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Hollywood in Europe

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HOLLYWOOD FILMS IN A FRENCH WORKING CLASS MILIEU: LONGWY 1945-1960

Fabrice Montebello, IUE Florence

In the days following the Second World War, French spectators rushed into the cinemas in order to discover those American films that the censorship of the previous governments had quite simply suppressed. In the emerging post-war climate, made worse by the eviction of communist ministers from the government (1947), the presence of American films on French screens could only provide another motive for the political confrontation which grew out of the cold war,¹ and from other contemporary conflicts about "the industrial production of cultural goods".² Strengthened by its newly acquired political legitimacy (The War, the Resistance) and by its appropriation of native Jacobin and Republican traditions, the French Communist Party (PCF) promoted itself as the defender of national independence against the "yankee invader". The distribution and projection of American films, made easier, some believe, by the Blum-Byrnes agreements,³ became one of the main targets of the PCF in its struggle against "the cultural and ideological imperialism" of the United States, placing the party alongside many Gaullists and intellectuals inclined by tradition to a certain anti-americanism.⁴

¹ Richard F. Kuisel, "Coca-Cola and the Cold War: The French Face Americanization, 1948-1953", *French Historical Studies*, Vol 17, no. 1, 1991, pp. 96-116, and from the same author, *Seducing the French, the Dilemma of Americanization*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993. On the position of the PCF in the field of culture, cf Jeanine Verdès-Leroux, "The French Communist Party in the 1950s: Between National Tradition and Counter-Culture", in: Brian Rigby, Nicholas Hewitt, *France and the Mass Media*, London: Macmillan, 1991, pp. 5-19.

² Cf. the violent and by now classic denunciation of "the industrial production of cultural goods" by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, New York, 1944 (Paris: Gallimard, 1974).

³ Signed in 1946, the Blum-Byrnes commercial agreements included a small clause aimed at favouring the distribution and projection of American films on French territory in exchange for financial assistance.

⁴ David Strauss, "The Rise of Anti-americanism in France: French Intellectuals and the American Film Industry, 1927-1932", *Journal of Popular Culture*, no. 4, 1977, pp. 752-759.

By putting into perspective statistics on the so-called American "tidal wave", and then by revealing the gap between the significant presence of these films on the screen and their relatively poor reception, recent studies have considerably toned down the "black legend" of the massive weight of American films, by which French cinema-goers were supposedly manipulated against their wills, and whose mediocrity threatened the "quality" of national cinema production.⁵ These new studies however remain hampered by a series of intellectual prejudices. By systematically focusing on statistics, and particularly on the numbers of admissions per nationality of film, they tend to isolate cinema attendance from other cultural or social activities, to separate artificially the diffusion and the "meaning" of films from the social conditions of their reception and use. They take for granted the existence of a homogeneous reality ("American films", "French films", ...) which is in fact merely a preconception. Finally, whatever precautions are taken, they also make certain debatable assumptions about the effects of cinema on spectators' behaviour, disconnecting it from the material and symbolic frameworks in which the aesthetic experience takes place (autonomy of judgment on single film performances and on the situations portrayed in films, on coded readings, *intertextualité*, ...).

As is well known the question of American films has often been linked to the issue of the "Americanisation" of European societies. This term, vague and general, indicates in abstract fashion the process of economic modernisation and the upheaval of European ways of life which took place after the war under the influence of the United States. This was a force whose effects can be explained in the real "ideological" fascination (Gramsci would have spoken of a "moral and intellectual hegemony") exercised by an "American model" (an entire complex of images, representations and stereotypes), which was diffused universally by means like the Hollywood film industry.⁶ Generally conceived as

⁵ Patricia Hubert-Lacombe, "L'accueil des films américains en France pendant la guerre froide (1946-1953)", *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, Cinéma et société, avril-juin 1986, pp. 301-313. Jacques Portes, "Les origines de la légende noire des accords Blum-Byrnes", *ibid.*, pp. 314-329. Francis Bordat, "Evaluation statistique de la pénétration du cinéma américain en France", *Revue française d'études américaines*, no. 24-25, pp. 225-248.

⁶ In addition to the book of Richard F. Kuisel and the article of David Strauss, cit., the French experience of the import of American techniques of management is studied in Luc Boltanski, "America, America ... Le plan Marshall et l'importation du 'management'", *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, no. 38, pp. 19-41, 1981. For Great-Britain, Germany, Italy and Finland, see respectively, Peter Stead, "Hollywood's Message for the World: The British Response in the Nineteen Thirties", *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, no. 1, 1981, pp. 19-32, Thomas Jeffrey Saunders, *Weimar, Hollywood, and the Americanization of German Culture, 1921-1933*, Phd, University of Toronto, 1985,

a mass phenomenon which imposed itself with the strength of its presence and encountered little true "resistance", the phenomenon of the industrial production and universal diffusion of American films reinforced the impression that little space was left for the freedom of choice of spectators.

By reversing this outlook and starting not from the centre but from the periphery, and by observing no longer from afar but from up close, I would like to contrast this general appraisal of the situation and show how there really was room for manoeuvre which ensured that audiences were able to make different uses of American films, even those working class sectors of the population generally imagined to be the most prone to manipulation or social conditioning. Without in any way intending to generalise excessively from hypotheses based strictly on local experience, or claiming access to an exceptionally representative sample, we will see how these micro-historical observations allow us to envisage distinct popular uses of the cinema applicable to larger groups.⁷ The analysis will deal with the years from 1945 to 1960 in the small town of Longwy, situated in the north of Lorraine (at the crossroads of the borders of France, Belgium and Luxembourg), with a population distinguished by a high concentration of blue-collar workers and a significant Italian immigration.⁸

and by the same author, "Comedy as Redemption: American Slapstick in Weimar Culture", *Journal of European Studies*, no. 4, 1987, pp. 253-277, Victoria De Grazia, "Mass Culture and Sovereignty: The American Challenge to European Cinemas 1920-1960", *The Journal of Modern History*, no. 1, march 1989. Jerker Eriksson, Matti Haapanen, Martti Itäälä et Rauno Lipponen, *American film in Finland*, University of Turku, Institute of General History, Publications (Finland), no. 10, 1983, pp. 63-84, 127-130, 131-134 and 135-140.

⁷ However it is not possible, in the limited framework of this article, to tackle the problems of method linked to the collection of data, especially those from working class sources not used to writing down their feelings and judgements. In addition to the analysis of the regional or militant press, of parish reports, of cine-club statements, field work with general ethnographic observations was carried out starting from a series of detailed oral investigations involving seventeen persons (twelve men and five women, ten of whom former working class people and thirteen of Italian origin). These questions are dealt with at length in Fabrice Montebello, "Problèmes d'histoire du public, le cinéma comme esthétique du pauvre", *Programme de recherche du Premier siècle du cinéma*, Paris: Collège de Polytechnique/Centre National de la Cinématographie, 1993, pp. 86-106.

⁸ In 1946, the Longwy-Villerupt district had 52,402 inhabitants of whom 10,897 were foreigners (20,8%). At that time, the iron and steel works and the iron mines of the region employed nearly 23,000 persons (20% of Italians, 10% of Belgians and 9% of Algerians). A good number of French people were also recently naturalised foreigners (from the end of the thirties and just after the war period). The official hierarchy in the iron and steel works of the region, in the days after the Second World War was as follows: OP or "ouvrier professionnel" ("professional worker") (OP1, OP2, OP3), OS or "ouvrier spécialisé" ("semi-skilled worker") (OS1 and OS2), MF or "manoeuvre de force" ("unskilled worker") and MO or "manoeuvre ordinaire" ("ordinary unskilled worker"). In 1948, the OS

Cinema attendance, distribution and releases

In the overall development in the number of cinema-goers, 1946 was the year when attendance reached its peak. It was also the year of the most massive "off-loading" of American films in France "both for economic necessity and financial profit".⁹ After a constant rise since the end of the Second World War, the number of spectators "drawn" to American films began to diminish after 1947. Related to the percentage of the total number of spectators, American films which were practically on a par with French films between 1947 and 1949, then began to lose ground after 1950 (45,17% of spectators for French films, 42,38% for American ones. Table I). Compared to the percentage of the total films projected, the decrease in films of transatlantic origin is even more apparent (Table III). These are national averages however and regionally there were wide variations. For example, the numerical superiority of France over the United States is apparently reversed in the regions of Strasbourg, Lille and Marseille from 1947 to 1950, but it is true that we do not have complete figures for the number of films shown by nationality at the regional level. In addition the administrative division of France by the Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC, National Center of Cinematography) is extremely general, vague and arbitrary, and does not allow us to grasp local peculiarities.

Calculations can however be made from the records of receipts kept by the CNC for the ten principle cinemas of the Longwy area, including the towns of Longwy, Herserange, Longlaville, Mont-Saint-Martin, Rehon and Saulnes, representing 31274 inhabitants in 1950. The CNC's records contain by calendar quarter and by "cinematographic region", the programme planning week by week of all the cinemas in France. Thus we can read from left to right the name of the cinema, the number of the cinematographic week (starting on wednesday), the last number of the current year (for example 5 for 1945), the headlines of the news, the title of the "big film", followed by that or those of the "shorts", the names of the distributing companies, the number of admissions, the cost of renting the film, the gross receipts, the net receipts, and finally the "total profit of the program". Unfortunately, the coding in figures of film titles, of distribution companies and of relevant data (nationality, censor's certificate, date of release in Paris, number of reels ...) make the exploitation of this data extremely painstaking and prolonged. In

represented 46,5% of the total worker manpower, ahead of the OP (25,8%), the MF (25%) and the MO (2,5%). Cf Union des Mines et de la Métallurgie de Longwy, *Longwy-Villercrupt 1956*, Longwy, 1956, p. 70. For a synthesis of the social and political history of the region, see Gérard Noiriel, *Longwy, immigrés et prolétaires, 1880-1980*, Paris: PUF, 1984.

⁹ Patricia Hubert-Lacombe, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

addition, there are numerous irregularities in the registrations: gaps, omissions, double counting, errors of re-transcription or simple carelessness.¹⁰

As is apparent from the tables of receipts constructed from the data obtained in this fashion, the principle characteristics of attendance on the national scale are completely reversed at the local level (Tables II and IV). Whether in relative or absolute terms, in the average numbers of spectators "attracted" by the different film programmes on offer, American films are well ahead of their French counterparts. It should be noted that in terms of the percentage of the total number of spectators, the figures are equivalent to those of the administrative region of Strasbourg. This region is moreover the only one to see a significant rise in the number of admissions between 1946 and 1947 (nearly 6 millions), whereas all the others, without exception, show a decline (Table I). Is this exceptional rise due to the adding on at a late stage of the departments of the Vosges, of Haute-Saône, of Meuse and Meurthe-et-Moselle (which includes the town of Longwy)—previously included in the *Grande Région Parisienne*—to the region of Strasbourg? Would this addition have contributed to the total reversal of the ratio of American to French films? In any case, the assumption would only confirm the exceptional nature by national standards of our local observation point.

Even more interesting are the following two facts: whereas on the national scale, the share of American films was close to 50% in 1946 and reached more than 59% the following year, we see in Longwy American films progressively occupying screens, but in a fashion which culminates in 1948 (50,04% of all films programmed in 1948 against 41,17% and 39,36% in the two previous years; cf. Table III). It is possible that this discrepancy reflects traditional variations in distribution patterns between Paris and the province. But the key point is that in Longwy, the regular rise in the share of American films on all the local screens is accompanied by an almost identical rise in the percentage of spectators going to see those American films (true also in absolute terms: Table IV), as though demand blindly followed the rise of supply. The average number of spectators for American film in Longwy (unlike the national situation) remains superior to that for French films. In other words, in absolute values as well as in relative terms, American films in Longwy are more successful than French films (cf. Table I: over the five years,

¹⁰ In the worst cases, the primary information itself may be imperfect: issue number 8 of march-april 1949 of the *Bulletin d'information du CNC*, states: "The CNC department for statement and film verification notes that in spite of information to the contrary published in the bulletin of the Center and in professional papers, many notes of weekly receipts are sent to this service incompletely filled in".

an average of 915 spectators saw the 1246 French films shown in Longwy, against 992 for the 1244 American offerings).

Obviously these figures give no information about the behaviour of audiences and particularly about the attitudes of those who, having paid for their seats, left the cinema with a negative or hostile impression of the film seen. So we will not try to find in these statistics the key to American "influence" on French cinema audiences. This avalanche of figures reveals, in our opinion, more subtle and relevant questions, part of the debates which the cinema has never ceased to generate since its origins, and which concern its very nature. Is it an "art" or an "industry"? To what extent does the spectator choose his or her programmes? To what extent does cinema-going constitute a mechanical or social ritual, divorced from the "value" of any particular film?¹¹ And if, instead of seeing in the rise in the number of American films and the corresponding number of people seeing them, a mechanical phenomenon characteristic of an artificial and artificially created "need", a sort of imposition, we recognised on the contrary a conscious choice¹² on the part of audiences who in the name of "pleasure" preferred American films to others? It would then no longer be a question of noting the presence of a considerable number of very similar products, or of denouncing marketing practices obsessed by profit, but of giving an account of the differentiation made by any spectator between at least two films, two "types" of films, two "styles" of films on the basis of criteria, of "types", and of "styles" which he has constructed himself, as a result of his own aesthetic experience, in other words on the basis of his own familiarity with the cinema. The choice may seem an illusory one, but it is a real illusion which creates a real difference. It is to the identification of this space for manoeuvre, where standard observations are overturned and things

¹¹ Studies of the social history of the working class devoted to its entertainments, have an essentially functionalist approach to the cinema and leave aside the specifically aesthetic matter of the working class appraisal of films; cf. for example Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Words of Labour*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984; Stephen G. Jones, *The British Labour Movement and Film, 1918-1939*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1987.

¹² The macroscopic point of view of Pierre Sorlin considers spectators as agents who are subject to the hazards of distribution; cf. Pierre Sorlin, *European Cinemas, European Societies, 1939-1990*, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 81-110, and by the same author, "What Made a Popular Film in France in the 1950s", in Brian Rigby, Nicholas Hewitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-84. We will return to the debate within cinema criticism of the fifties on spectator's choice ("The critic generally deals with products which are already the result of a choice", Chris Marker, *Cahiers du cinéma*, no. 4), and which solves its contradictions by constructing a system of classification of films a posteriori, recognising them as the "Septième Art"; cf. Antoine de Baecque, *Les Cahiers du cinéma, Histoire d'une revue*, tome I, Paris: Editions Cahiers du cinéma, pp. 67-68.

"imposed" became in the minds of cinema-goers "choices", that we must now turn.

If we can see in the period just after the Second World War, a considerable number of distributors operating in metropolitan France as a whole, on closer inspection they turn out to be almost all subsidiaries of the big American companies (Paramount, RKO, Fox, Metro, Universal, Associated Artists, Warner, Columbia) or their French counterparts (Alliance Générale, Discina, Ciné-Sélection, Filmsonor, Sirius, Pathé, Gaumont). They all have numerous outlets, and in particular local agencies. We also find independent distributors operating at the regional or inter-regional level, but the movement towards concentration which began from 1948 on eliminated companies which only devote themselves to the physical distribution of films, without taking a greater interest in their production. Spread over time by means of phased distribution (from "first-degree exclusive" cinemas where new films were released in Paris and in certain large provincial cities, to cinemas of "second-degree" exclusiveness; then on to "first viewing" cinemas in city suburbs and large provincial towns, followed by "second-viewing" cinemas in lesser suburbs and small towns, finally general distribution in country areas), the career of a film was already well under way when it arrived on the screens of a provincial town like Longwy. The distribution of films in cinemas of primary and secondary exclusiveness, even in minor "first-viewing" theatres, corresponded then to a "life-chance" test and allowed both the operator as well as the cinema-goer, from their own points of view, to get an idea of their supposed "worth". The so-called "locomotive" or bloc-booking system,¹³ which consisted of imposing on a theatre owner a number of commercially un-attractive films which then allowed him to obtain a film likely to be successful, was violently criticised and seemed to lock up audiences even more tightly into a system of restricted and predictable "choices".

Nevertheless, when the facts are examined more closely, it becomes apparent that the general scheme of things did allow certain margins for manoeuvre. Thus in Longwy, one of the supporters of bloc-booking, the owner of the *Cinéma des Familles*, a theatre whose experience we shall return to, showed between 1948 and 1953 402 films of which 247 were distributed by six of the major American companies (Universal (55 films), Paramount (45), Fox (45), Columbia (45), Warner (30), RKO (27)). He also entered into rental agreements with no less than 43 different distributors during these five years. If we then recall the fact that this same owner possessed or ran four other cinemas throughout the

¹³ René Bonnell, *Le Cinéma exploité*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1978, Ramsay Poche Cinéma, pp. 200-208.

urban area and the neighbouring towns, we can easily imagine the possibilities open to him to "vary" his programmes, even if his behaviour seems at first sight to be dictated only by concern for profit. The practise of block-booking was of course the object of general hostility on the part of critics and cine-clubs, even from the PCF, which saw itself as defending the "freedom of artistic creation". The programmers of the circuits of family halls tied to the Church generally objected for reasons of morality (demanding "wholesome", "clean" films for family audiences and children). If those responsible for film society networks, such as the militants of the PCF, could only offer "their" respective audiences a few full-length films on rare and unpredictable occasions, the Church, with its *Centrale Catholique du Cinéma et de la radio* (CCCR, "Catholic Association of the Cinema and the Radio"), tried to organise existing cinemas and newly created ones into a "pressure" network able to order from distributors the films whose "moral value" it approved of. In spite of the somewhat disillusioned tone, the following report gives some idea of the scope of the Catholic organisation of family cinemas in France in the fifties:

But one has to yield to the facts that a multitude of small cinemas has relatively no impact on the structure of the cinema as a whole: their irreplaceable role is rather to serve the healthy elements in our parishes and sometimes to give material help to maintain other services of popular education. If we own one sixth of the cinemas of standard size, we probably have only one tenth of the seats, and it does not seem to be an exaggeration to say that our cinemas only reach one twentieth of French audiences. If some départements have family cinemas which reach sixty percent of all spectators, others do not reach five per cent.¹⁴

It should be noted that the activities of the Church were not only due to a desire for moral censorship. Catholics were anxious to stress the artistic vocation of the cinema, but this required the cinematographic education of the public,¹⁵ and at times led to tensions difficult to deal

¹⁴ *Bulletin de Liaisons des Comités Diocésains du Cinéma* (janvier 1954), in *Répertoire général des films 1954-1955*, Paris: Editions "pensée vraie", 1955, pp. 21-22. The Catholic organisation for supervising cinemas in Brittany has been studied thoroughly by Jacques Deniel and Michel Lagrée, *Le Cinéma en Bretagne rurale: esquisse pour une histoire*, *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest*, tome 92, 1985, no. 3, pp. 257-288.

¹⁵ Still ruled by the encyclical "Vigilanti Cura" of Pope Pius XI (1937), the attitude of the Catholics towards the cinema was ambiguous. Suspicious on principle, Catholic leaders nevertheless underlined the potentially positive action of the cinema in the "spiritual" and intellectual elevation of humanity, and in spreading the evangelical message. The desire to interest the public in "works of quality" and to make public interest more demanding, was further expressed in the encyclical letter "Miranda Prorsus", Cinema Radio Television, of Pope Pius XII (1957); cf. Michael Kelly, *Catholic Cultural Policy from 1944 to 1950s: "Bande dessinée" and Cinema*, in Brian Rigby, Nicholas Hewitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-36. For

with between the Church's moral denunciation and its aesthetic appreciation of the same film.¹⁶ To the two dominant practices of film use in Longwy in these years (one commercial, the other independent) can be added a whole series of initiatives now difficult to trace, which depended mainly on the marketing of films in 16 mm (projection of educational films in schools and youth clubs, information films dealing with subjects such as the safety for factory workers; the showing of Egyptian films in arabic for the North-African workers of the region ...). In short, during those years 1940-50, in this little provincial town, a very considerable number of films was on offer to spectators in a variety of different circumstances.¹⁷ Behind the apparent uniformity of the numbers is revealed a range of distribution practices, and programmes numerous enough to encourage cinema-goers to believe that they were carrying out a significant act of choice when deciding on their viewing. What we have to do now is to see how the thought-processes involved in choosing served to justify the choices made after the event.

The party, the church and the film-clubs

We may group the cinematographic establishments of the Longwy area—into three categories. The *Circuit Familial de l'Est* ("Family Network of the East") provided the programmes for cinemas run by associations organically linked to the surrounding factories and to local parishes, or even to both of at the same time (*Parisiana* in Mont-Saint-Martin, *Sainte-Anne* in Herserange, *Gouraincourt-Cinema* in the neighbourhood of the steel works of Longwy). Heirs to the old paternalistic system of

the example of Italian Catholics, cf. Bruno P.F. Wanrooij, below.

¹⁶ Here is the advice given by the CCCR to "those who become aware of the importance of the cinema" in the heart of Parish Missions: "they will be of service in educating the public, by persuading people to like the cinema then to change it, to know the cinema before judging it. Christians should be the most influential cine-club members; the family and parish rooms should be the most influential culture centres", *Répertoire général des films 1953-1954*, Paris: Editions "pensée vraie", 1954, p. 29. On audience education through the control of cinemas, see the example of Milan studied by Alberto Gatti: "La cattedra popolare. Funzioni, vocazioni, organizzazioni della sala cinematografica cattolica nella Milano del dopoguerra", in "Il cinema a Milano dal secondo dopoguerra ai primi anni sessanta", ed. by Raffaele De Berti, *Comunicazioni sociali*, 1-2, Anno XIII, 1991, pp. 163-190.

¹⁷ For all the towns studied from July 1948 to December 1953, examination of the local editions of the paper *L'Est Républicain*, records that 3396 films were shown, not counting trailers or newsreels.

the organisation of workers leisure,¹⁸ these establishments were typically small neighbourhood cinemas in the villages on the periphery of Longwy (*Salle Jeanne d'Arc* in Saulnes, *Ciné-Réhon* in Réhon, *Eden* in Longlaville) and distanced themselves, sometimes with contempt, from the larger and more modern cinemas of the town-centre (*Palace*, *Rex*, *Cinéo* and *Cinema des Familles* in Longwy, *Nouveautés-Palace* in Herserange), where owners more readily employed the practise of bloc-booking. Close to the concerns of the Church, one of the first associations tried to promote in the *Gouraincourt-Cinéma* a "cinema for children". It was also in this cinema that one of the very first local film societies in the region saw the light of day. As for the PCF and the CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail, the powerful union close to the PCF), whose presence was felt strongly in popular festivals and workers gatherings after the war, they showed most of their films in the biggest commercial cinemas of the urban area: the *Nouveautés-Palace* and the *Palace*. Local branches of much larger national organisations, which was the attitude of these semi-official authorities towards the massive presence of American films on the screens of Longwy's cinemas?

Being mainly engaged in the great workers and union struggles of the post-war period, the local militants of the PCF satisfied themselves with a posture of hostility in principle towards the United States and in particular to American film output, which they denounced as "idiotic", and basely commercial, offering workers nothing but escapism, far from the real social problems of the time. Confronted with this "ideological offensive" by the American enemy, the PCF increased public demonstrations, the number of cinema evenings it organised in support of the USSR, festivals and commemorations of local members of the Resistance movement who had fallen during the War against the occupiers. All the organisations of the Party and those close to it (like the CGT union and the France-USSR friendship association), were mobilised to distribute edifying films dedicated to the glory of socialism, Stalin or the victories of the "valiant red army", during the world conflict (*Les 13*, *Nikita*, *Gloire à Moscou*, *Salut à Moscou*, *Coeur d'acier*, *Oural*, *Le Chant de la terre sibérienne*, *L'Arc-en-ciel*, *Djoulbars*, *Zoïa*, *Jeunesse radieuse*, *La Chute du tyran*, *Le Serment*,...). Militant workers very much appreciated these "realistic" stories, drawn from "true events" (in their eyes a guarantee of cinematographic respectability): they were the type of story in which the hero of modest origin, with whom they could identify,

¹⁸ On paternalism in industrial Lorraine, cf Gérard Noiriel, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-226, and from the same author, "Du 'patronage' au 'paternalisme': la restructuration des formes de domination de la main-d'oeuvre ouvrière dans l'industrie métallurgique française", *Le Mouvement Social*, no. 144, 1988.

struggled throughout to gain and preserve his dignity (*Histoire d'un homme véritable*).

By concentrating on "the projection of films of a moral, intellectual or artistic level higher than that on view in the majority of cinemas at the moment",¹⁹ cine-clubs (attended for the most part by teachers, factory clerks, even by workers themselves on occasion) also rejected commercial films, but they could not prevent themselves from allowing a certain contempt for their intended audiences to show through on occasion. Heirs to a movement for popular education which originally grew out of the Resistance,²⁰ the local cine societies were typical of those first mass "film enthusiasts" organisations where the desire to educate the audience cinematographically prevailed. Sensitive to the question of raising the intellectual level of their public, they favoured recognised works whose literary origins (typically, the cine-club of Piedmont projected in April 1952 *La Chartreuse de Parme*),²¹ justified the prestige conferred on them. It is easy to imagine how this type of outlook, based on the presumed artistic importance of the cinema gradually came to give a greater place to uncommon works with artistic pretensions, characteristic of "the best" European national film-making, rather than to "Hollywood" films, which were easily written off as standardised products, mass produced, the very opposite of the idea of Art.

The programming of the Acier cine-club for the year 1953, reveals a strangely dated mixture, with old favourites (*Alexandre Newsky*, *Citizen Kane*), running alongside successes of the moment (*Sciuscià*), "French classics" (*La Beauté du diable*, *Le Silence est d'or*, *Les Enfants du paradis*), eye-witness accounts of recent events (*La Dernière étape*, *La Bataille de l'eau lourde*), educational products (the scientific films of Jean Painlevé), and films now long forgotten (*Fantôme à vendre*, *Whisky à gogo*, *Les Roseaux du lac Balaton*). In these circles, where people were working hardest to have the cinema recognised as a legitimate and noble cultural activity (like literature), American films in general did not yet enjoy the status that some critics would eventually

¹⁹ Text of the first performance at the Acier Ciné-Club, *L'Est Républicain*, 24 décembre 1952.

²⁰ For a recent synthesis of the debates on *la culture populaire* ("popular culture") in France after the Second World War, understood as an entirety of values encouraging the development of human personality, see Brian Rigby, *Popular Culture in Modern France: A Study of Cultural Discourse*, London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 39-67.

²¹ During the same year 1952, the Piedmont Cine-Club would show the following films: *Le Paradis des pilotes perdus*, *La Nuit fantastique*, *Le Bossu*, *Le Carrefour des enfants perdus*, *Service de nuit*.

award them, using the notion of the director as artist.²² This development was of course even less likely to occur at the local level since in the leadership of the federations of film-societies (where communist militants were strongly represented) contrasts of a political nature often exacerbated differences of aesthetic opinion. Emmanuelle Loyer has shown very well how during those cold-war years, American cinema was the "subject of a war between critics", involving particularly Georges Sadoul (a member of the PCF) and André Bazin²³ (editor of the *Cahiers du Cinéma*).

We have seen how the Church, although fixed in its determination to moralise the cinema, notably by means of the judgments of the CCCR,²⁴ nevertheless emphasised its potentially positive role in the "spiritual" and cultural elevation of humanity. Generally speaking, it took no notice of the nationality of films in the judgments it expressed, even if some critics have insisted on its benevolent attitude towards a good part of the American output.²⁵ But there was a big difference between

²² During the first training course for cine-club organisers, run by by the Fédération Française des Ciné-Clubs (FFCC) (French Federation of Cine-Clubs), from the 9th to the 15th september 1946, Georges Sadoul made comments on the history of the cinema, using approaches and periodisations now considered classic, and which would be the basis for his subsequent reference work, *Histoire générale du cinéma*, 6 volumes Paris, Denoël 1948-1975 (Archives Nationales, Paris, cote F/42/132). These recurrent training courses of the FFCC in the years after the Second World War, with the contribution of the best known directors and critics of the time (Bazin, Leenhardt, Gremillon, Rouquier, Auric,...) contributed significantly to the training of cine-club organisers from Longwy.

²³ Cf the article of Emmanuelle Loyer, "Hollywood au pays des ciné-clubs (1947-1954)" in *Vingtième Siècle*, no. 33 Janvier-mars 1992, pp. 45-55. On film criticism of communist inspiration, see the study of Olivier Barrot, *L'Écran Français 1943-1953, histoire d'un journal et d'une époque*, Paris: Les Editeurs Français Réunis, 1979.

²⁴ The CCR had six film ratings: "3: films which can be watched by everybody", "3 bis: films which can be seen by everybody although with some elements unsuitable for children", "4: films for adults", "4 A: films for adults with restrictions", "4 bis: not advisable", "5: out of respect for Christian discipline, it is requested that you abstain from going to see films marked with the number 5". A film could obviously change from one rating to another depending on whether the person in charge of the cinema had made "judicious" cuts or not (a practise extremely frequent in the so-called *salles familiales* ("family halls")). According to Martine Boyer, *L'écran de l'amour*, Paris: Plon, 1990, pp. 168-169, "rating 5 had quasi-official authority. It led to a decreasing attendance for any film so rated. Some producers had to negotiate with the 'centrale' not to be given a 5 rating".

²⁵ Bruno P.F. Wanrooij, *op. cit.*, shows how Italian catholic leaders could have seen in the American output centred on entertainment films a positive substitute for the noxious atmosphere of Italian neo-realist films, even if expressing this preference meant accepting certain not very "suitable" parts of these same American films ("films noirs" with "sex" and "violence"). Irwin Wall postulates an obvious complicity between Catholic censorship

the calm and measured judgments made by the cinema loving priests of the CCCR, who saw in a certain type of cinema a means of spiritual emancipation, and the more radical views of some of the parish priests of Longwy, who often spoke out against the "tarzanneries" ("tarzan-type rubbish") and the "vamps, murders and pornographic stories without any consistency",²⁶ in films we can guess to be American in origin. In a working class, deeply dechristianised world, where the varied ethnic origins of the workers hardly facilitated religious proselytism, priests easily felt bewildered.²⁷ But it was the cinema as a whole that was being rejected and this was all the more natural when it was associated with the bad life led in cities, in cabarets and working class festivals.²⁸

Within the most "intellectual" sections of the local public then, whether for aesthetic, political or moral reasons, American cinema in general was not deemed worthy of much interest. This did not prevent films from the United States being the most widely distributed and successful among the general public.²⁹ It was also on this "American cinema" that the workers we spoke to based all their judgments concerning the cinema. This is all the more striking as most of the

(which mainly dealt with French films) and American political influence in France, Irwin Wall, *L'Influence américaine sur la politique française, 1945-1954*, Paris: Balland, 1989.

²⁶ *Chrétienté Longwy-Bas* (parish bulletin of the region of Longwy), no. 42, 01-01-1954.

²⁷ "In the mining bassin of Longwy, less than 5% of adults were practising catholics of any sort, although 95% of them had made their first communion when they were children", Oscar L. Cole-Arnal, *Prêtres en bleu de chauffe*, Paris: Les Editions ouvrières, 1992, p. 71, (*Priests in working-class blue. The history of the worker-priests (1943-1954)*, New York: Paulist Press, 1986). A small survey carried out in Longwy in 1955 showed that "2% of workers, 30% of employees, 40% of engineers and 80% of employers were church-goers", Gérard Noiriol, David Charasse, *Un siècle d'intégration des immigrés dans le Pays-Haut lorrain*, Paris: Mission Interministerielle Recherche Expérimentation (M.I.R.E.), 1992, p. 112.

²⁸ Bernard Alexandre, the minor priest of the Pays de Caux, ordained in 1945, recalls in his memoirs the ambiguous attitude of the Church towards the cinema in the forties, and his own conflicts as a film enthusiast with the ecclesiastical hierarchy. "The cinema is obviously not in the programme of the seminary. It is even taboo...The priest is not allowed to go there. The synodic statute and the diocesan rules are strict about that. The curtain, often red as in the theatre, is an unpleasant reminder of the hell of the middle-age in the Mysteries...and all that necessarily means cinema has a smell of sulfur." Bernard Alexandre, *Le Horsain, vivre et survivre en Pays de Caux*, Paris: Plon, 1988, p. 75. For some priests in Longwy, the cinema was seen as a meeting-place which broke up "family life" and made young people lazy. Cf. Serge Bonnet, *L'Homme du fer*, tome II, Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, Editions Serpenoises, 1987, p. 219.

²⁹ Of the 3396 projections recorded from 1948 to 1953, religious associations, cine-clubs, the PCF, and the CGT did not contribute more than a hundred performances altogether.

workers interviewed remain close to the PCF³⁰ and that the latter is still strongly established in the local working-class, especially among the Italian-born sections of it.³¹

The working class uses of cinema

The villages and towns of the mining and steel-making basin in the north of Lorraine, what Serge Bonnet qualifies as "suburbs without any town",³² are sometimes gathered around an older historical nucleus. Such is the case with Longwy, where the specifically working-class neighbourhood of Gouraincourt faces the steel works, and the town centre serves as a focal point for the inhabitants of the surrounding "suburban" towns, all geographically connected to the town of Longwy in a continuous line more than ten kilometers long.

The town square as such has been the favourite gathering place for all the great worker demonstrations of the post-war period down to the present day. People go there on foot, with the family or in the company of "gangs of mates". Daily life and the weekly tempo of work/rest/leisure also take place essentially within the framework of this social geography. The neighbourhood is an entity which remains profoundly influenced by the family and by social pressures of all sorts; "going down to Longwy" thus means "going into town", that is "marking a distance" from the family world and in a certain sense going against parental authority. It is not surprising then to see the local cinemas wedded to the same logic of centre/outskirts and offering different programmes according to their geographic location or their social "functions": for cinemas in the outer areas, week-end afternoon or evening bills suited to family excursions

³⁰ The gap between the pro-communist workers' love for American films and the political background of the activists is studied in more detail in Fabrice Montebello, "Joseph Staline et Humphrey Bogart: L'hommage des ouvriers", *Politix*, no. 24 décembre 1993, pp. 115-133.

³¹ In the Longwy constituency in 1956, the PCF won 34,7% of the votes. The CGT trade-union (close to the PCF) received 73% of the votes at the elections to the Social Security office in Longwy in 1947, cf Gérard Noiriél, Longwy, ..., *op. cit.*, pp. 355-358. The connection between Italian immigration and the communist vote was underlined early on by S. Bonnet, Ch. Santini, H. Barthelemy, "Appartenance politique et attitude religieuse dans l'émigration italienne en Lorraine sidérurgique", *Archives de sociologie des religions*, no. 13, 1962 (cf the English translation in Serge Bonnet, "Political Alignments and Religious Attitudes Within the Italian Immigration to the Metallurgical Districts of Lorraine", *Journal of Social History*, no. 2, Vol. 2, 1968, pp. 125-155).

³² Serge Bonnet, *Sociologie politique et religieuse de la Lorraine*, thèse d'Etat, Paris, 1972 (Cahiers de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, no. 181).

with children and young married couples;³³ less "conformist" evenings typical of the outings of young adult workers for the more modern cinemas in the centre of town. Marked out socially as a place of transgression, the cinema "naturally" became one of those activities whose function was to ease the transition from adolescent to adult life, in the same way as the social life surrounding cafes, bars, dances, sports events, factory clubs, and group outings operated. These consequent social distinctions traditionally opposed one generation to another, and within these generations and different social classes, the contrasts were increased by the ostentatious "consumption" of American films. Considered by the working class people we spoke to as a genre in itself, or rather as the cinematographic form *par excellence* (the one there were no doubts about), American cinema is in itself "Cinema", in contrast to French films in general, which were believed to be too boring, artificial or wordy, and so judged absolutely useless dramatically, if not simply dismissed as "non-cinema".³⁴

Confronted at the time of the Liberation, with what they willingly called a "revelation" (the advent of American films on French screens) these workers made their choices and justified them by constructing an essentially aesthetic distinction between American and French films. Cinema was essentially American: individual films were then discussed using a vocabulary "drawn" from the world of the factories and from the industrial universe in general, as if the good points about American films—their "efficiency", "technical skill", "performance", "construction", "beautifully well-done work", "great show"—were ways of expressing the modernity of the moment. The words used to praise the actors came from the same sources and had derogatory equivalents. I have heard how the use of professional categories such as "chômeur" ("unemployed person"), "garde réfectoire" ("canteen guard"), "manoeuvre" ("unskilled worker"), to refer to denigrated and degrading activities for skilled workers, served to characterise the skills of the worst actors, or even the films with which they were systematically identified.³⁵ In this way Humphrey Bogart found his exact opposite in the figure of Eddy Constantine (protagonist of the French series "Lemmy Caution"): real

³³ Michel Verret, *La Culture ouvrière*, Saint-Sébastien: ACL Edition, 1988, p. 129.

³⁴ The expression "American films" must be considered as an aesthetic rallying call, a watchword which played a real role in differentiating films for some people. In terms of "aesthetic differentiation", for these workers it played a role equivalent to the erudite notion of "cinéma d'auteur" for intellectuals. On the "discursive" construction of styles, see the example of the western in Jean-Louis Leutrat, *L'Alliance brisée, le western des années 1920*, Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1985, p. 17.

³⁵ Fabrice Montebello, "De la réception des films au cinéma des ouvriers", *Cinemas*, Montréal, no. 2-3, spring 1992, pp. 123-148.

"chômeur" of the detective film, a colourless "ersatz", a ridiculous pastiche, the incarnation of incompetence in films. We find then all kinds of justifications for what was considered implausible directing and artificial acting "It's all put on"; "It sounds wrong"; "It's badly made" (in the sense of "badly manufactured").³⁶

The comparison between the two cinemas (*Sainte-Anne* and *Cinéma des Familles*) which showed the most American films in the area, allows us to reconstruct the logic inherent in the different use of the films shown in each of the cinemas, a reflection of their status and their reputation in the neighbourhood. The first of them was situated in Herserange and clearly fulfilled the role of a local cinema aiming above all at children and families. The films shown there were generally less recent than those on offer in the cinemas at the centre of the general area. The fact that it was run by an association with its origins in the local parish led to its being known as the "priests cinema" by the working class audience. This was enough to get it characterised as naive and moralising, and to deny it any legitimacy as "serious cinema". ("You could send your children to the *Sainte-Anne* with your eyes shut"). On the other hand, at the *Cinéma des Familles*, which didn't really merit its name (elliptical working class pronunciation soon reduced it to the "fami", thus phonetically neutralising the social significance of the original), and where more American films were shown and seen than anywhere in the entire urban area, what counted was being together amongst friends, in a good atmosphere, where it was possible to have a laugh, a chat, something to eat, a smoke, to chat up the girls, all the while enjoying the exploits of the heroes on the screen. The memories of non-working class witnesses recall either the social characteristics of the cinema, sometimes with a hint of scorn, as in the case of a retired primary school teacher who spoke of a den of "riff-raff", or condemned the details of programmes she considered aesthetically inferior. The ex-president of a cine-club said: "at the *Cinéma des Familles*, the adventure film reigned (...) once I grew up, I didn't go there anymore".

³⁶ These popular judgments praising America and ridiculing French detective films as poor parodies, can also be found in some scholarly analysis of film criticism, cf. Jill Forbes, "The 'Série Noire'", Brian Rigby, Nicholas Hewitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-97. These opinions are similar to those assigned by Mass-Observation to Bolton workers in Great Britain in 1938, who preferred American films by far to national productions, and used to qualify the latter as "dull and lifeless" and the playing of the actors as "stiff and artificial". As for the American films, they were "slick, polished, fastmoving and often spectacular", and their actors "natural and lifelike". Cf. Jeffrey Richards and Dorothy Sheridan, *Mass-Observation at the movies*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1987, p. 39.

The analysis of the physical conditions in which the audience was received and the logic of social distinctions brings out differences between two cinemas that the statistical evidence seems to contradict. Of all the cinemas studied, these two do show, as a matter of fact, the largest proportion of American films, and both have the highest average audience for American film (cf. table IV). Detailed study of programming, added to information gathered from interviews, shows how real choices were made between films and how aesthetic distinctions were constructed, whereas the raw statistical evidence only reveals patterns of choice imposed by the trends of distribution. If we use, for example, one of the criteria used by Catholic observers of the time, such as the moral ratings of the CCCR, we can understand that for the workers it was a question of seeing at the *Cinéma des familles*, the least "pure" and "naive" films, the ones produced by Hollywood (if at random we take 1948 as our reference year, the borderline ratings 4a, 4bis, are by far the most common at the *Cinéma des Familles*). In the light of the individualised working class perceptions encountered in the interviews, and of our ethnographic observations, we can understand how far American films were seen to be from those with the most obvious French aesthetic characteristics ("long" and "talkative" pictures, melodramas without no action, often qualified as "women's films").³⁷ The search for "great American films" even took working people to other cinemas where American films were less frequently shown and also less successful (the *Palace* and above all the *Rex*). But the special relations they maintained with the owner of the *Cinéma des Familles* and the efforts made by the latter to project a majority of American films, were often

³⁷ For example in 1948, the cinema *Sainte-Anne* showed American films such as: *Le Chant de Bernadette* (*The Song of Bernadette*, Henri King, 1947, CCCR rating: 3), *Le Ciel peut attendre* (*Heaven Can Wait*, Ernst Lubitsch, 1946, 4), *Les Clés du royaume* (*The Keys of the Kingdom*, Tohn Stahl, 1946, 3 bis), *Deux sœurs vivaient en paix* (*The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer*, Irving Reis, 1948, 3 bis), *Le Fantôme de l'opéra* (*The Phantom of the Opera*, Arthur Lubin, 1943, 3 bis), *La Soeur de son valet* (*His Butler's Sister*, Frank Borzage, 1947, 3 bis), *La Vie privée d'Elisabeth d'Angleterre* (*The Private Lives of Elisabeth and Essex*, Michael Curtiz, 1941, 4), *Le Cygne noir* (*The Black Swann*, Henry King, 1947, 3 bis), etc.. In the same time, at the *Cinéma des Familles*, people could see, *Arizona* (*Arizona*, Wesley Ruggles, 1947, 3 bis), *La Rue rouge* (*Scarlett Street*, Fritz Lang, 1947, 4 bis) *Deux mains dans la nuit* (*The Spiral Staircase*, Robert Siodmak, 1947, 4 bis), *Révolte à bord* (*Two Years Before the Mast*, John Farrow, 1947, 3 bis) *Double énigme* (*Dark Mirror*, Robert Siodmak, 1947, 4), *Evadé de l'enfer* (*Angel on My Shoulder*, Archie Mayo, 1947, 4) *Le Triomphe de Tarzan* (*Tarzan's Triumph*, William Thiele, 1947, 3) *Les Raisins de la colère* (*The Grapes of Wrath*, John Ford, 1947, 3 bis), *Deux nigauds démobilisés* (*Buck Privates Come Home*, Charles Barton, 1948, 3), *Le Grand sommeil* (*The Big Sleep*, Howard Hawks, 1947, 4 bis), etc. See also Table V.

mentioned by the workers interviewed to justify the originality of their choices.³⁸

Cinema and working class culture

Apart from the generation differences which normally "opposed" the methods and thinking of parents to those of their children, it is necessary to emphasise how for another large section of the local population, Italian immigrants, a cultural "gulf" now separated the parents, often of peasant origin, illiterate, uprooted and employed in the most menial heavy labour, from their children who were born and schooled in France, and so were more able to get "skilled" jobs. Even more fundamentally, the symbolic universe of the people concerned found itself transformed: peasant beliefs, superstitions, local dialects, all kinds of a half-pagan religiousness that French priests, like Italian ones, had difficulty in grasping, were generally derided by children who had become young adults in the new environment. The gap became even wider when they started to go back to the land of their birth at the beginning of the fifties, visiting cousins, uncles, and aunts who had remained in the peninsula.

Their accounts talk of a "backward" society, characterised by shortages, scarcity, technical backwardness (villages "without running water, gas or electricity"), and are ironic about habits or customs considered "out of date" or old-fashioned, particularly in matters sexual. The illusions at the heart of the immigrant experience (of the temporary departure, of continuing to live "here" the way we lived "there" ...) and the relativisation which derived from it, eventually of course favoured adapting to (and accepting) the new host country and its "ways and customs".³⁹ The later a child arrived in a family, the less he or she tended to reproduce the behavioural structures typical of the society of origin. For all that, if an objective comparison is to be made between the peasant societies of northern or central Italy, at the beginning of the century, and the organisation of working class society in the North of Lorraine after the Second World War, we must not forget the strong constraints which continued to weigh on people in a working class environment. Patterns of behaviour from the past endured or were even revived, such as sexual segregation at work, the most striking evidence

³⁸ Fabrice Montebello, "Usages sociaux et usages populaires du cinéma, la question des amateurs", *Iris*, no. 17, (forthcoming).

³⁹ Abdelmalek Sayad, *L'Immigration ou les paradoxes de l'altérité*, Editions Universitaires, Bruxelles: De Boek Université, 1991.

of the structural logic inherent in working class culture, space and work.⁴⁰

Social tolerance and the logic of transgression which characterised the beginning of working life and adulthood were therefore neither uniform, nor unilateral. If it was easy for young adult workers born in France to build their world "against" that of their parents, the same cannot be said for their female counterparts, who were more subject to family control and whose outings to dances, or to the cinema, were limited in space (mostly, they were not allowed to go outside the neighbourhood, so the space of childhood remained as a mark of immaturity and subordination), and in time (girls were allowed go out mainly at the week-end, and practically never during the rest of the week): parents feared finding their daughters pregnant. Boys meanwhile challenged society by making a "free and libertarian use of their time",⁴¹ overturning the order of "priorities" in the week, turning days off into holidays and the moments when the family traditionally went out together to the cinema, like Sundays, into days devoted to other leisure activities (dances, sporting events etc.).

The ostentatious appropriation and consumption of American films can be seen then as one of the possible responses to the fracture which separated the old world from the new one,⁴² the uprooted peasants from their "skilled worker" children, the country from the comforts of town, the use of bastardised dialects from the need to master the language of the host country, the submission of a disorganised proletariat, with few rights and little protection, from the situation of workers "who stuck together" in the mass party organisations and the unions.⁴³ By allowing them to see the world through the eyes of the cinema, the aesthetics of "American films" allowed these workers to "think out" the rupture and as a result to bear it.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Olivier Schwartz, *Le Monde privé des ouvriers, hommes et femmes du Nord*, Paris: PUF, 1990.

⁴¹ Pierre Bourdieu et Jean-Claude Passeron, *Les Héritiers*, Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1964, p. 50.

⁴² An equivalent point of view about immigrants can be seen at the beginning of the century in the United States: Roy Rosenzweig, *"Eight Hours for What We Will", Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920*, Cambridge, New-York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 196-197.

⁴³ Expression of a "successful" "integration"? The fact remains that there were no projections of Italian films in the original version in Longwy in those years, unlike the case of Egyptian films in arabic, brought in for North-African workers of the region; who were less numerous and of more recent immigration.

⁴⁴ Cf. Fabrice Montebello, "Problèmes d'histoire du public, le cinéma comme esthétique du pauvre", *op. cit.*

If "American modernity" therefore had any influence at all on audiences, it was not to be found in a dumb and envious contemplation of the outward signs of consumerist wealth and domestic "bliss" which swept across the cinema screens of the time (cars, TV sets, washing-machines, refrigerators ...), as the intellectualist prejudices mentioned above would have us believe, but rather in the social use of American films, that is to say their appropriation within the construction of a specific working class identity, that of second generation "Italians".⁴⁵ What was modern for them was to go to the cinema to see American films.

For all that, the act of going to the cinema cannot be understood without being tied in to the overall picture of working class social activities, that is to say all the other ways of socialising which governed collective life, whether at work, on the factory floor, in cafés, dances and sports events, song contests, parties, strikes ... It is enough to mention the reasons for their appropriation of the actor Humphrey Bogart, the absolute incarnation of the American cinema, to perceive the complex system of relationships working within the sphere of working class pleasures.

We would in fact understand nothing of the admiration with which Humphrey Bogart was regarded by the group of workers among whom we conducted our interviews, if we did not first reduce the actor—that is to say the character he embodied in films as well as the actor himself, in the logic of the "double contamination" described by Edgar Morin⁴⁶—to the ideal-type of all-male ladies man embodied to perfection in the notion of *barbeau* (the ponce or pimp). The *barbeau* is not so much here the pimp in the sense that the Larousse dictionary defines him while still attributing the word to "popular" language, so much as the womaniser who seduces all women with disconcerting ease and without being "naturally" handsome. Thus he personifies in the domain of seduction all the social qualities required within the working class social situation. In particular he embodies "ease", that particular quality, distributed socially but unequally, including within the popular classes themselves, which can be defined in the sense used by Pierre Bourdieu as the "indifference to the objectivizing eyes of others which neutralizes their power".⁴⁷ To move with ease means knowing how to adjust one's

⁴⁵ Gérard Noiriel, *Longwy, immigrés et prolétaires*, *op. cit.*, and by the same author, *Les Immigrés italiens en Lorraine pendant l'entre-deux-guerres; du rejet xénophobe aux stratégies d'intégration*, in Pierre Milza, *Les Italiens en France de 1914 à 1940*, Ecole française de Rome, 1986, pp. 609-632.

⁴⁶ Edgar Morin, *Les Stars*, Paris: Seuil, 1972 (Minuit 1956), pp. 36-64.

⁴⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, "Remarques provisoires sur la perception sociale du corps", *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, no. 14, avril 1977, pp. 51-54.

voice and place one's body—essential attributes for these sons of Italian immigrants who have to reconstruct themselves to get over the linguistic stigma and the peasant gawkiness of the parents, and absorb the national characteristics of the host country. Only in this way can they be accepted by their "mates" in the working world.

There is in fact no domain in which this working class *savoir-vivre* does not manifest itself, whether at the cinema, in the factory, in the family, in the café, in politics, or again at dances. Dancing, because it is a matter of placing the body in a precise way in a precise geographical spot, expresses marvellously all that depends on inherited ways of moving and acting in a given social space. At the "dancing evenings", as they were called by the regional papers of the time, "knowing how to speak" ("not like those who need to down three beers before they can get talking to a girl") and "knowing how to dance" ("not like those who dance like peasants, once they get to the end of the room, they turn around") are the indispensable qualities involved in being presentable ("to cut a good figure", "*jouer les barbeaux*"), notably in view of starting up an affair. The absence of these attributes condemned workers who were a little awkward, and "who had nothing in their heads", the ones who were embarrassed and shy, to go to country dances, which were seen as pathetic by the others, places where their social destiny was bound to "folk who are lower than us, who have really nothing". The last remark expresses less the scorn of some workers for the "lumpen proletariat" (in the original sense of the word "proletariat in rags", that is to say deprived of everything) than the spontaneous perception of an objective position held within the social world. So it is this vision as a whole we must bear in mind when we hear these workers saying of Humphrey Bogart that he represented "the real barbeau". This understanding of an implied aesthetic judgement is confirmed when we think of the mixture of cold intelligence and of scepticism, almost cynicism, which characterised all the roles played by Bogart, and which fitted in with so many of the attitudes of mistrust typical of the popular classes, along the lines of "they won't get me".⁴⁸

Consciously thought of as a period of "good times" before the constraints of married life,⁴⁹ the leisure activities of young people who entered working life around 1945 from the age of fourteen on, offered within their social world alternatives between, on the one hand, ascetic strategies of social climbing or devotion to a cause (as in the case of party or union militants), and on the other, drifting of all kinds (going too far,

⁴⁸ Richard Hoggart, *La Culture du pauvre*, Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1970 (*The Uses of Literacy*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1957).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

hanging around, laziness at work and the ultimate kind of social debasement that alcoholism represented). And there was also the "shady" world—"shady" because subdued and little understood—of those last immigrants who had arrived without their wives and who worked from one "hell to another", with the sole objective of sending money back to the family at home.⁵⁰ At the heart of this universe of measured "enjoyments", and in opposition to the constraints of factory work and to all the varieties of social control, we find strategies for protecting the body against all the likely risks (work accidents, physical degradation, fatigue, exhaustion ...), and the symbolic compensation provided by the imaginary transfer of the self to the cinema screen. As one ex-steelworker, now in early retirement, put it, "we were cinema fans, not like some of the others who were only fit to work like madmen at the factory".

Hollywood films have often been presented as cultural sub-products—responding to a logic of entertainment, ideological fascination or commercial profit. Yet our local observations reveal a workers' audience specifically adapting these same American films to its own purposes and imbuing them with a variety of different "meanings". These films were at the crossroads of a lot of different uses: transgression, aesthetic assertion, the expression of a specific working-class identity and of a relationship with the world seen as a split-off from that of parents, carriers of social modernity. Different uses of the cinema that could be summed up as follows: Many of the social uses of the cinema listed here involved the diffusion of symbolic forms, which once reappropriated by the popular classes allowed them to think out the new social world and position themselves in it. Apart from the basic questions this study raises for the historian of cinema audiences (such as those relating to the success of films considered minor at the time, turned by critics into masterpieces of the 7th Art years later),⁵¹ we can understand in particular how workers who voted "communist" could be refusing, in the admiration they felt for American films, the conception of the world implied by their political allegiances. In 1950, a shrewd observer of the CNC noted: *"In the suburbs, in spite of the well-known political opinions of the majority of the population, the share of American films increases year after year. It is the same trend in the East (...) and in the region of*

⁵⁰ Abdelmalek Sayad, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁵¹ Thus some films were part of the aesthetic world of workers long before they were recognised as masterpieces of the 7th Art (in particular certain westerns and "films noirs"). They raise the question of the transformation of a commercial product into a cultural one.

Lille (...). The region of Marseille is also showing a clearer and clearer preference for American films".⁵²

This snapshot of the cinematographic geography of France corresponds very accurately to the traditional division of the country between the industrial north and the "rural" south, following a line from Le Havre to Marseille. It also corresponds to some of the densest geographical areas of communist sympathies.⁵³ It is a strange paradox that this love for Hollywood films, denounced at the time as brain washing devices, represented for the social classes with the least privileged cultural heritage, an exceptional means for getting to know the world.

⁵² *Bulletin d'information du CNC*, no. 14, juin-juillet-août 1950.

⁵³ Jean-Paul Molinari, *Les Ouvriers communistes, sociologie de l'adhésion ouvrière au PCF*, Thonon-les-Bains: L'Albaron, 1991.

TABLE I

Percentage of the total number of spectators according to film nationality, in France and in the different regions defined by the CNC, from 1946 to 1950. (in bold, the favourable ratio of American films over French films, and increase of the total number of spectators from one year to another). Source: CNC.

	1946-47	1947-48	1948-49	1949-50	1950
PARIS					
French	42,79%	41,80%	41,30%	45,72%	47,72%
American	47,53%	48,91%	44,75%	41,52%	41,00%
Total	107.132.742	93.020.104	84.506.256	81.544.850	78.052.430
SUBURBS					
French	54,25%	48,32%	44,77%	44,51%	47,38%
American	35,00%	42,05%	42,30%	41,08%	40,00%
Total	47.834.082	43.726.878	40.954.940	38.182.771	38.365.546
GRP					
French	63,96%	56,82%	51,98%	49,05%	51,26%
American	25,68%	32,16%	35,24%	36,77%	35,16%
Total	66.903.662	58.856.445	59.119/503	56.423.803	57.245.555
STRASBOURG					
French	51,91%	38,03%	34,07%	31,75%	34,42%
American	41,35%	50,81%	51,96%	52,06%	51,72%
Total	23.169.692	29.069.445	28.885.988	27.862.963	28.162.017
BORDEAUX					
French	55,91%	52,27%	50,27%	48,89%	50,57%
American	33,86%	36,65%	38,30%	37,50%	37,65%
Total	38.683.774	39.970.856	38.081.438	35.844.197	35.634.769
LILLE					
French	49,05%	40,48%	37,19%	34,02%	37,35%
American	42,31%	46,34%	49,51%	50,93%	50,24%
Total	38.632.744	39.697.316	39.031.944	36.985.623	37.786.250
LYON					
French	55,56%	49,72%	47,47%	45,69%	48,55%
American	34,81%	40,77%	38,22%	40,27%	39,05%
Total	48.488.680	47.812.780	46.632.126	44.527.216	43.892.891
MARSEILLE					
French	44,13%	36,46%	34,43%	36,52%	37,35%
American	47,00%	52,29%	53,71%	49,93%	50,01%
Total	53.544.311	49.555.874	49.031.293	48.488.137	47.992.291

FRANCE					
French	51,16%	45,63%	43,11%	42,98%	45,17%
American	39,26%	43,82%	43,76%	43,04%	42,38%
Total	419.389.996	401,709.698	386.243.488	369.859.560	367.131.749

TABLE II

Percentage of the total number of spectators according to film nationality, in France, in the region of Strasbourg and in Longwy, from 1946 to 1950. Source: CNC.

	FRANCE	STRASBOURG	LONGWY
1946-47			
French	51,16%	51,79%	57,29%
American	39,26%	41,35%	38,33%
English	6,36%	4,56%	2,93%
Italian	0,93%	0,80%	0,32%
Others	2,29%	1,50%	1,12%
1947-48			
French	45,63%	38,03%	48,60%
American	43,82%	50,81%	44,01%
English	4,30%	4,71%	3,60%
Italian	3,22%	3,34%	2,01%
Others	3,03%	3,10%	1,79%
1948-49			
French	43,11%	34,07%	35,98%
American	43,76%	51,96%	52,31%
English	4,40%	4,70%	4,18%
Italian	4,24%	4,38%	3,97%
Others	4,69	4,88%	3,54%
1949-50			
French	42,98%	31,75%	33,77%
American	43,04%	52,06%	52,13%
English	4,93%	5,26%	4,44%
Italian	5,65%	6,10%	4,80%
Others	3,40%	4,83%	4,84%
1950			
French	45,17%	34,42%	32,56%
American	42,38%	51,72%	50,88%
English	4,62%	4,31%	5,47%
Italian	5,00%	5,64%	6,07%
Others	2,83%	3,91%	5,00%

TABLE III

Percentage of the total number of films released and of spectators, in France and in Longwy, from 1946 to 1950, for American and French films. Source: CNC et Hubert-Lacombe (1986).

	FRANCE		LONGWY	
	FRENCH FILMS			
	films % total	Spect. % total	films % total	Spect. % total
1946	37,10%	51,16%	56,38%	57,29%
1947	23,46%	45,63%	51,05%	48,60%
1948	22,33%	43,11%	36,71%	35,98%
1949	23,75%	42,43%	35,52%	33,77%
1950			33,38%	32,56%
	AMERICAN FILMS			
	films % total	Spect. % total	films % total	Spect. % total
1946	49,77%	39,26%	39,36%	38,33%
1947	59,20%	43,62%	41,17%	44,01%
1948	55,58%	43,76%	50,04%	52,31%
1949	52,49%	44,54%	47,88%	52,13%
1950	46,09%	50,88%		

even 47%

TABLE IV

Number of films and number of corresponding spectators, according to film nationality and year, for the ten cinemas of the Longwy district from 1945 to 1950 (first according to the year, then to the cinemas). Source: CNC.

1) YEARS

1945	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
Sainte-Anne	17	9081	13	10130						
Nouv-Palace	37	32136	15	14771	1	970	1	945		
Eden	52	34102	9	7082	3	2018	1	561		
Gour-Cinéma									1	940
Rex	52	88802	16	32326	1	753				
Palace	22	51397	19	40233	4	7317	1	4780	5	16177
Parisiana	43	29766	14	9380	1	732	1	976	3	2170
Ciné-Réhon										
Jeanne-d'Arc										
Familles	13	17330	20	34512	1	1421				
Total	236	262614	106	148434	11	13211	4	7262	9	19287
Moyenne		1113		1400		1201		1815		2143
1946	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
Sainte-Anne	24	12863	32	25305	1	650			1	794
Nouv-Palace	26	29411	8	11694	3	5133	1	800	1	1325
Eden	20	12004	20	13873	1	732				
Gour-Cinéma										
Rex	38	56260	24	27457						
Palace										
Parisiana	20	12023	23	14603	1	417			2	673
Ciné-Réhon	31	19571	4	2177	1	330				
Jeanne-d'Arc										
Familles										
Total	159	142132	111	95109	7	7262	1	800	4	2792
Moyenne		894		857		857		800		698

1947	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
Sainte-Anne	18	10837	26	20756	6	5219	3	2472	2	1364
Nouv-Palace	28	30777	30	36912	1	1608	1	1254	1	1093
Eden	38	17573	6	4108	3	1017				
Gour-Cinéma										
Rex	58	88464	30	34408	5	2572			5	4342
Palace										
Parisiana	56	28338	48	28513	2	821				
Ciné-Réhon	33	20185	4	2434	1	546				
Jeanne-d'Arc	4	2298	8	4132						
Familles	8	8090	44	55834	3	3480	3	4846	1	804
Total	243	206562	196	187097	21	15263	7	8572	9	7603
Moyenne		850		955		727		1225		845
1948	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
Sainte-Anne	17	12025	30	28539	8	6685			1	566
Nouv-Palace	24	24439	22	18947	4	3363	2	1981	8	8878
Eden	32	13099	15	8759	1	564	5	2108	1	400
Gour-Cinéma										
Rex	33	52460	36	36261	2	2893	3	3033	1	574
Palace	16	38715	30	69759	1	1618	2	5662	2	3039
Parisiana	32	18577	48	23085	2	1661	2	586	4	2339
Ciné-Réhon	4	2532								
Jeanne-d'Arc										
Familles	5	5710	43	58235	3	2706	4	5140	1	694
Total	163	167557	224	243585	21	19490	18	18510	18	16490
Moyenne		1028		1087		928		1028		916
1949	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
Sainte-Anne	13	7544	36	30611	2	1187	2	1681		
Nouv-Palace	20	20889	30	29986	2	1957	2	1932	4	3956
Eden	61	27343	46	15962	19	6998	11	3232	7	2327
Gour-Cinéma	28	25514	20	18277	3	1803				
Rex	34	47954	47	42635	6	6918	6	4008	8	7141
Palace	17	33246	37	85607	1	1919	3	5439	3	7452
Parisiana	49	25957	51	25422	5	3343	4	1306	4	1880
Ciné-Réhon										
Jeanne-d'Arc										
Familles	5	5748	39	51244	1	1424	8	9998	5	5109
Total	227	194195	306	299744	39	25549	36	27596	31	27865
Moyenne		855		980		655		767		899

1949	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
Sainte-Anne	13	7544	36	30611	2	1187	2	1681		
Nouv-Palace	20	20889	30	29986	2	1957	2	1932	4	3956
Eden	61	27343	46	15962	19	6998	11	3232	7	2327
Gour-Cinéma	28	25514	20	18277	3	1803				
Rex	34	47954	47	42635	6	6918	6	4008	8	7141
Palace	17	33246	37	85607	1	1919	3	5439	3	7452
Parisiana	49	25957	51	25422	5	3343	4	1306	4	1880
Ciné-Réhon										
Jeanne-d'Arc										
Familles	5	5748	39	51244	1	1424	8	9998	5	5109
Total	227	194195	306	299744	39	25549	36	27596	31	27865
Moyenne		855		980		655		767		899

1950	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
Sainte-Anne	15	6242	36	24532	6	3097			2	1092
Nouv-Palace	21	14675	30	28685	5	3190	2	1777	5	4248
Eden	47	12745	63	28749	10	2065	12	4300	22	6953
Gour-Cinéma	22	16845	21	21880	5	3918	2	2092	3	2352
Rex	40	40043	35	29195	7	6671	6	6427	8	5387
Palace	28	52806	30	71998	3	5311	3	7688		
Parisiana	34	12576	52	18001	10	2808	3	1385	7	2186
Ciné-Réhon										
Jeanne-d'Arc										
Familles	11	10758	34	37402	1	960	9	7437	3	3378
Total	218	166690	301	260442	47	28020	37	31106	50	25596
Moyenne		765		865		596		841		512

2) CINEMAS

Sainte-Anne	FRENCH		AMERICAN		ENGLISH		ITALIAN		OTHERS	
1945	17	9081	13	10130						
1946	24	12863	32	25305	1	650			1	794
1947	18	10837	26	20756	6	5219	3	2472	2	1364
1948	17	12025	30	28539	8	6685			1	566
1949	13	7544	36	30611	2	1187	2	1681		
1950	15	6242	36	24532	6	3097			2	1092
Total	104	58592	173	139873	23	16838	5	4153	6	3816
Moyenne		563		808		732		830		636

Nouv-Palace	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1945	37 32136	15 14771	1 970	1 945	
1946	26 29411	8 11694	3 5133	1 800	1 1325
1947	28 30777	30 36912	1 1608	1 1254	1 1093
1948	24 24439	22 18947	4 3363	2 1981	8 8878
1949	20 20889	30 29986	2 1957	2 1932	4 3956
1950	21 14675	30 28685	5 3190	2 1777	5 4248
Total	156 152327	135 140995	16 16221	9 8689	19 19500
Moyenne	976	1044	1014	965	1026
Eden	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1945	52 34102	9 7082	3 2018	1 561	1 940
1946	20 12004	20 13873	1 732		
1947	38 17573	6 4108	3 1017		
1948	32 13099	15 8759	1 564	5 2108	1 400
1949	61 27343	46 15962	19 6998	11 3232	7 2327
1950	47 12745	63 28749	10 2065	12 4300	22 6953
Total	250 226866	159 78533	37 13394	29 10201	31 10620
Moyenne	467	494	362	352	343
Gour-Cinéma	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1949	28 25514	20 18277	3 1803		
1950	22 16845	21 21880	5 3918	2 2092	3 2352
Total	50 42359	41 40157	8 5721		
Moyenne	847	979	715	1046	784
Rex	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1945	52 88802	16 32326	1 753		
1946	38 56260	24 27457			
1947	58 88464	30 34408	5 2572		5 4342
1948	33 52460	36 36261	2 2893	3 3033	1 574
1949	34 47954	47 42635	6 6918	6 4008	8 7141
1950	40 40043	35 29195	7 6671	6 6427	8 5387
Total	255 373983	188 202282	21 19807	15 13468	22 17444
Moyenne	1467	1076	943	898	793
Palace	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1945	22 51397	19 40233	4 7317	1 4780	5 16177
1948	16 38715	30 69759	1 1618	2 5662	2 3039
1949	17 33246	37 85607	1 1919	3 5439	3 7452
1950	28 52806	30 71998	3 5311	3 7688	
Total	83 176164	116 267597	9 16165	9 23569	10 26668
Moyenne	2122	2307	1796	2619	2667

Parisiana	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1945	43 29766	14 9380	1 732	1 976	3 2170
1946	20 12023	23 14603	1 417		2 673
1947	56 28338	48 28513	2 821		
1948	32 18577	48 23085	2 1661	2 586	4 2339
1949	49 25957	51 25422	5 3343	4 1306	4 1880
1950	34 12576	52 18001	10 2808	3 1385	7 2186
Total	234 127237	236 119004	21 9782	10 4253	20 9248
Moyenne	544	504	466	425	462
Ciné-Réhon	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1946	31 19571	4 2177	1 330		
1947	33 20185	4 2434	1 546		
1948	4 2532				
Total	68 42288	8 4611	2 876		
Moyenne	622	576	438		
Jeanne-d'Arc	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1947	4 2298	8 4132			
Total					
Moyenne	574	516			
Familles	FRENCH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	ITALIAN	OTHERS
1945	13 17330	20 34512	1 1421		
1947	8 8090	44 55834	3 3480	3 4846	1 804
1948	5 5710	43 58235	3 2706	4 5140	1 694
1949	5 5748	39 51244	1 1424	8 9998	5 5109
1950	11 10758	34 37402	1 960	9 7437	3 3378
Total	42 47636	180 237227	9 9991	24 27421	10 9985
Moyenne	1134	1318	1110	1143	999

LONGWY	FRENCH	AMERICAN
General total	1246	1.139.750
Average		915
		1244
		1.234.411
		992

TABLE V

100 films of the fifties extracted at random from the diaries of A.G. and A.M., metal-workers and cinema lovers from Longwy, born in 1928 and 1929. The year indicated is that of first release in France.

A.G.

- Scarface* (*Scarface*, Howard Hawks, 1932, USA).
L'Appel de la forêt (*Call of the Wild*, William Wellman, 1935, USA).
La Grande illusion, Jean Renoir, 1937, Fr.
La Fille du puisatier, Marcel Pagnol, 1940, Fr.
Qu'elle était verte ma vallée (*How Green Was My Valley*, John Ford, 1940, USA).
Ne le criez pas sur les toits, Daniel Normand, 1943, Fr.
L'Odyssée du docteur Wassel (*The Story of Doctor Wassel*, Cecil B. De Mille, 1944, USA).
A chaque aube je meurs (*Each Dawn I Die*, William Keighley, 1945, USA).
Aventure en Birmanie (*Objective Burma!* Raoul Walsh, 1945, USA).
Le Grand sommeil (*The Big Sleep*, John Huston, 1947, USA).
La Charge fantastique (*They Died with Their Boots on*, Raoul Walsh, 1947, USA).
Pour qui sonne le glas (*From Whom the Bells Tolls*, Sam Wood 1947, USA).
Le Trésor de la Sierra Madre (*Treasure of Sierra Madre*, John Huston, 1948, USA).
Key largo (*Key Largo*, John Huston, 1948, USA).
Dédée d'Anvers, Yves Allégret, 1948, Fr.
Pilote du diable (*Chain Lightning*, Stuart Heisler, 1949, USA).
La Flèche brisée (*Broken Arrow*, Delmer Daves, 1949, USA).
Les Bas fonds de Frisco (*Thieves' Highway*, Jules Dassin, 1949, USA).
La Femme à abattre (*The Enforcer*, Robert Burks, 1950, USA).
Fort invincible (*Only the Valiant*, Gordon Douglas, 1950, USA).
La Flèche et le flambeau (*The Flame and the Arrow*, Jacques Tourneur, 1950, USA).
L'Inconnu du Nord-Express (*Stranger on a Train*, Alfred Hitchcock, 1951, USA).
L'Homme tranquille (*The Quiet Man*, John Ford, 1951, USA).
Quand les tambours s'arrêteront (*Apache Drums*, Hugo Frégonèse, 1951, USA).
Le Jour où la terre s'arrêta (*The Day the Earth Stood Still*, Robert Wise, 1951, USA).
Viva Zapata (*Viva Zapata*, Elia Kazan, 1952, USA).
Les Neiges du Kilimandjaro (*Snows of Kilimandjaro*, Henry King, 1952, USA).
Le Train sifflera trois fois (*High Noon*, Fred Zinneman, 1952, USA).
L'Homme des vallées perdues (*Shane*, Georges Stevens, 1953, USA).
Fenêtre sur cour (*Rear Window*, Alfred Hitchcock, 1954, USA).
Du plomb pour l'inspecteur (*Pushover*, Richard Quine, 1954, USA).
La Comtesse aux pieds nus (*The Barefoot Contessa*, Joseph Mankiewicz, 1954, USA).
Le Mouton à cinq pattes, Henri Verneuil, 1954, Fr.
Razzia sur la Chnouff, Henri Decoin, 1954, Fr.
Le Crime était presque parfait (*Dial M for Murder*, Alfred Hitchcock, 1954, USA).
L'Homme du Kentucky (*The Kentuckian*, Burt Lancaster, 1955, USA).

- Honoré de Marseille*, Maurice Regamey, 1956, Fr.
Douze hommes en colère (*Twelve Angry Men*, Sidney Lumet, 1956, USA).
Le Temps de la colère (*Between Heaven and Hell*, Richard Fleisher, 1956, USA).
L'Homme qui en savait trop (*The Man Who Knew Too Much*, Alfred Hitchcock, 1956, USA).
Moby Dick (*Moby Dick*, John Huston, 1956, USA).
Écrit sur le vent (*Written on the Wind*, Douglas Sirk, 1956, USA).
Si tous les gars du monde, Christian Jaque, 1956, Fr.
L'Adieu aux armes (*A Farewell to Arms*, Charles Vidor, 1957, USA).
Le Grand chantage (*Sweet Smell of Success*, Alexander Mackendrick, 1957, USA).
Les Dix commandements (*The Ten Commandments*, Cecil B. De Mille, 1957, USA).
Orgueil et passion (*The Pride and the Passion*, Stanley Kramer, 1957, USA).
Les Vikings (*The Vikings*, Richard Fleisher, 1958, USA).
En cas de malheur, Claude Autant-Lara, 1958, Fr.
La Mort aux trousses (*North By Northwest*, Alfred Hitchcock 1959, USA).

A.M.

- L'Impasse tragique* (*The Dark Corner*, Henry Hathaway, 1947, USA).
La Ville abandonnée (*Yellow Sky*, William Wellman, 1948, USA).
Montana (*Montana*, Rey Enright, 1949, USA).
Marqué au fer (*Branded*, Rudolph Maté, 1950, USA).
Colt 45 (*Colt 45*, Edwin L. Marin, 1950, USA).
Les Flèches brûlées (*Flaming Feather*, Ray Enright, 1951, USA).
Au pays de la peur (*The Wild North*, Andrew Narton, 1951, USA).
Les Affameurs (*Bend of the River*, Anthony Mann, 1951, USA).
La Vallée de la vengeance (*Vengeance Valley*, Richard Thorpe, 1951, USA).
Le Sentier de l'enfer (*Warpath*, Byron Haskin, 1951, USA).
Les Conquêteurs de Carson City (*Carson City*, André de Toth, 1952, USA).
Dallas ville frontière (*Dallas*, Stuart Heisler, 1952, USA).
La Dernière flèche (*Pony Soldier*, Joseph M. Newman, 1952, USA).
Le Trésor des Caraïbes (*Carribbean*, Edward Ludwig, 1952, USA).
Le Retour au paradis (*Return to Paradise*, Mark Robson, 1953, USA).
Le Port des passions (*Thunder Bay*, Anthony Mann, 1953, USA).
Le Cirque infernal (*Battle Circus*, Richard Brooks, 1953, USA).
Le Pirate des sept mers (*Raiders of the Seven Seas*, Sidney Salkow, 1953, USA).
Révolte au Mexique (*Wings of the Hawk*, Bud Boetticher, 1953, USA).
La Charge sur la rivière rouge (*Charge at the Feather River*, Gordon Douglas, 1953, USA).
Le Vagabond des mers (*The Master of Ballantrae*, William Keighley, 1953, USA).
La Ville sous le joug (*The Vanquished*, Edward Ludwig, 1953, USA).
La Piste des éléphants (*Elephant Walk*, William Dieterle, 1954, USA).
Les Jeunes années d'une reine (*Mädchenjahre einer Königin*, Ernst Marischka, 1954, D).
L'Homme de la plaine (*The Man from Laramie*, Anthony Mann, 1954, USA).

- Ce n'est qu'un au revoir* (*The Long Gray Line*, John Ford, 1954, USA).
La Brigade héroïque (*Saskatchewan*, Raoul Walsh, 1954, USA).
La Lance brisée (*Broken Lance*, Edward Dmytryk, 1954, USA).
La Flamme pourpre (*The Purple Plain*, Robert Parrish, 1954, USA).
A l'ombre des potences (*Run for Lover*, Nicholas Ray, 1955, USA).
La Guerre privée du major Benson (*The Private War of Major Benson*, Jerry Hopper, 1955, USA).
La Furieuse chevauchée (*Tall Man Riding*, Lesley Selander, 1955, USA).
Horizons lointains (*The Far Horizons*, Rudolph Maté, 1955, USA).
Collines brûlantes (*The Burning Hills*, Stuart Heisler, 1956, USA).
Je reviens de l'enfer (*Toward the Unknown*, Mervyn Le Roy, 1956, USA).
Le Mariage est pour demain (*Tennessee's Partner*, Allan Dwan, 1956, USA).
Un pitre au pensionnat (*You're never too young*, Norman Taurog, 1956, USA).
Les Ailes de l'espérance (*Battle Hymn*, Douglas Sirk, 1956, USA).
Les Années sauvages (*Rawhide Years*, Rudolph Maté, 1956, USA).
L'Homme de San Carlos (*Walk the Proud Land*, Jesse Hibbs, 1956, USA).
L'Armada sauvage (*Huk*, John Barnwell, 1956, USA).
La Prisonnière du désert (*The Searchers*, John Ford, 1956, USA).
La Dernière caravane (*The Last Wagon*, Delmer Daves, 1956, USA).
Les Lavandières du Portugal, Pierre Gaspard-Huit, 1957, Fr.
Tension à Rock City (*Tension at Table Rock*, Ch. M. Warren, 1957, USA).
L'Esclave libre (*Band of Angels*, Raoul Walsh, 1957, USA).
Le Survivant des monts lointains (*Night Passage*, James Neilson, 1957, USA).
La Poursuite fantastique (*Dragoon Wells Massacre*, Harold Schuster, 1957, USA).
La Vallée de l'or noir (*Campbell's Kingdom*, Ralph Thomas, 1957, GB).
L'Héritage de la colère (*Money, Women and Guns*, R.H. Bartlett, 1959, USA).