anti-spectacle indie response to Hollywood sci-fi’, this ‘anti-spectacle quality’ being ‘manifested in its sound design’ working with the film’s ‘mise-en-scène to emphasise the mundane and everyday instead of the fantastical, in an attempt to lend credibility and realism to its time-travel conceit’ (2012, 3; 1). Primer reworks and revises and thus expands the scope and potential of the American independent film, the science-fiction time-travel film, and the figure of the double, which is enabled by Carruth’s idiosyncratic and self-reflexive approach grounded in repetition, and specifically repeating with difference.

Whilst Primer is a highly innovative and idiosyncratic film, as a time-travel film, science-fiction film, and American independent film, comparisons have consistently been made to Marker’s La Jetée. As Columpar observes, whilst numerous connections have been made between La Jetée and Primer emphasising their shared subject matter and similar cinematic techniques, such as voice-over narration and the ‘two body’ problem, ‘what is most striking
is the fact these two films occupy similar positions within the wider film cultures out of which they came’; just as La Jetée drew from its position ‘in the space between not only photography and cinema, but also classical film theory and its contemporary counterpart’, Primer, in straddling ‘the representational traditions of film and new media’ is able to address ‘the very issues that currently preoccupy a number of scholars: namely, the vicissitudes of contemporary cinema in the information age as well as the state and stakes of film theory as it grapples with the formal, industrial, ideological, and institutional effects of the digital revolution’ (2006, n.p.). Columpar argues that Primer, featuring multiple fractured narratives which the spectator must put together becomes ‘a film of hybrid form, a database/narrative wherein meaning is equally dependent on the accumulation and sequencing of information’ (2006, n.p.).

I wish to expand upon this idea in relation to film spectatorship and how this intersects with Primer’s relationship with the past and its non-chronological structure. As Columpar has observed, an important part of Primer (and its role as a ‘hybrid form’ and ‘database/narrative) is the online discussion it has provoked, with ‘well over 1100 threads of discussion and 8000 postings’ on the forum hosted on its official website, ‘many of which proffer extremely lengthy, considered, and often insightful analyses of the film purporting to explain its many intricacies’ (2006, n.p.) From reading some of these analyses, not only on the official website but across various online forums and blogs, 11 (Tinch, 2004; S, 2008; IMDb 2004 ) and indeed from my own analysis of the film and discussion with fellow film scholars, it becomes apparent that what seems to be agreed upon as an essential part of the experience of Primer is repetition of the film via multiple viewings in order to attempt as a spectator to put the non-chronological pieces of the film’s narrative together. The film and the criticism generated, including both online discussions and Columpar’s article, inspire the spectator/scholar to not only re-watch the film itself but to return to and re-watch other earlier films it evokes, such as La Jetée, with a new perspective. Carruth and Primer both look to the past, in terms of technology, aesthetics, and narrative in order to rework and reimagine the past, present, and future simultaneously.

In this regard, I propose that Primer engages with and mobilises what I consider a form of

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critical cinematic time-travel. This type of cinematic time-travel is one experienced by the spectator and/or the film scholar, and takes the form of a non-chronological approach to reading (and re-reading) films through subsequent films that might reference, repeat, or remake the other. This reading strategy helps to identify how the meaning of cinematic texts change over time through the difference emerging with repetitions both within the film and of the film, both in itself and in relation to other films, and following Deleuze emphasises the significance of the difference in the mind of the spectator who regards such repetitions (2004, 90). Primer’s use of older technology in the form of 16mm film can be compared to La Jetée’s use of still images and how both films have complex, seemingly contradictory relationships with temporality/chronology. Both draw from the past and look to the future simultaneously, and have thus become significant and recognised in film scholarship for their influence on subsequent time-travel films and our re/interpretations of these contemporary films in relation to those that preceded and inspired them.

**Primer and Deleuze**

Primer’s rendition of temporality both exemplifies and extends aspects of Deleuze’s philosophy of time and theorization of cinematic images of time. The filmic figure of the temporal double is not only central, but doubled, and further multiplied in Primer, as the two protagonists are both multiplied through time-travel and continue to proliferate as the process of time-travel is repeated by both subjects. The temporal double is crucial to understanding Primer because it not only embodies the film’s conceptualization of time as multiple and fragmented, but exercises influence on the entire body of the film, from the overall narrative structure down to individual images and shots. Primer exemplifies a time-image film, as developed by Deleuze in Cinema II, whereby certain images, specifically those depicting the double and the arrangement of such images present subjective, ‘direct’ images of time and convey the duality (of the instant) that the time-image evokes through its play with the actual/virtual and their indiscernibility (2005). Primer is composed of multiple (individual) images of time conveyed by shots and sequences of shots that all coalesce into a filmic body that can also be perceived as a Deleuzian time-image, or specifically a ‘crystal-image’, which is emphasised by the film’s non-chronological, fragmented structure and the repetitions and sense of indiscernibility pervading the film (2005). The temporal double as Deleuzian time-image is a disruptive figure whose appearance in the narrative unsettles the film’s chronology, shattering ‘the empirical continuation of time, the chronological
succession, the separation of the before and the after’ (Deleuze 2005, 150).

*Primer* explores a connection between time and identity that is embodied by the multiplied figure of the temporal double. The protagonists perceive time as a tool they can work with and manipulate in order to mould their experiences and identities into desired forms. The present is rejected by the characters, who are not satisfied with their current mundane lives and identities and realise they can alter it by inserting difference into the past via time-travel. Deleuze maintains that ‘the present is no more than an actor, an author, an agent destined to be effaced, while the past is no more than a condition operating by default’ (2004, 117). The ‘original’ iterations of each of the protagonists, those ‘belonging’ to the present (or rather, what the spectator assumes to be the present or first permutation of events) are reworked, improved, and in a sense replaced by their doubles produced by time-travel, who coming from ‘the future’ possess superior knowledge and power and use this to exert control over the unfolding of events and development of their identities.

In *Primer*, there is a direct correspondence between the body of the temporal double and the narrative. As Columpar observes ‘a moment of doubling occurs quite early in the film, approximately a quarter of the way into it, and instead of “squaring” (actually, “circling”) the film’s logic, it exerts a centrifugal influence on its narrative structure' (2006, n.p.). It is the crucial sequence in which Abe reveals to Aaron his discovery of time-travel, then proving this by showing Aaron his doubled self which has manifested as a side effect of time-travel, that subsequently fragments the film into multiple timelines. It is the moment preceding this revelation that is returned to later in the narrative. This return is facilitated by the power of time-travel learnt about in this sequence and which is enacted by a temporal double, the figure produced through time-travel, which is portrayed as the film’s first material manifestation of repetition resulting from such a manipulation of temporality. It is following this sequence that *Primer’s* temporality becomes distinctly subjective and unreliable. The perspective and veracity of images become uncertain as multiple temporalities and the beings or temporal doubles that correspond with the multiple forking paths of time, through beginning to co-exist and interact, become intertwined and indiscernible. As Columpar points out, following the reveal of Abe’s double, the narrative ‘splinters’ as ‘[s]ubsequent sequences feature Abe and Aaron without any explicit indication of where they are temporally and thus of which experiences they have had and what knowledge they have accrued’, with ‘the seeming coherence of both self and story in preceding sequences’ also being ‘called into
question…when seemingly innocent signifiers- Abe’s exhaustion and Aaron’s use of an ear piece, for example- demand to be read retroactively as indicators of time travel’ (2006, n.p.).

Columpar identifies another scene portraying a manipulation of temporality that subsequently becomes visible and resonates visually throughout the body of the film, in addition to altering the narrative events (2006, n.p.). Columpar observes that from the moment an Aaron who has travelled back in time not only co-exists with but interacts with his temporal double from the past, a conversation altering the past, ‘the film proves even more confounding since the fragmentation, both narrative and formal, already underway intensifies’ (2006, n.p.). This is where Primer diverges from and transgresses films like La Jetée, which despite depicting the ‘two-body’ paradox, never allow their doubles to interact directly. Columpar and Gendler both show how narrative as well as cinematography are employed to convey the dual and intertwined splintering of the self and of time in and following this scene (2006; 2011). Gendler observes how this scene ‘is presented not in a unified, contiguous representation of space and time, but in a series of jump cuts and temporally repetitious inserts that fracture both space and time, further complicating a reading of the action and narrative’ (142, 2011). Primer is similar to La Jetée in how its structure and form reflect and emphasise the film’s deconstruction of temporality and its self-reflexivity embodied by and stemming from the temporal double.

Cinematography, particularly editing patterns, produce ‘a fractured experience of time’ corresponding to ‘the altering of reality carried out by the characters in the narrative’ and conveying their subjective experience of such destabilised re-ordered time (142, 2011). Gendler suggests Primer’s use of jump cuts and editing of ‘sequences in which a single shot is cut up and the pieces rearranged in a different order (although the audio track remains unified)’, cutting out moments of action, such as in the repeated scene in which Abe approaches Aaron on the bench and collapses out of exhaustion, allude to the occurrence of time-travel (2011, 156). This editing technique also conveys the characters’ subjective perception of time as it appears to show the disorienting and dissociating effects that time-travel and repetition of this instant have on the body and mind of the subject perceiving this moment.

The cinematography of this sequence conveys the breakdown of subjectivity and identity and effects on the body having occurred as a result of the characters’ manipulation of temporality
through its re-ordering of images and the dissonance between image and sound. Subjectivity and identity are shown to be in a constant state of flux and transformation, prone to fragmentation, mutation, and change. The Deleuzian notion of ‘becoming’ (which means ‘becoming different’ to Deleuze) is conveyed through such images (2004). Here, the body, subjectivity, and identity are unstable, and continuously susceptible to change as they are transformed by and show the effects of time and repetition, conveyed through such images. Deleuze regards the human subject as a product of becoming, and maintains that, as Stagoll explains it in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, ‘one’s self must be conceived as a constantly changing assemblage of forces’ (2005, 22). The temporal double embodies a becoming cinematic subject that is fractured into multiple images and iterations conveying the multiplicity of the self and the multiplicity of time. The temporal double ‘becomes’ through the affirmation of its hidden inner difference within its repetitions. The body of the temporal double is a type of time-image within a film comprised of multiple time-images. For Deleuze, as King emphasises, the *body* is crucial to formulating the operations of the cinematic time-image in how it ‘registers time and the layerings of time’ (2014, 62). Deleuze argues that ‘the body is never in the present, it contains the before and the after, tiredness and waiting. Tiredness and waiting, even despair are the attitudes of the body’ (Deleuze 2005, 182). The figures in *Primer* never appear to ‘belong’ to the present. In acquiring the ability to time-travel, Aaron and Abe begin to believe they are able to exist outside time, that they have shed the restraints of ordinary existence that come with being bound to the present. They are able to repeat the past, inserting their present, or now ‘future’ selves into the repeated instant, injecting difference into the past and thus altering the present and the future that proceed from that past. Knowledge from the future is used to their advantage and to control circumstances and thus obtain power over others and their own identities. Their manipulation of time destabilises the present. Much of the film is comprised of repeated versions of the same day and it is never made clear which permutation of that day is being shown in any sequence.

Whilst Abe and Aaron obtain knowledge, power, and profit from their ability to time-travel, it becomes apparent that they are not completely above or immune to the effects/affects of time. Just as the bodies of the protagonists’ temporal doubles (or multiple selves) are presented as the positive material manifestations of repetition, they are shown to suffer from the adverse side effects of excessive time-travel or repetition. Gendler suggests ‘[t]hese [physical] symptoms presumably get worse the more removed the time-traveller becomes from their original reality (i.e., the more instances in which a time-traveler travels backwards
through time and alters reality from their original reality, the more they become dislodged from reality, and the worse these symptoms get’ (2011, 146). A memorable moment occurs when Abe collapses out of exhaustion in a repeated scene. This scene not only depicts physical exhaustion, but conveys Abe’s loss of power and control, and the exchange of power that occurs between Abe and Aaron. In Primer, the protagonists acquire power through their ability to time-travel and can thus exercise control over how events unfold around them. Knowledge equates with power in this narrative, so whoever is able to travel the furthest back in time possesses the greatest precience, giving them the upper hand. In this scene the spectator learns that it is Aaron who has travelled furthest back in time and seized temporal supremacy, who as the omniscient narrator also determines the structure of the film through the voice-over narration. The Aaron providing the voice-over represents a figure from the future, because this iteration of Aaron (which becomes connected to a body on the screen, one of Aaron’s temporal doubles) has already experienced the ‘present’, having the effect, as Gendler suggests of ‘illustrating the fact that the future already exists in the present or that the concept of the present is virtually meaningless’ (2011, 148). The present is problematised and rejected by Aaron, who disenchanted with his everyday life which he perceives as boring and repetitive, ‘the eternal return of the same’, wishes to insert some difference into the past in order ‘to reshape his personal history and consequently revise his identity’ (Miller 2012, 152). Miller argues that the splintered narrative of Primer shows how ‘our identities are never actually unified because they constantly fluctuate with the continuing floating signifier of the present’, that ‘[s]ince the present can never be pinned down because it is always already past, identity remains fundamentally nonunifiable as well’ (2012, 152). The multiplicity of the self is embodied in Primer by the multiplied figure of the temporal double which appears when time-travel occurs and time splinters into multiple timelines. The multiple intertwined realms of time are manifest in the temporal doubles that become increasingly difficult to discern from one another or link to a specific temporal realm as they continue to proliferate and co-exist in the same diegetic and temporal space. Primer’s temporal doubles are cinematic images of time that embody the multiplicity of time, the multiplicity of the self, and the connection between time and identity.

According to Deleuze, direct time-images are rendered visible by chronosigns, which blend past and present, actual and virtual in a way that ensures ‘what is in play is no longer the real and the imaginary but the true and the false’ (2005, 263). Deleuze argues that ‘just as the real and the imaginary become indiscernible in certain very specific conditions of the image, the
true and the false now become undecidable or inextricable: the impossible proceeds from the possible, and the past is not necessarily true’ (2005, 263). Chronosigns are described by Deleuze as either the ‘order of time’ or ‘time as a series’ (2005, 262). The ‘order of time’ includes ‘peaks of the present’ and layers or ‘sheets of the past’ and refers to the co-existence or simultaneity of multiple different times, or as Rodowick describes them, ‘topographical expressions of relations internal to time’s passing’ (1997, 82). In the peaks of the present, ‘time as external succession is displaced by quantum jumps across points where the present has fractured into a present of the present, a present of the past, and a present of the future which are nonetheless simultaneous’ (Rodowick 1997, 82). In the ‘sheets of the past’ ‘succession is displaced by topological transformations of layers of the past that co-exist even though their order is discontinuous and nonchronological’ (Rodowick 1997, 82). The use of time-travel in Primer means the film is able to move between multiple realms of time.

Repetition of a scene or event such as the bench scene/s creates a temporal shift between multiple temporal layers. These repetitions result from the characters having time-travelled into the past. On a first viewing of the film, the spectator is invited to identify in the second iteration of the bench scene a ‘present of the present’ in the unfolding of this scene and the difference that has emerged as a result of the repetition of this event, as well as a ‘present of the past’ in the knowledge that this moment is repeated to insert difference and establish Aaron’s dominance. On a second viewing of the film, with the knowledge from the repetition of this scene and the difference that emerges, leading to the revelation of new information explaining how Aaron came to manipulate events by travelling furthest back in time and achieving temporal supremacy, a ‘present of the future’ can be identified via the clue of Aaron’s earpiece, which he uses to record the conversations so when he travels back to this moment in the future, he can use this knowledge to his advantage. Both the past and future continue to come into contact with and alter the present.

In terms of the series of time, which Deleuze also describes as powers of the false, he refers to a series as:

a sequence of images, which tend in themselves in the direction of a limit, which orients and inspires the first sequence (the before), and gives way to another sequence organized as series which tends in turn towards another limit (the after). The before and the after are then no longer successive determinations of the course of time, but the two sides of power, or the passage of the power to a higher power. The direct
time-image here does not appear in an order of co-existences or simultaneities, but in a becoming as potentialization, as series of powers’ (2005, 263-264).

In Primer time is not linear, and the continuity between past, present, and future is consistently disrupted as the realms of time and events unfolding in these realms of time are repeated, reordered, and thus altered by the time-travellers’ continuous and repeated trips back into the past. Many scenes are shown in an unknowable order, but are nevertheless able to convey the process of becoming that the time-travelling protagonists experience as the film progresses. The before and after are brought together in a becoming, rather than separated, as the time-travellers gain knowledge and power from their trips back in time and use this to change their circumstances and alter their identities in the present. The past, present, and future are all altered by such insertions of difference.

For Deleuze, ‘[i]t is a power of the false which replaces and supersedes the form of the true, because it poses the simultaneity of incompossible presents, or the co-existence of not-necessarily true pasts’ (2005, 127). Primer’s repetition of scenes that appear to unfold within the present due to time-travel do not replace the previous permutation of that event as the ‘truth’. Rather, they co-exist in the body of the film as alterable, alternative, and co-present ‘incompossible presents’ which are repetitions-with-difference that can alter the past, which is not singular but comprised of multiple permutations of events, including ‘not-necessarily true pasts’ continuing to exist in the narrative if not in the particular timeline being depicted in the ‘present’ scene (2004; 2005, 126-127; 98). The past is shown from multiple possible viewpoints and presented in the present tense; what is possible and impossible co-exist, rendering the possible and impossible indeterminate and conditional. The intrusion of a temporal double in the form of a time-traveller from the future disrupts chronological time and introduces to the event an alternative viewpoint that a variation of another being or identity that continues to exist in that temporal realm. They are, however, ‘replaced’ or overcome by the double that has travelled furthest back in time and achieved temporal supremacy and power derived from knowledge of the future only in terms of how that identity is expressed through the order of narrative events as determined by the voice-over provided by the temporally supreme iteration of Aaron, and not erased from the space-time comprising the film’s diegesis. Multiple temporal doubles continue to exist as bodies expressing difference in and across time. Multiple temporal doubles are depicted in the same diegetic space when a future iteration of Aaron temporarily incapacitates his past self in order
to take his temporal double’s place and establish temporal supremacy and control over the unfolding of events from this early point in the timeline.

Temporal doubles embody the multiplicity of the self and the multiplicity of the self in and across time in a manner that embodies and extends Deleuze’s theorization of time as comprised of multiple co-existing realms. The temporal double as cinematic time-image that comes into being as a product of the narrative device of time-travel suggests that virtual past and future selves co-exist with ‘actual’ present selves. These multiple, virtual selves are actualised as cinematic images of time that embody time as comprised not only of multiple intertwined realms but as repetitions-with-difference that are visually manifest in the slight variations between the doubles. Temporal doubles embody the notion that multiple selves associated with multiple times form one’s identity and that in order to engender change and a revision of one’s identity, a dissociation with one’s past self tends to occur. Like memories, past selves, along with the past as a temporal realm, continue to co-exist with the present and the future as points of difference and evidence of the becoming in time that has been achieved through a process of repeating-with-difference.

**Primer Film Analysis**

Reminiscent of *La Jetée*, there exists in *Primer* a dissonance between sound and image, a dissonance highlighting the layered and subjective nature of time. This manifests primarily through the voice-over provided by an unseen narrator, a narration determining the structure of the narrative and its temporal flow. It also indicates the existence of dual, conflicting perspectives or two layers of narrative operating—that spoken by the narrator, and that visualised and perceived by the characters depicted onscreen—and the different knowledge and sense of time conveyed by the characters belonging to these dual narratives/timelines. *Primer* is also striking, especially as a science-fiction film about time-travel, in how it establishes a tension between narrative and spectacle through its ‘counter-spectacle aesthetic’, as a ‘science fiction of the present’ that as Miller suggests utilises realism to ‘comment upon our present world’, and which I believe also gives more significance to subtler manipulations of image and sound and their relation to temporality (2012, 133).

From the opening sequence, time is established as multiple and fractured. The cinematic present is immediately subverted and the spectator introduced to a filmic space-time, or
diegesis, in which past, present, and future are discernibly simultaneously operating, which can be gathered from the film’s (and characters’) continuous transitions between temporal realms. It is the cinematic technique of the voice-over that opens the film and indicates that its approach to temporality is non-linear. The voice-over is presented as a phone-call, although neither the speaker nor the listener are identified, and it is only with the progression of the narrative that the spectator can attempt to assign identities to these parties. The narrator speaks with authority, instructing his listener not to interrupt or speak at all. He explains, “Here's what's going to happen. I'm going to read this... and you're going to listen, and you're going to stay on the line.” He proceeds to introduce the protagonists, speaking about them in the past tense, addressing them as ‘they’, without naming them individually. The narrator is presented as prescient at least, perhaps completely omniscient, possessing knowledge of the past, present, and the future.

*Primer’s* narrative structure is affected by the relationship and differences between the narrator and the narrative. In contrast to the conventions of the classical narrative, *Primer’s* narrator seems to possess more information than the narrative is willing to give to the spectator, this presumed withholding of information cultivating a sense of tension, frustration, and anticipation in the listener and the spectator. The narrator acknowledges that the listener is privy to some information, noting, “Now, some of this you know. I'm going to start at the top of the page…” This line is a clear signification of temporality and reminder that the narrator is in a position of power and control, his words determining the temporal flow of the narrative. It also suggests that temporality is subjective and changeable, as the spectator is being guided through the narrative in line with the narrator’s chosen (re)ordering of events. The narrator’s reference to and concerns with knowledge and information, and relationship to the narrative structure can be understood by considering the film’s particular type of ‘focalization’, a term coined by theorist Gérard Genette that can be used in a manner similar to ‘perspective’ or ‘point-of-view’ to describe the position from which a narrative is presented, that is a text’s ‘restriction of ‘field’…a selection of narrative information with respect to what was traditionally called *omniscience*, corresponding to the experience or knowledge of the narrator or characters (1988, 74). Genette establishes and distinguishes between three categories of focalization, zero, internal, and external:

The first term [zero focalization] corresponds to what English-language criticism calls narrative with omniscient narrator and Pouillon ‘vision from behind,’ and which
Todorov symbolizes by the formula *Narrator > Character* (where the narrator knows more than the character, or more exactly, *says* more than any of the characters knows). In the second term [internal focalization], *Narrator = Character* (the narrator says only what a given character knows); this is narrative with ‘point of view’ after Lubbock, or with ‘restricted field’ after Blin; Pouillon calls it ‘vision with.’ In the third term [external focalization], *Narrator < Character* (the narrator says less than the character knows); this is the ‘objective’ or ‘behaviorist’ narrative, what Pouillon calls ‘vision from without’ (1980, 188–89).

In *Primer*, a process of internal focalization can be identified, which becomes apparent when it is revealed that the identity of the narrator corresponds to one of the iterations of the character of Aaron. *Primer*’s narrative at first appears to indicate zero focalization because the narrator is not identified, and seems to be omniscient, at least possessing much more knowledge than an internal focaliser or character would normally possess. It is revealed that this knowledge comes from the narrator’s temporal position; as an iteration of Aaron from the future the narrator is prescient, but not completely omniscient. *Primer*’s narrative structure is affected by its complex relationship to temporality engendered by the plot device of time-travel, which produces a time-travelling narrator from the future whose unknown identity and whose voice-over highlights the duality of the narrative, encouraging the spectator to wonder both ‘who sees?’ and ‘who speaks?’ (Genette 1980, 186), and thus to consider the difference between sound (voice-over narration) and image (the visual unfolding of the narrative).

*Primer*’s narrative structure also differs from the classical narrative in how the film begins in ‘the middle’ rather than at ‘the beginning’ and the narrator states that he is going to repeat to the listener ‘the beginning’ of the story. We can presume that the film has opened *in media res*, in the midst of a series of events, at least from the perspective of the listener, who possesses some knowledge of past events the narrator is going to discuss, but for the sake of clarity (and for the spectator who has just entered the space-time of *Primer*), the narrator is going to look into the past and describe the events from ‘the beginning.’ We can thus identify (at least) three representations or modes of temporality/layers of time operating; that of the narrator, that of the listener, and that of the characters depicted onscreen, which will also, as the narrative unfolds and the concept of time-travel introduced, be fractured into multiple timelines.
The ‘present’ is destabilised by the voice-over narrator and brought into question, as the cinematic present inhabited by the onscreen protagonists and presented to the spectator is revealed to also be a past for the narrator, and up to a certain unspecified point for the listener, where the past described by the narrator becomes his present, and then continues on as his future as foretold to him by the narrator. The question of the identity of the temporal doubles and the connection between identity and time is an issue from the opening of the film. Upon a first viewing of Primer, the film does not give the spectator the knowledge to figure out the identity of the narrator at this point, nor is this ever made explicit. With information gradually gleaned from the progression of the narrative, the film enables the spectator to make an educated guess or theory concerning the identities of the narrator and the listener. However, this is never completely certain, as this information is never explicitly revealed, and such indiscernibility is pivotal in the film’s identity and structure. The indiscernibility between past, present, and future in Primer aligns with the indiscernibility between protagonists’ temporal doubles or iterations that are produced as an effect of time-travel. The narrative and specifically the crucial element of time-travel informs the film’s structure. Time-travel engenders the repetition, indiscernibility, and multiplicity that define the film and the images that correspond with these concepts. As in La Jetée, it is from the opening of the film that the spectator is unknowingly exposed to a protagonist that exists in multiple forms corresponding or ‘belonging’ to multiple temporal realms, figures that this thesis terms temporal doubles. It is only retrospectively with information gained from the narrative that Primer allows the spectator to decipher the identity of the narrator and listener and thus recognise the character of Aaron exists in (at least) three iterations, although only one of these is visually depicted consistently throughout the film, the Aaron onscreen. The other two Aarons are invisible or virtual, one is heard as the voice-over narrator and the other’s existence is only highlighted by being addressed as the listener on the other end of the line. Both of these Aarons come from the ‘future’ (or rather, two different futures or points in the future) in contrast to the onscreen Aaron who is depicted in/as belonging to the ‘present.’

Many of the plot points of Primer are revealed retrospectively. This is in keeping with and derivative of its crucial cinematic device of time-travel, and how this determines the non-chronological nature of the narrative and structure of the film, as well as the importance of repetition and repetition-with-difference in the film. What is initially presented as a crucial scene, and indeed is a memorable and important scene, that is, the film’s first visual narrative
revelation of doubling via time-travel when Abe shows Aaron his double, is retrospectively undermined and revealed to be far less significant than the seemingly innocuous conversation/scene that precedes it. It is repetition-with-difference that reveals this.

Abe reveals his discovery of time-travel powers to Aaron by first dramatically revealing his temporal double from afar (as the physical, material evidence of the effects of time-travel) before explaining the technicalities and process of this discovery and thus endowing Aaron with the knowledge that he will later use to his own advantage, against Abe, actions which will imbue the conversation preceding this sequence with significance. It is the subsequent repetition(s) (with difference) of the scene featuring the conversation between Abe and Aaron on the bench that reveals critical narrative information, thus engendering the indiscernibility brought about by the fracturing of Aaron into multiple iterations aligned with the multiple timelines produced by time-travel: Aaron’s temporal doubles.

In the first bench scene Abe convinces Aaron to take the afternoon off work so he can divulge his discovery, as Abe describes it here, “the most important thing that any living organism has ever witnessed.” Nothing about this conversation seems particularly noteworthy, that is until the scene is later repeated. The only thing slightly unusual is that Aaron is wearing an earpiece, but this is explained away as Aaron listening to the broadcast of a basketball game. We later learn that this is not true in the repetition-with-difference of this scene that occurs as a result of what initially appears to be one of Abe’s trips back in time. However, it will later be revealed that the Aaron in this scene is also not of the present but rather is one of his iterations or temporal doubles from the future who has time-travelled back to this moment unbeknownst to Abe. The repeated scene begins the same way as the first time this event was depicted. Abe stands on the rooftop of a building looking down at Aaron sitting on a bench in the park below. The camera cuts to a medium close-up shot of Abe approaching Aaron in the park. The camera is positioned behind Abe, at a high-angle looking down at Aaron, which falsely suggests that this scene is perceived from Abe’s perspective (like most of the narrative) and that it is Abe who (again) possesses knowledge and power. The cinematography in this scene conveys the perceived positions of power inhabited by each of the two characters and how this dynamic is inverted. The scene begins with Abe looking down at Aaron, and concludes with Aaron positioned above Abe.

The moment that reverses these power positions is also emphasised through cinematography
and enhanced by a dissonance between sound and image. Manipulations of sound and image are also used to convey the affects of time on the body in the shape of exhaustion, doubling, and dissociation. Following the initial identical opening shot and the first line uttered by Aaron everything unfolds differently, and Abe is revealed as weak and powerless, both physically and mentally, in contrast to both Aaron and Abe’s other self in the first iteration of this scene. Difference at first emerges slowly and subtly before overwhelming the scene and causing events to branch into and continue along a new and different timeline. At first there is only a slight variation in dialogue. In response to Aaron telling Abe, “I've been calling you all morning”, Abe asks, “Really?” instead of “Where’d you call?” which he asked the first time. Aaron also responds with slight difference, answering, “Your cell and work” instead of “Your work and your cell.” These differences are subtle but unsettling. Abe and Aaron’s next respective lines align with those uttered in the first bench scene, but the scene derails when Abe does not (or does not get the chance to) say his next line, which in the first scene explained the presence of Aaron’s earpiece. This line and Aaron’s response are skipped as Aaron goes on to repeat another line that he uttered in the first scene, which does not make sense in this instance because it is a response to a question that is this time not asked. The camera cuts to Abe and he appears unsettled as he says, “I'm just tired”, which he did not say the first time. Aaron again repeats an answer to a question that Abe did not ask this time, which again causes confusion. This time Aaron’s expression appears perturbed after he uttered the line, presumably realizing his mistake. Before Aaron can attempt to rectify the situation, Abe has a strange reaction, swaying on his feet and stepping backwards before fainting.

This moment conveys Abe’s loss of control and semblance of power as he becomes overwhelmed by and loses his connection with time, and is evocative of Scottie’s fainting in *Vertigo* as he too appears to be overwhelmed by the temporal force of repetition, which disconnects him from the present moment and his ability to act. In this scene in *Primer*, a subjective experience of time is conveyed to and shared by the spectator as sound is distorted and a dissonance between sound and image manifests, conveying the sense of dissociation experienced by the character of Abe as he is overcome by difference within this repetition. The moment that the sound becomes muffled and slightly out of sync with the image signifies the shift in perspective and power from Abe, who believed he was in control of the situation, and from whose point-of-view the scene initially appeared to be presented, to that of Aaron, whose dominance is asserted as the subjective narration and sound switches to his
perspective, with the sound that Aaron hears briefly becoming the only diegetic sound the spectator is able to hear. This subjective sound is evocative of the subjective voice-over, also provided by an omniscient future iteration of Aaron. In this moment of dissociation from Abe and transference of subjectivity to Aaron, Aaron’s position as the internal focaliser is affirmed as the sound becomes aligned with the perspective of a character whose knowledge and position as narrator determines the information the narrative reveals to the spectator. All sound becomes muffled, and as Aaron stands up and moves towards Abe, a distorted recording takes the place of sound in this scene, repeating the lines that Abe said in the first bench scene and would have been saying now if the scene had unfolded the same way. As Aaron moves to touch Abe, the camera cuts to a close-up of Aaron’s chest, with his earpiece having fallen out and dangling in the middle of the frame, as the sound becomes louder and clearer, obviously emanating from the earphone, which is reiterated as the camera moves even closer, cutting to an extreme close-up and allowing the earpiece to come into clear focus. We can gather that the Aaron in this scene is a temporal double from the future utilising a recording made by a past Aaron unbeknownst to Abe. In this repetition of the earlier scene it is Aaron who possesses prescience and power. The ‘present’ is a repetition of the past with difference, which not only takes the narrative in a new direction but also retrospectively alters the spectator’s possible reading of the first iteration of the bench scene. The ‘present-ness’ of the first depiction of this scene is undermined and brought into question. We are invited to wonder whether that really was the first time that conversation occurred. Aaron was wearing an earpiece then. Was he recording the conversation then or was he also listening to a recording of the sounds of the present, experiencing the moment as simultaneously present and past…? The future is at work in the repetition of this scene, embodied by Aaron, who is not the ‘present’ Aaron but one of his temporal doubles from the future.

The next sequence explains how it is Aaron (or specifically, one of Aaron’s temporal doubles), rather than Abe, who now possesses power and control, or temporal supremacy and prescience. This is explained by the voice-over narrator, who also reveals his identity as one of Aaron’s iterations, and is finally depicted onscreen, shockingly co-present with another of Aaron’s doubles, the two interacting in a physical altercation, leading to a discussion between the two and coming to an agreement. One Aaron remains to continue his work and the other leaves and removes himself from the situation, at least until the inevitable point in the future when he makes the phone call to his past self that constitutes the voice-over narration. The
explanation of how Aaron was able to time-travel the furthest back in time, to a point at which his past self had not even been made aware of the existence of time-travel, also depends on a secret doubling created by Abe but usurped by Aaron. This revelation also reveals something initially perceived as an ‘original’ to be a repetition or double. Aaron discovers that the time-machine revealed to him by Abe as the first one was actually a double. A hidden ‘original’ existed, which is referred to as a ‘failsafe’ having been created as a precaution for if anything were to go wrong Abe would be able to use this machine to travel back to the point it was turned on, before Abe had told Aaron about his discovery of time-travel. Voice-over Aaron explains how he too was able to double this time-machine by taking it with him inside another time-machine, creating more layers of time, and travelling the furthest back possible to achieve temporal supremacy and to insert difference into the repetitions to ensure events unfold as he wants them to, to his own advantage, or at least to the advantage of this version of Aaron who has managed to go the furthest back in time by sabotaging not only Abe but earlier iterations of himself. From the voice-over, and the depiction of another of Aaron’s temporal doubles, it is made clear that multiple Aarons do and continue to exist. However, it is emphasised that one iteration of Aaron possesses the most power, the one that has travelled furthest back in time, who possesses knowledge of the past, present, and future and is able to introduce difference in the repetitions of time that will affect and change the future. The ‘original’ or ‘present’ Aaron and his timeline are seemingly indiscernible and insignificant when they are replaced and written over by repetitions from the future because as the narrator puts it “what the world remembers... the actuality, the last revision is what counts, apparently.” However, the existence of the Aaron providing the voice-over and his warning to another one of his temporal doubles serves as a reminder that multiplicities of the self in and across time continue to exist. Whilst the present constantly falls away to become the past, multiple (or perhaps infinite) selves that correspond to each instant continue to exist, although they usually exist in a chronological, linear sequence and do not deviate or co-habit the same space-time. The cinematic tool of time-travel disrupts and shatters such a linear conceptualization of time, creating images that visualise the multiplicities of the self that exists across and corresponds to the multiple realms and repetitions constituting time.

**Primer’s Multiplicities**

This chapter has investigated Primer’s status as a film comprised of repetitions and
multiplicities in which the manipulation of temporality produces productive paradoxes and cinematic images of time manifest in the film’s temporal doubles. These figures both fashion and fragment notions surrounding the connection between time, memory, identity, and power. Primer is composed of multiple, intertwined layers of repetitions that are conveyed through narrative and cinematography. Primer operates as a ‘science-fiction of the present’, set in the present day and with an anti-spectacle, realistic aesthetic in which the temporal double is striking and significant in its ability to reflect the diegesis and the self back to the spectator in an uncanny fashion (Miller, 2012). Primer engages with the tropes and conventions of science-fiction and time-travel cinema, reworking and repeating images, concepts, and techniques with difference to create an innovative and self-reflexive film that deconstructs the role of temporality and repetition in cinema. I draw from Deleuze’s theorization of time to explore how multiple temporal doubles in Primer embody a process or experience of temporality that we can understand through the notion of time as multiple, and comprised of repetitions-with-difference that enables a becoming in and across time to take place (2004).

Primer explores a connection between time and identity that is embodied by the multiplied figure of the temporal double and expressed by the close correspondence between the body of the temporal double and the body of the film. The temporal double embodies a becoming cinematic subject that is fractured into multiple images and iterations conveying the multiplicity of the self and the multiplicity of time. The temporal double as a time-image exercises images of the body to convey the effects of time on the body and how identities can be shaped by and also altered by one’s relation to time. Primer employs the cinematic tool of time-travel and the temporal double as the product of this process, taking advantage of cinema’s ability to manipulate temporality in order to deconstruct chronological time and one’s position in and identity in relation to time. Repetition as a crucial component of the cinematic medium—able to define and structure a film— is exemplified in the way Primer repeats and reworks concepts and images from science-fiction cinema. Furthermore, Primer has proceeded to occupy an important position in science-fiction/time-travel cinema. It has inspired and influenced films like Looper, which also features the figure of the temporal double as a manifestation of repetition-with-difference, that similarly embodies the multiplicities of time and the self in and across time.
Chapter Six: Thesis Conclusion

This thesis investigates three films, *Vertigo*, *La Jetée*, and *Primer*, identifying each as part of a pattern of repetition across cinema in which texts are connected through their self-reflexive manipulation of temporality and of repetition itself as a crucial component of time and the body of a film. Repetition is considered and interrogated as both a cinematic technique and as an aesthetic in relation to both characterisation and narrative form.

I highlight a direct correspondence between the figure of the double and the body of the film through elements including narrative and characterisation. Each film reworks the double as a cinematic trope and image in different ways, but all three iterations share several key distinguishing features. They are all characterised by a complex relationship with temporality, and all come into being through the repetition or manipulation of time. Thus this thesis posits the temporal double as a specifically cinematic figure. I have defined it as a filmic figuration of repetition produced by the Deleuzian processes or *syntheses* of time (Sullivan 2016). I argue that films are syntheses of time, or rather syntheses of images of time, which is why I have cross read Deleuze’s *Cinema II* with *Difference and Repetition* (2005; 2004). It is the temporal double as a self-reflexive visual manifestation of repetition that draws attention to this temporal element, functioning not only as a time-image but as a provocation that encourages an interrogation into cinematic time and repetition.

Through tracing the progression of the double this thesis has shown that the figure becomes increasingly sophisticated not only in the images it generates and the influence it exerts over the individual film in which it appears, but in how it opens and continues a dialogue across cinema that influences how spectators/scholars read and re-read texts, via what this thesis as termed *critical cinematic time-travel*. The figure is not merely a trope but a self-reflexive tool that draws attention to and deconstructs the function of repetition of temporality in and across film.

Engaging with various theorists’ work on repetition, including Bellour, Verevis, and most crucially, Deleuze, this thesis identifies and connects varying types and degrees of repetition ranging from the details of an individual shot to considering one film as a remake or
repetition of another, as well as considering how conventions are carried across and altered throughout cinema (1979 and 2010; 2005 and 2006; 2004 and 2005). Whilst this thesis arranges the films explored in chronological order, the chronology that I have traced is indicative of films that want to destabilise chronology. The temporal double is a non-chronological being, and this thesis shows that it affects how spectators/scholars read films in a non-chronological manner. In each film, I have found time to be the essential problem that creates and connects their doubles. Each chapter explores the effects that temporality can have on a film, extending beyond the narrative to the structure and aesthetic of the film. Even from the precursor to the temporal double, the classic Rankian double, I have found the figure to be one that challenges or even rejects its position in a chronological temporal order (1971). This may be either the doubled character themselves, others projecting onto them, or both, as seen beginning in *Vertigo*.

*Vertigo*, like *La Jetée* and *Primer*, re-imagines the double through repetition-with-difference, putting a particularly cinematic spin on how the double conveys the connection between temporality and identity. This is done not only through narrative, but also in how images and editing are used to manipulate and distort identification and perspective. Whilst *Vertigo*’s doubling is, out of the three films explored in this thesis, the closest to the classic Rankian double, the film does rework this trope (1971). Firstly, *Vertigo*’s focus is on an obsessive repetition and doubling of the other, rather than the self, and second, through the double’s distinctive relationship with temporality and identity. While there are fleeting instances in *Vertigo* where the protagonist, Scottie, also appears doubled, these moments are initially easily explained as a simple foreshadowing of the doubling of “Madeleine”/Judy. However, as the narrative becomes increasingly complicated, so too does its portrayal of perspective and subjective images of time. Initially depicting the protagonist’s subjective perception of the other doubled, the film splinters and begins to take into account the double’s point-of-view. As further repeating and doubling takes place, multiple realms of time as well as multiple perspectives are rendered visible, and the film, which is comprised of Deleuzian time-images, reaches a point of indiscernibility (2005).

*La Jetée* is an inverse of *Vertigo* in the sense that the doubling is of the self, or the protagonist. Rather than being a major plot point, neither the protagonist nor spectator are aware of this doubling until the end of the film. *La Jetée* is, however, similar to *Vertigo* in how it repeats its obsessive focus on an other, specifically on a woman desired by the
protagonist. Furthermore, it is found to be the repetitions with difference of the image of this woman that hold critical clues to the protagonist’s own identity and fragmented position in time. This revelation, however, is deferred until the very end of the film, played out as a repetition-with-difference of the opening sequence.

*Primer*, featuring another iteration of the temporal double, which I describe as a contemporary science-fiction double, further complicates temporality and identity through its increased multiplicity and fracturing of the self and its subjective images of time. There is a doubling, or rather multiple doublings, that become multiplications of both the self and other/s. In addition, out of the dual doubling of the protagonists, one is not immediately recognisable as secondary to the other. This duality or multiplicity in conjunction with an uncertain hierarchy underscores the film’s interrogation of power and identity in relation to temporality. Questions of perspective, prescience, and power are further complicated by the extent of indiscernibility between both doubles and temporal realms, produced through the actualisation of both time-travel and temporal doubles. *Primer* continues and surpasses *La Jetée* in its execution of several temporal elements, expressed through both narrative and style/structure. Firstly, time-travel is unequivocally actualised in the sense that it is real and physical in *Primer*’s diegesis. Furthermore, actual physical time-travel begets actual physical temporal doubles. There are instances where the temporal doubles do not only co-exist in the same temporal realm, but the very same shot, and even physically interact, as one iteration of Aaron physically overcomes another version of himself. *Primer* acknowledges and exacerbates the ‘two body’ problem, evolving it into a multiple body problem, veering towards indiscernibility rapidly (via both narrative and cinematography) through its many temporal doubles and their destabilisation of perspective, identification, and identity.

In all three films the characters, whether they themselves are doubled or not, are characterised by the affects of time. Adverse effects/affects of excessive time-travel or repetition range from emotional/psychological, for example Scottie’s melancholy and obsession, to physical, Abe and Aaron’s fainting and bleeding ear(s), to death, as befalls *La Jetée*’s time-traveller (and *Vertigo*’s “Madeleine”/Judy). With regards to Deleuze, I revisit King’s observation that ‘[f]or Deleuze, the body is crucial to formulating the operations of the cinematic time-image in how it registers time and the layerings of time’ (King 2014, 62). Returning directly to Deleuze on the body in relation to non-chronological time, in *Cinema II* he asserts ‘the body is never in the present, it contains the before and the after, tiredness and
waiting. Tiredness and waiting, even despair are the attitudes of the body’ (2005, 182). We see this temporal conflict expressed in each film, most direct and visceral in Primer, as the doubles’ bodies increasingly destruct as each iteration becomes further removed from the present.

The temporal double as an image of time, or rather a synthesis of images of time within films composed of syntheses of time, is a particularly cinematic figure. This is due to its self-reflexivity and intertextuality and its ability to embody film as comprised of such repetitions or syntheses of time both across a film and across cinema. The temporal double is, however, a contradictory figure as its rejection of the present can be perceived as particularly uncinematic. Film, especially classic or Hollywood film (those we would through Deleuze classify as comprised of movement-images rather than time-images) create and sustain the illusion that what we are watching is (always) unfolding in the present (2005). This convention was challenged by films Deleuze classified as containing or being composed of time-images, subjective non-chronological images such as dreams, memories, and visions, such as flashbacks and flash-forwards, that disrupt the film’s linear progression and can position the character to perceive oneself as beside themselves in time (2005). Duality, multiplicity, and indiscernibility are intrinsic to the time-image, which vacillates between and confuses actual and virtual, real and imaginary, and past, present, and future.

Narratives distinguished and driven by problems of a temporal nature, especially time-travel narratives (and/or those featuring temporal doubles) generate images and sequences that further complicate chronology and interrogate cinema’s ability to convey subjective images of time. The increasing complexity and indiscernibility of such films (whether time-travel is actual or virtual) mirrors, in terms of both narrative and cinematography, the non-chronological movement from the Cinema volumes to Difference and Repetition (2005; 2004). The filmic figure of the temporal double, which this thesis argues is a manifestation of Deleuzian repetition-with-difference, is a synthesis of images of time that exist within films which are also syntheses of time, and participate in broader circuits of repetition and intertextuality across cinema (Sullivan 2016). The three films explored mobilise, through recognition of the temporal double both as an image and as a tool, a form of critical cinematic time-travel. This cinematic time-travel is critical in how it considers not only the traditional film spectator, but also the film critic and scholar within the broader cultural and academic contexts of film reception.
Critical cinematic time-travel takes the form of a non-chronological approach to reading (and re-reading) films through subsequent films that reference, repeat, or remake the other. This elucidates how the meaning of texts change through the difference produced with repetitions both within the film and of the film, both in itself and in relation to other films. This methodology reworks and extends Deleuze’s idea of the filmic time-image by cross-reading it with *Difference and Repetition* and reframing it as specifically cinematic repetitions or syntheses of time. The time-image’s duality or multiplicity is also expanded to include that of the viewer/character dynamic, recognising spectatorship as an essential aspect of understanding the figure of double and its relationship to time through repetition. The spectator (and critic/scholar), who is always doubled with the character/s, participates as a time-traveller as we watch and re-watch these interconnected films, which themselves operate as time-machines that revisit and rework form and figuration of repetition and the double across cinema.
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