

## FOREWORD TO THE 2004 EDITION

*By Dudley Andrew*

### I.

IN THE TOUCHING foreword with which Jean Renoir graced this translation of *What is Cinema?* thirty-five years ago, he conjures up civilization's murky past and its murkier future. When history has had its devastating way, he writes—when noisy people, problems, and events have eroded and passed through the “sieve” of memory into oblivion—there will still remain those rock-hard formulations of great poets, which outlast even the subjects that occasioned their verse. Bazin's essays are such gems.

Bazin is indeed cinema's poet laureate, or better, its griot. Full of praise poems and aphorisms, his essays emblazon cinema's history and its possibilities in lapidary language that remains unmatched in both precision and luminescence. Yet Bazin would have laughed at this precious gemological metaphor, as his Preface to *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* makes clear. The bulk of what he had produced came out in newspapers and pamphlets, he said, useful mainly to fuel the fireplace. “The history of criticism being already such a minor thing, that of a particular critic ought to interest no one, certainly not the critic himself except as an exercise in humility.” Yet in the last year of his life he sifted through the nearly three thousand items he had written for publication in order to find those key pieces (sixty-five of them) that

### *What is Cinema?*

signaled something larger than the particular exigency under which they were penned. Each selection addresses the question which—in homage to Sartre's great essay on literature—he posed as title to his four-part collection: "What is Cinema?"

Was it this presumptuous title that tempted Glen Gosling, an editor at the University of California Press, to envisage an English translation of Bazin? He had been looking to follow up Rudolf Arnheim's *Film as Art*, which he had brought out in 1957. Gosling worked out of the Los Angeles office, where he often ran into Hugh Gray, who was on *Film Quarterly's* editorial staff. Gray had been a scriptwriter in both England and America before he began teaching aesthetics at UCLA, a position that included service with *Film Quarterly*. It was his knowledge of Bazin's writings and of Bazin's reputation in France that led to the project. A generation older than Bazin, Gray nevertheless shared his philosophical orientation, evident in the theological defense he makes in his introduction. An elegant conversationalist and stylist, he was sensitive to Bazin's clever prose, which he strove to deliver in graceful English.<sup>1</sup>

It's not clear how much of Bazin's original Gray proposed to include, but Gosling surely meant to keep the volume sleek, restricting it mainly to articles dealing with films familiar to Americans. They settled on ten essays taken from the twenty-five that make up the first two of the four volumes Bazin had laid out. After surprisingly good sales, Gray was encouraged by Ernest Callenbach to prepare *What is Cinema? Volume II*, sixteen more pieces selected from the forty that comprise the last two volumes of the original French. While any excision may seem sacrilegious, Bazin's French publishers would in fact cut nearly the same amount when they brought out their single volume "édition définitive" in 1981.<sup>2</sup>

His modesty notwithstanding, Bazin might well have bristled at this streamlining. In his own short preface he justified the inclusion of brief pieces on forgotten short subjects (like *Death Every Afternoon* and *Gide*) which Gray found expendable and are no longer to be found in the French collection.<sup>3</sup> He claimed they serve as supporting

stones to help bear the weighty theoretical edifice. Nor did he want to fold them into one of the longer essays (though “Evolution of the Language of Cinema,” “The Virtues and Limitations of Montage,” and “Cinema and Painting” are indeed compilations). The idiosyncrasies and imperfections of some of the essays, he felt, are what give them character and, as is the case with concrete, a certain tensile strength. Here Bazin gives away his secret: he regards his own essays the way he feels a critic should treat films, elaborating their lofty narrative and thematic problems, yet attending sympathetically to the contingencies and impurities that made them fitting expressions in their historical moment. As a medium, cinema begs exactly such double vision: the nature of photography ties cinema’s huge ambitions to historical and material circumstances. Thus cinema shaped not only Bazin’s thought about his vocation but also his very manner of thinking.

## II.

No one understood this better than Eric Rohmer, who had prepared a brilliant review of *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* for *Cahiers du Cinéma* only to see it published as a eulogy when it came out just weeks after Bazin’s death.<sup>4</sup> Entitled “André Bazin’s ‘Summa,’” Rohmer’s title invokes Thomas Aquinas, suggesting a magisterial command of a diverse set of questions, organized hierarchically and answered from first principles. Rohmer appeals to Bazin’s organization of the four little tomes: Volume One treats cinema’s internal life principles—its “ontology” and its “language”; Volume Two approaches cinema from the outside as a surveyor might, triangulating its situation on the cultural landscape amongst the other arts; Volume Three turns to patently contextual issues, subtitled as it is “Cinema and Sociology”; Volume Four is reserved for a case study of neorealism, the most important development in sound cinema and a movement that ratified and contributed to his understanding of the medium.

Rohmer insists that Bazin did not hastily impose this order from

### *What is Cinema?*

his deathbed, searching for the main threads of a life's output. Rather, he carried a lucid design with him throughout his career, a design that progressively expressed and clarified itself in contact with whatever history brought him. Serge Daney would vividly ratify this point:

Bad cineastes have no ideas; good cineastes have too many. But the great cineastes have just one idea. Such an obsessive idea stabilizes them on their way, yet guides them into ever new and interesting landscapes. And what about great critics? The same would hold true for them, if there were any. . . . [All critics fade in time] except for one. Between 1943 and 1958 André Bazin was that one . . . [His *idée fixe* was] to show that before signifying it or resembling it, cinema embalmed the real.<sup>5</sup>

The hundreds of film reviews that Bazin patiently wrote year after year were animated by his fixation with cinema's specifically photographic capability. History thereby validated the coherence of a theoretical line; yet—and this is crucial—history also extended that line. For, in the Sartrean vocabulary of those times, Bazin held that “cinema's existence precedes its essence” because “contingency is also a necessary quality of film.”<sup>6</sup> New films, no matter of what quality, led Bazin to new formulations about crucial features of the medium. Rohmer can make Bazin sound quite like Gilles Deleuze, as a thinker obsessed with creating new concepts. Rohmer says, “The purpose of each new article is not to complete or clarify a thought that was partially expressed elsewhere or even to offer more convincing examples. Rather, it adds, it creates a new thought whose existence we had not suspected. It gives life to critical ‘entities,’ just as the mathematician gives life to numbers or theorems.” But where Deleuze would champion self-generating mathematical (and filmic) systems, Bazin, at least as Rohmer portrays him, unswervingly developed a realist system. Like “Euclid's straight line,” photographic reference serves as this system's first axiom: from it, the theorist may derive corollaries and far-flung hypotheses.

Bazin formulated this principle as early as 1943 while first turning out movie reviews in a mimeographed student newsletter. Twenty-five years old, rebounding from having just been blocked from teaching because of a stammer, he announced to his friends that he could foresee making a life writing about film; he aimed to produce a history and an aesthetic founded on the social psychology of this popular medium. Where did Bazin acquire the inspiration and the confidence to project a full-blown reorientation of film theory?<sup>7</sup> He had as a model the “little school of the spectator” that Roger Leenhardt had composed in the thirties for *Esprit*, the Personalist journal that would soon disseminate Bazin’s most prominent essays. Leenhardt, a socially committed intellectual and cineaste, claimed a realist aesthetic that Bazin found the only significant approach to modern (i.e. sound) cinema. It was to Leenhardt and to François Truffaut that in 1958 Bazin dedicated his collected works: the first man representing his heritage, the second his legacy. Leenhardt met Bazin frequently at the ciné-club of the Maison des Lettres that Bazin helped found in 1942 near the Sorbonne. One of their discussions concerned André Malraux’s “Sketch for a Psychology of the Cinema,” which appeared in *Verve*’s “wartime issue,” previewing the celebrated 1947 *Psychology of Art*. Bazin, who belonged to a Malraux study group at the Maison, was deeply taken with this dashing scholar, already a Resistance legend. Just after the war the two men jostled over the “cinematic language” that Malraux deployed in *Espoir*, released in 1945, although finished in 1939. Malraux graciously conceded that Bazin provided by far “the most ingenious and attentive” response to his film.

Then there was Jean-Paul Sartre, another legend of the Occupation years, who from time to time would show up clandestinely at Bazin’s ciné-club to see—what else—German silent films! Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness* appeared at just this moment, but it was his earlier *Psychology of the Imagination* (1940), with its phenomenology of painting and photography, that Bazin immediately bought and annotated.<sup>8</sup>

Although Bazin adopted from his intellectual heroes a set of concerns and a style of thinking and writing, he seldom took up their po-

### *What is Cinema?*

sitions. One can feel both Sartre and Malraux hovering at the borders of "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," yet this magnificent essay is all Bazin. It is one of the most far-reaching and suggestive essays ever written on the image; his oeuvre can hardly be imagined without it.<sup>9</sup> A pearl secreted within him throughout the Occupation, the essay received a first chance at publication when in 1943 the art historian Gaston Diehl commissioned Bazin to contribute to an ambitious special issue of *Confluences* called *Les Problèmes de la peinture*.<sup>10</sup> He was surely proud to be included alongside Cocteau, Stein, Desnos, Rouault, Matisse, and Braque, and within the bravely leftist series *Confluences* that was struggling to make it through the war in Lyon. In fact, Bazin had a lot of time, perhaps as long as a year, to refine his contribution, since the publishing house that printed *Confluences* by day also brought out the Resistance publication *Témoignage Chrétien* by night. Two weeks before D-Day, the publishing office was raided by the Gestapo, and its director sent off to his death. With the press shut down, and with several of the projected contributors having gone into the active Resistance, Diehl and René Tavernier (editor of *Confluences* and father of filmmaker Bertrand Tavernier) determined to hold the issue till the war's end.

By 1945 Bazin had honed his eight pages to perfection and had started to elaborate their consequences. More than a gem to be admired, and more too than just a supporting stone, it became the cornerstone of his view of what cinema was and could be. And yet "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" behaves strangely as cinema's foundation. First of all, it concentrates on photography and seldom mentions cinema. (The final, startling sentence about cinema, which mimics the conclusion of Malraux's "Sketch," was added by Bazin in 1958.) Secondly, the essay's memorable opening deflects inquiry away from ontology to ontology's nemesis: "If the plastic arts were put under psychoanalysis, the practice of embalming the dead might turn out to be a fundamental factor in their creation." Apparently, to understand "what cinema is," at least in the milieu of Sartre, one must understand not the ontology so much as the psychology at play behind the experi-

ence of images, an experience that Malraux was just then demonstrating to be more cultural than personal. At one time—for instance in ancient Egypt—human beings evidently believed in the ontological identity of model and image. But few in our Western culture believe this anymore. Images today are thought to serve symbolic and aesthetic functions, not magical ones; they signify what is important to culture and they do so in styles that display values. Nevertheless, even sophisticated or decadent cultures have been fascinated by the possibility of duplicating appearances and thereby preserving what naturally decays in time. Hence Bazin's conclusion: "If the history of the plastic arts is less a matter of their aesthetic than of their psychology then it will be seen to be essentially the story of resemblance or, if you will, of realism."

The invention of photography in the nineteenth century constitutes the "most important event" in this history: a shift in the material, ontological basis of images forced a reconfiguration of aesthetics and psychology in the ever-variable "balance between the symbolic and realism." The tension between these terms, which traditionally mark the limits of the functions of images, exists both in photography and in painting but in different ratios. This tension also separates the two traditions that vie for dominance in Bazin's view of the evolution of the cinema, between those filmmakers "who put their faith in the image and those who put their faith in reality."

Bazin is often prematurely accused of being a proponent of a realist style; but realism to him is not primarily a stylistic category. It is an automatic effect of photographic technology drawing on an irrational psychological desire. As he points out, for a long time after the birth of photography, oil painting remained superior in producing likenesses. "A very faithful drawing may actually tell us more about the model . . . but it will never have the irrational power of the photograph to bear away our faith. . . . Hence the charm of family albums." The way an image comes into being, then, sways the way we take it in, so that in a psychological rather than a stylistic sense photography "satisfied our appetite for illusion by a mechanical reproduction in the mak-

### *What is Cinema?*

ing of which man plays no part.” Exactly what Bazin thinks about this “appetite for illusion” is debatable.

The photograph recovers the fetish character that the image lost in Western culture years ago: by virtue of the impression of its unique pattern of reflected light on emulsion, the object photographed haunts the photo from which it is absent in both space and time. Bazin’s marvelous litany of analogies flows easily from this intuition: the photograph as fingerprint, as holy shroud, as death mask, as the veil of Veronica, and so forth. We accept and even venerate these leavings not because they look like the originals, but because they were produced by direct contact with the objects they call up. Bazin never returned to photography as a subject, but treated it as an essential string in the genetic code of cinema, a medium which is “the achievement in time of photographic objectivity.”<sup>11</sup> That part of the genetic code contributed by photography to cinema’s identity explains the virtual absence in Bazin’s corpus of any discussion of animated cartoons, an image mode that shares cinema’s exhibition technology but that—certainly in his day—was produced by the work of human hands in distinction to the automatic images of photography.<sup>12</sup>

Animation constitutes a prime test case, for its recent flowering can be traced to the intersection of artistic imagination with computer algorithms. Animation serves cultural functions that are both traditional (the cartoonist imitates or distorts nature just as artists always have) and futuristic (rotoscoping and now digital processes replace photography or wildly manipulate it). In this, cinema’s second century, the rise of animation might spell the fall of the photographic image. This is the claim of Régis Debray’s *Vie et mort de l’image*, a grand synthesis that Bazin would have had to contend with were he at work today.<sup>13</sup> Debray posits photography (including Bazin’s theories about it) as the core of the modernist period (1820–1980), which followed the classical age during which oil painting held cultural power.

Today the digital has lodged itself at the heart of postmodern image culture. Inhuman, cold in their perfect technical reproducibility, digital images not only can ignore the artist, they can ignore all reality



*Foreword to the 2004 Edition*

beyond the monitor. Cinema may appear to have freed itself from the artist by serving as a decal of visible reality; but by the same token, digital video has freed the image from photography's dependence on a pre-existent reality. The video world appears now utterly self-contained, auto-referential, and immediate.<sup>14</sup> We live with video in our living rooms and offices; the computer or TV monitor has become a sorcerer's apprentice, a piece of furniture that takes up an immense share of our inner space and time, crowding out whatever "we" might have been. On the other hand, Bazin's film spectators were led by the "little flashlight of the usher moving like an uncertain comet across the night of our waking dream [toward] the diffuse space without shape or frontiers that surrounds the screen." In the great volume of a dark theater the spectator gazes at and reflects upon images that relay a world that is both elsewhere and present in its visual trace. The videosphere has changed all that. No longer do we pass from the image to its referent. No longer, for instance, do law courts readily accept photographic evidence, since digitization encourages the indefinite manipulation of the image, until its relation to the natural world is suspect or obliterated. Images in the videosphere have no need of a source. Everything we see may be animation.

*III.*

What might Bazin have said of this new step in the evolution of image culture? He would surely have addressed it as a step likely to demote cinema as the medium of our time. Would he have seen it as a regression to idolatry, as Debray does, one that makes the video image prized for itself and its instant effects rather than as a double of an absent world existing somewhere outside the theater? Bazin was primed to deal with such issues. His film theory begins as an anthropology of shifting image cultures, indebted as we have seen to the influential ideas of Malraux and parallel with the slightly earlier notions of Walter Benjamin concerning photography's relation to the arts. And

### *What is Cinema?*

yet, unlike Debray, Malraux, Benjamin, McLuhan, and others who make long-range speculations about the media, Bazin refused to believe that shifts in technology automatically initiate shifts in the thought and behavior of a culture. In Bazin's view, technology affects culture only after being itself triggered by something like the cultural will. His detractors in the seventies pronounced Bazin an "idealist," since he seemed to posit an independent life of the spirit, one that effects material changes, including the invention of technologies. And indeed he was interested in asking why cinema came to be invented only in the nineteenth century when so many of its principles were understood earlier. Bazin entertains the notion that culture must itself be cultivated by the arts in specific ways until the taste for a technology (like photography) becomes overwhelming enough to promote and reward inventive tinkerers. The historical research of Peter Galassi and Jacques Aumont on the pre-photographic realism in paintings of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,<sup>15</sup> not to mention the growing cultural history of the period emphasizing the expansion of popular taste in such things as visual toys and illustrated journalism, sustain Bazin's desire to complicate the formula of change.

Bazin's idealism, then—if idealist he be—is paradoxically impure, for no film theorist, except perhaps Deleuze, has been more attentive to the historical, material peculiarities of the medium and its products. Both men had a penchant for taxonomy. Bazin could write "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema" only when, like Darwin, he felt completely familiar with countless species, including dominant strains, freaks or oddities, and organisms that were dying out. For Bazin, films are suspended in a cinema culture defined by the rules and expectations of genres, so that each film can be identified by the types of regulations it serves or thwarts. In one of his most clever essays, "The Virtues and Limitations of Montage," Bazin applied the characteristics he identified in "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema" to the minor genre of the children's film. In this case, the genre was not treated as an evolving organism but as a constant human impulse: people of all eras and cultures have entertained children with fabulous tales. Bazin

reasoned that in the cinema certain laws—or, more precisely, certain limits—of montage promote or defeat the effect of “the marvelous” aimed at by the genre. One cannot, for the sake of eloquence or convenience, cut into the space of the marvelous without turning it into standard cinematic spectacle. While watching a conjurer work, the spectator at a live magic show stares without blinking in an effort to note the moment when reality is tricked: were a filmmaker to shoot the trick from multiple angles, editing it for the best view, who would believe in the magic?

Films of magic and fairy tales are two sub-genres of the marvelous where rules of editing derive from a relation between psychological and aesthetic factors. Rules governing other genres follow. Some, like restrictions of shot changes in slapstick comedy, seem relatively stable across time; others—for instance the prohibition against reconstructed events in newsreels—are less permanent. At certain times in film history audiences were convinced by reconstructions, either because they were gullible or because reconstructions served an intermediate function between reportage and fictionalized history. Today’s docudramas, which show up on television within months of the sensational issues they represent, are a contemporary example of this mixed form.

However, even were we to discover all the laws of cinema that govern its more timeless generic functions, we would scarcely have answered the driving question, “What is cinema?” Moreover, we would have characterized cinema only insofar as it takes up cultural functions (fairy tales, physical comedy) that pre-existed it. When it comes to understanding what cinema has added to cultural history, Bazin is certain that only local laws prevail and that, whatever cinema is, it evolves in contact with shifting cultural needs and situations. Cinema’s stable photographic axiom, together with the few corollaries demanded by stable genres, interacts in myriad ways with history, and does so in an evolutionary manner.

And so the bulk of Bazin’s reviews and essays tacitly trace this interaction. His “Evolution” accumulates evidence not from cinema as an abstract potential, but from the multiple species of films that have

### *What is Cinema?*

flourished and survived. The thickest branch on this evolutionary tree has grown in the United States, from the proscenium framing of the earliest films and even of slapstick, to the narrative space pioneered by Griffith, to the invisible, psychologically motivated editing of the Classic Hollywood style. European alternatives pushed the silent film to a level of great graphic eloquence either through what Bazin termed deformation of "the plastics of the image," in the case of German expressionism, or through the muscular montage by which the Soviets ripped realistic images out of spatial and temporal continuity to develop strings of metaphors and other figures that permit discursive complexity. The era in which he wrote, from the outset of the Second World War up to the New Wave, saw an important evolution away from what he described as the efficient representation of clever scenarios and toward the carving of stories out of a deeper, thicker, more complex space. Using his intuitions about the variable ratio of space to script, Bazin traced the Darwinian struggle for survival of many species of film, often isolating conflicting impulses in a single movie, such as *Mr. Hulot's Holiday*.<sup>16</sup>

The richness of Bazin's conception of cinema stems from the interpenetration of style and matter that he so ingeniously observed and more ingeniously described in the hundreds of films he treated. Because of the photographic axiom, cinema—more than the other arts—adjusts itself to, and is altered by, the projects it is asked to take up. When the Second World War brought new material to represent, the cinema responded with an enlarged set of codes (particularly governing the documentary) and with new technologies of representation. When a trend developed after 1945 to adapt first-person novels (film noir, *La Symphonie pastorale* [1946], *Le Silence de la mer* [1947], and of course *Le Journal d'un curé de campagne* [1950]), sound and image relations needed to be radically readjusted to deliver subjectivity, reflection, and perception in subtle ways. Bazin became the leading theorist of these post-war developments, elaborating Alexandre Astruc's famous 1948 plea for "la caméra-stylo," that is, for an approach to cinema as supple as a writer's approach to his or her projects.<sup>17</sup>

Bazin's "Evolution of the Language of Cinema" concludes by suggesting that the new realist impulse in cinema has made the filmmaker the "equal of the novelist": the ability to carve stories out of complex space invites the spectator to view the world as inflected—but not utterly dominated—by the consciousness of the artist. Space remains partly independent of the artist who delivers it to us. Hence we are permitted (and sometimes encouraged) to look beyond the artist's organization of things to the complexity of the world, to the "mystery" and "ambiguity" that outlast every view of it. Cinema reveals to the anxious and alert spectator a world alive with possibilities that ask for recognition and response. In cinema, aesthetic issues lead immediately to moral ones.

The values Bazin found in the cinema—including the discovery of nature, the mystery of human expressions and motivations, and fresh approaches to tired arts—derived from a personal and Personalist philosophy that sustained him throughout a life of relative deprivation and constant illness. These same values would bring down on him the scorn of his opponents, few of whom could impugn the man or his mission, but many of whom needed, in their eras, to argue for different values and thus for a different cinema. This would be true at his own journal, *Cahiers du Cinéma*, which repudiated him along with his friends and admirers, Truffaut and Rohmer, when the momentous events of May '68 politicized the critical landscape in Paris.

Sometimes one can best measure the strength of a thinker by the vehemence of the attacks he or she is subject to. André Bazin occasioned such a stream of virulent responses after 1968 that his thought must have weighed heavily on those needing to throw off that weight so as to undertake a kind of thinking proper to their generation. His opponents, who grew in number in the post-New Wave era, worked in a culture dominated by television. In noisy journals, conferences, and classrooms, they competed with other film scholars hoping to have the kind of effect on cinema that Bazin had been able to claim with such apparent ease, in what was more clearly the age of cinema. Writing before the assimilation of "cinema studies" into the academy, writing

### *What is Cinema?*

without needing to display or defend his methodology, writing even before the era of the extended exegesis (his 1950 *Orson Welles* stands among the first monographs on a director), Bazin was the champion of those who wanted cinema to break from the stranglehold of convention. He proved to be a modest champion, but behind him rode the vainglorious knights of *Cahiers du Cinéma*. As Serge Daney lamented jealously, "The generation of the New Wave was certainly lucky, for they really knew how to make enemies."<sup>18</sup> The post-1968 Marxists had to turn against the complacency and confidence of what was by now not the new wave but a receding wave of critics, many of whom had become professional filmmakers. Since Bazin had given his followers such confidence, Bazin had to be taken down.

Of course not just anyone could be proclaimed champion of a cause. It required more than intelligence and an engaging style; more too than a passion for cinema; it required a specific cultural background with an attendant agenda. This, as much as anything, his later critics targeted. Because it was tied to a dated discourse, Bazin's thought could be diminished by being exposed as determined; the consequences of his beliefs could be circumscribed by the historical situation that engendered them. Bazin simply had to be removed as an impediment to the post-1968 political agenda at *Cahiers du Cinéma* . . . at least until that agenda in turn fell out of favor and Bazin's name could be re-invoked, often reverentially.

In any case, even during its Marxist period, those in charge at *Cahiers* maintained much of the Bazinian heritage. This is particularly visible in the writings of Serge Daney, the most important figure after Bazin to work at this most influential of film journals. Daney's criticism ever urged the "morality of style." His many essays on television, written in the eighties at *Libération*, take up the kind of thinking about images in video culture that Bazin had brought to such a level of sophistication for cinema. Most pertinently, Daney and Bazin share an instinct and an ability to track the crucial shifts of their respective image cultures from within, by observing symptoms in the visual phenomena they so obviously loved to write about. And then there is the

*Foreword to the 2004 Edition*

matter of style. These men knew how to write so that the words themselves produce ideas hard as rocks, words that are dense enough, grave enough (that is, with sufficient *gravity*) not to float off but to anchor a point of view, a way of thinking, a personality . . . let us say it, an auteur.

Dudley Andrew  
April 2004

1. Gray signals the difficulty of translating Bazin in a note to the last line of "Umberto D" in Volume II, a line he nevertheless fails to properly bring across. A more accurate translator, however, might not have relayed the texture of Bazin's French so well. Occasionally Gray's limits run into the wall of fact, as when on p. 47, he has Bazin attribute Alexandre Astruc's *Le Rideau Cramoisi* to Albert Lamorrisse. This is Gray's gaff, not Bazin's.
2. *Bazin at Work*, edited by Bert Cardullo, came out from Routledge Press in 1997, effectively doubling the number of pieces from Bazin's original that are now available in English.
3. "Death Every Afternoon" has at last been translated, appearing in Ivone Margulies' *Rites of Realism: Essays on Corporeal Cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).
4. Eric Rohmer, "André Bazin's 'Summa,'" in *The Taste for Beauty* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989).
5. Serge Daney, "André Bazin," *Ciné-Journal vol II 1983-1986* (Paris: Cahiers du Cinéma, 1998), 41.
6. Rohmer, 103.
7. For a fuller discussion of Bazin's biography, see my *André Bazin* (New York: Oxford, 1978); for a fuller summary of his positions, see my "André Bazin's 'Evolution'" in Peter Lehman, *Defining Cinema* (New Brunswick: Rutgers Press, 1997) where parts of this essay were first formulated.
8. I recently discovered a single sheet of folded paper inside Bazin's personal copy of Sartre's *L'Imaginaire*, on which he had typed several key points appearing in the "Ontology" essay.
9. Susan Sontag's *On Photography* and Roland Barthes' *La Chambre claire* both seem indebted to the "Ontology" essay, virtually reproducing key

### *What is Cinema?*

- phrases, though neither cites it. Stanley Cavell's *The World Viewed* maintains an explicit dialogue with Bazin.
10. Letter from Gaston Diehl to Sally Shafto, 8 June 1998. I am grateful to Shafto for sharing her thoughts about this correspondence.
  11. This translation amends Gray's formulation on p. 14, "Cinema is objectivity in time." One needs constantly to return to the original.
  12. In fact, on three occasions he wrote brief notes on cartoons. In an ingenious book, *La Lettre volante: quatre essais sur le cinéma d'animation* (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1997) Hervé Joubert-Laurencin theorizes animation in the wake of Bazin.
  13. Régis Debray's *Vie et mort de l'image* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992).
  14. Debray, 413.
  15. Peter Galassi, *Before Photography: Painting and the Invention of Photography* (New York: MOMA 1981). Jacques Aumont, "The Variable Eye," in Andrew, ed., *The Image in Dispute: Painting and Cinema in the Age of Photography* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1987).
  16. Bazin, "M. Hulot et le temps" in *Qu'est ce que le cinéma?* This fine essay remains untranslated.
  17. Alexandre Astruc, "The Birth of a New Avant-garde, La Caméra-Stylo," in Peter Graham, ed., *The New Wave* (New York: Doubleday, 1968).
  18. Serge Daney, "Après Tout" in *La Politique des auteurs* (Paris: Cahiers du Cinéma, 1999), 5.