Transcript of Part Five (by Andy Elliot, 2007)

This will the be the last lecture of the first part in which I would like to explore another consequence of the previous lecture about the area which we have been describing. In my view what I call the theory of the trailer is a metaphor of how our culture operates, and how arts and philosophy operate nowadays. What I am trying to say, as you know very well what a trailer is, is that a trailer is by far much more than this common sense meaning. Let us review and revisit a little bit what we understand to be a trailer. A trailer is a set of images which give you a short version of something that is longer. It is something that, if you like, is a version which in 1 or 2 minutes tries to cover let's say 60 or 90 minutes. That's number one. Number two, is it is a sort of anticipation of something which will be delivered later; it is a promise. And therefore, number three, it is a sort of expectative, this creates an expectation for you, because in one way or another, you have some information, you have some images, but you don't have the others. You have a basic structure and a basic direction but you don't have all the images to fill that direction. Number four, because you have this expectative, therefore the moment in which you see the film, this expectation affects the way in which you see the film, and puts that view into one particular direction, or gives you a sort of element that you are going to use. These, very very briefly explained are the four basic elements. My view is that culture, if you like, or reality, is working under the same principle. This is what I am saying is the theory of the trailer. The theory is that these four elements apply to culture, apply to philosophy, or to our ordinary life.

Let's put that aside for a little while and talk about this cinematographical form of space. When I say forms, I am referring to one or several: I think cinema, and the way in which we make cinema, is a particularly interesting way to approach space, which is basically a problem - if you have been following the previous lectures, you will know - which is a problem that we cannot avoid and which we need to deal with. What I understand as cinematographical forms of space are cinematographical aspects which in one way or the other can be incorporated to analyse other issues which are not merely cinematographical, but can be applicable to culture, arts, or other manifestations. Basically, in cinema you have a form which (1) allows you to establish a local universe, there are several ways in which you have at the beginning of a particular film a sort of set-up, in which within two or three minutes, you have a context from which the film starts. (2) you know very well that this let's say set-up, this local universe which we have established is created from images, the message passes to you through images. Then (3) with images again, we focus on a particular aspect of that local universe: we do not have the whole universe all the time, we focus on particular aspects of it. Even if that happens, we never lose the perspective. Cinema always allows us to focus on this particular aspect while retaining the general perspective of this local element. So we have a forum to have at all times the sense of ensemble, the sense of a 'set of elements',. Indeed as we will see later, one of the definitions of a perspective in cinema is a person who can have a small focus on a particular aspect of a universe but at the same time have a general perspective, and go from one to the other constantly while watching the film. This is something with which I am sure you have experimented in seeing a film, when you explore all the possibilities; what will happen, what is going to happen, what did happen, what did not happen, this relation between the general and the particular is constant in the cinema. And finally, there is a fifth element, to make this always reversible. Always in cinema we have the possibility of going forwards or backwards, we are not at a fixed and established point from which we cannot move an arm. Cinema allows us to do that. So if you put 1,2,3,4, and 5 together, basically it is what cinema offers us to understand other cultural manifestations, and this is why I mentioned space, and this

is why I was thinking of offering this course. I think that cinema, by using space in the way that I have just described, allows us to understand much better what is around us in cultural terms, which is the point I introduced at the beginning of the course. Therefore you can understand why I mentioned knowledge and cinema, because the more we understand how cinema operates, or rather the more we understand films, the more possibilities we have to understand how knowledge operates in our society. I truly believe that there is a direct connection between what we understand as knowledge in our society and what is the meaning of cinema. Not only because both are working with the idea of space, but more importantly because we cannot have an idea, or a definition of knowledge or cinema if we don't have an idea about space, which is indeed the hypothesis of Deleuze, with whose work you are probably familiar already, if you have been reading some of his work.

For this lecture I am picking up something I already mentioned to you, in chapter two of the *Aesthetics of Disappearance* from Paul Virilio, which is a very short article, but I think that it will give you a really accurate sense of this connection between space, knowledge and cinema. All the suggested reading once again is based on explanations from works which you have been seeing everywhere and reading a chapter or two. From Deleuze, Vol 2, chapter seven; from Suzanne Hême de Lacotte, a book on Deleuze which is very good, chapter two which comprises a resumé of views Deleuze held about the subject. Then *Mille Plateaux*, chapter one, which is a good introduction; from Yuri Lotman's Semiotics of Cinema - I have the Italian version but I think there is an English version - chapter one and thirteen; Edgar Morin, *Le cinéma ou l'homme imaginaire*, a French version, but again I think there is an English version called *Cinema and the Imaginary Man*, chapter seven; from Jameson, *The Geopolitical Aesthetic*, for which the introduction and Part 1 will be useful. From Dominique Chateau, Chapter 4 is a very simple description of the main connections. Sánchez-Biosca - a Catalan author, I'm not sure it's been translated into English - a very interesting book; it's a bit technical, but if you want to explore the idea of the trailer a little bit more you will certainly find enough material here. I recommend the

first part. *Moving Pictures: A Theory of Film,* the introduction is good; and from Brian Winston, I recommended Chapter three. From Alain Montesse, there is an article which has been published in an interesting book called *Le cinéma et la science;* interesting because as I did in chapter twelve of my book, which I recommended to you in lecture three, he discusses the direct connection that exists between the development of science and the development of cinema. Then from Jean-Michel Arnold, a very good cinematographic grammar which is again very interesting because it gives you an idea of how this notion of trailer can be used to describe an entire culture, in this case the scientific culture.

Again, this is a very big subject, so I think the task for you should be to pick out one or two elements and to try to explore them a little bit, and as usual I am willing to discuss with you the theory if you wish.

Recommended Reading

Paul Virilio, *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* (New York: Semiotxt(e), 1991), Chapter 2.

Suggested Reading

Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 2. l'image-temps* (Paris: Minuit, 1985), chapter VII.

Suzanne Hême de Lacotte, *Deleuze: philosophie et cinéma* (Paris: l'Harmattan, 2001), Chapter II.

Gilles Deleuze/Felix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux* (Paris: Minuit, 1980), Chapter 1.

Yuri M. Lotman, *Semiotica del cinema* (Catania: Edizioni del Prisma, 1979), Chapter I and XIII.

Edgar Morin, *Le cinéma ou l'homme imaginaire* (Paris: Minuit, 1956), Chapter 7.

Frederic Jameson, *The Geopolitical Aesthetic. Cinema and Space in the World System* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press/BFI, 1995), Introduction and Part One.

Dominique Chateau, *Cinéma et philosophie* (Paris: Nathan, 2003), Chapter 4.

Vicente Sánchez-Biosca, *El montaje cinematográfico* (Barcelona: Paidós, 1999), First part.

Torben Grodal, *Moving Pictures. A New Theory of Film, Genres, Feelings, and Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 'Introduction'.

Brian Winston, *Technologies of Seeing* (London: BFI, 1996), Chapter 3.

Alain Montesse, 'La machine à mémoire. Notes sur la préhistoire du cinéma' in Alexis Martinet (coord.), *Le cinéma et la science* (Paris: CNRS, 1994), pp. 10-17.

Jean-Michel Arnold, 'La grammaire cinématographique: une invention de scientifiques' in Alexis Martinet (coord.), *Le cinéma et la science* (Paris: CNRS, 1994), pp. 210-217.