

The Morphogenesis of Post-Political Time: Time Loop Cinema after the Berlin Wall and Rhizomic 'Specters of Marx'

Subashish Bhattacharjee

**UGC-Research Fellow, Centre for English Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.**

Although the concept of a time loop has been used in films since the 1940s, *La Jetée* ("The Jetty," 1962, dir. Chris Marker) and *Je t'aime, Je t'aime* ("I Love You, I Love You," 1968, dir. Alain Resnais) being notable arthouse examples, the 1990s, with the backdrop of the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall, produced a new wave of time loop cinema. Critical opinion of this post-evental time loop cinema has often been negative, charging post-1990s films as being decreasingly philosophical and veering more towards popular sci-fi, following the tracks of 'kitschy' works such as the *Back to the Future* film franchise. However, the time loop cinema in its transition into the new millennium has portrayed a consistent regard for specific politicisation of the very symbols and metaphors that were predominantly viewed as benign aesthetic principles. Developing from the basic principle of a Nietzschean 'eternal return' ("time is a flat circle"), which itself is a development from Indian philosophies of time, and the gradual philosophical progression of the concept of time through Poincaré and Bergson to Deleuze, time loop cinema can be viewed as a projection of the principle of 'difference and repetition.' Modern time loop cinema is framed close to the Novikov self-consistency principle¹ — either in support of the principle or to refute the concept of time paradoxes. However, more than the establishment or refutation of a scientific principle, time loop cinema in its postmodern, popular iteration has been political in its aspirations and presentations.

The politicisation of time as an event and any analysis of the conceptual persona of time are rife with the possibilities of incurring quantum fallacies, especially when tying up the temporal perspective from a social sciences perspective. A post-philosophical, social, and political time-compression necessitates a shift away from categorical evidences. Ruben Borg has stated quite correctly that "[there] is a certain superfluity in writing about time, particularly about a time that cannot be experienced, a time that, as its most characteristic, does not even lend itself to thought" (1). The roots of this temporal assonance, its construction within time loop cinema, however, have a different context, especially in light of space-time compression theories that have been in development since Aristotle's elaboration:

The 'now' is the link of time, as has been said (for it connects the past and future time), and it is a limit of time (for it is the beginning of the one and the end of the other). But this is not obvious as it is with the point, which is fixed. It divides potentially, and in so far as it is dividing the 'now' is always different, but in so far as it connects it is always the same, as it is with mathematical lines. For the intellect it is not always one and the same point, since it is other and other when one divides the line; but in so far as it is one, it

is the same in every respect.” (222a)

The ambiguity of the statement conceals an important parallelism that Aristotle uncovers in the situating of omnilinear time². Time as eternally recurrent, as consistently diachronic and a plurality of simultaneous pastnesses and presentnesses is what Aristotle lends to Western schools of thought on time/Time, and thus providing the scaffolding for thinkers such as Nietzsche, Bergson, and even Deleuze to formulate such concepts as would be necessary for the present study.

While Deleuze locates the event of cinema as post-Bergsonian, dismissing the conception of cinema as a succession of still photographs and to be figurative of temporality as a measure of movement in what he calls the ‘movement image,’ his estimation of the second period of cinema, or the ‘time image,’ is more pliable towards the framework of such alternative timeline omnilinear films that employ the multi-chronicity of time as a feature of filmmaking. The films *Groundhog Day* (1993), *12 Monkeys* (1995), *Run Lola Run* (German: *Lola rennt*, 1998), *Donnie Darko* (2001), *Primer* (2004), *The Butterfly Effect* (2004), *Looper* (2012) and *Interstellar* (2014) all feature spatio-temporal alterations on the basis of a recurrent timeline that the protagonist or associated characters experience in a loop. The eight films are also distinct in that they endorse a revision of the Deleuzian schema pertaining to cinema and also move beyond movement- and time-image to a post-Deleuzian concept of the ‘neuro image’ as has been developed by Patricia Pisters, and also the subsequent theories of cinematic psychology. At the same time, the use of time as rhizomatic and constantly dislocated also helps in presenting important social and structural commentaries that have a wider and more engaged interaction with multiple socio-historical formations.

The concept of time that is enabled in such time loop films is consistent with a philosophical moulding of the Nietzschean ‘eternal return,’ Bergson’s estimation of Einstein’s views on time which broke from the Newtonian model of the universe, besides also appropriating the Novikov self-consistency principle of the paradoxes of time travel. Einstein’s special theory of relativity, at least partially in Bergsonian interpretation of the same in his *Duration and Simultaneity* (1921), helped complete the latter’s theory of *durée* (‘duration’) by negating ‘a universe existing within an absolute, homogenous, and reversible time.’ Bergson, through Einstein, “theorised the existence of many local times, relative to the observer within them” (Martin-Jones 110). However, given the state of human consciousness, only one temporal plane can be experienced at a given time: “the time that is ‘lived or able to be lived.’ The relative time ascribed to the other [...] but which is not actually lived through by the observer, is a mere fiction, an imaginary time” (Durie vi). The enactment of these temporal experiences takes place, paradoxically, on a unilinear spatial plane and thus helps in building what Deleuze has referred to as ‘virtual multiplicity.’ Extending also from Bergson’s concept of the *durée* is Deleuze’s concept of Aion, of which a particular segment is essentially important in our understanding of the temporal experience in the three films. Deleuze states that “any event ‘is adequate to the entire Aion,’ containing the past as recollection and the future as contraction,” and “if we follow Deleuze’s lead, we can describe an essentially incorporeal structure of time that operates like a funnel, the inside of which acts as the instant, encompassing the largest unthinkable amount of time and dividing Aion to create the smallest unthinkable amount of time. Into this instant, as if into a whirlpool, the corporeal is sucked to create the moment. Rendered entirely random, or aleatory as Deleuze maintains, any point becomes the potential for every point” (Sutton 74). The aleatory point of ‘timeframe’ is also the native referend in questions concerning multi-linear narratives, as are ably demonstrated by the cultural significance asserted by eight post-90s time-loop films.

Deleuze conceptualizes in *Bergsonism* a proposition of infinitude of time where the intersections of time co-exist—the Cold War, by extension, always existed, and was always present and absent simultaneously through verification of multiple histories:

We are too accustomed to thinking in terms of the ‘present’. We believe that a present is only past when it is replaced by another present. Nevertheless, let us stop and reflect for a moment: How would a new present come about if the old present did not pass at the same time that it *is* present? How would any present whatsoever pass, if it were not past *at the same time as present*? The past could never be constituted if it had not been constituted first of all, at the same time that it was present.” (58)

The questions which Deleuze ask here are pertinent projections into an impactful resonance of the scientific hypothesis of time-travel. In the event of alternative timelines that one could ‘visit,’ the possibility of the said alternative omnilinearity being a parallel consequence of non-events to compensate for psychological abnormalities is an actual construct. The statement and its relevance towards the development of a postmodern philosophy of time could be consolidated further through Deleuze’s statements, developed using Bergsonian constructs, in *Cinema 2*:

[Since] the past is constituted not after the present that it was but at the same time, time has to split in two at each moment as present and past, which differ from each other in nature, or, what amounts to the same thing, it has to split the present in two heterogeneous directions, one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past. Time has to split at the same time as it sets itself out or unrolls itself: it splits in two dissymmetrical jets, one of which makes all the present pass on, while the other preserves all the past. (Deleuze 81)

This preservation of plurality is what has been used in the 1960s French time loop cinema and has been brought into context following the end of the Cold War. However, it must be defended that the idea of politicisation is not overtly reactionary. On more than one instance in the eight films being compared here, a pivotal marker or motivator is the spectre of love or romance. Therefore, the structural framework remains distantly Wellsian, there is a personal motive that establishes the capitalist ethics over the objective socialist idealism that has just been proven to be a failure primarily through the *perestroika* and the *glasnost*, and thereafter through the splitting apart of the Soviet Union.

Idyllic loops: The Advent of Psychological Time-Travel

Time loops have been effected with a duality in their schematics insofar as they are either ‘true-physics’ events or are Lacanian intra-circularities of the mindscape. The immediate effect of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the epoch under discussion here, had the immediate effect of erasing the sense of competition that existed prior to the event. The sense of exultation was also rife with nostalgia for a recent past where the idea of a contentive super-non-imperialism existed. This materialistic bias was existent in both competing economies and ideologies of Socialism and capitalism. The first ‘range’ of three time loop films that exploited temporal phases for their political concerns were founded more on Lacanian principles than on actual space-time compression theories. In effect, the sentiment may have been said to generate from Nietzsche when he wrote in *The Gay Science*, launching a tirade against the assumed circularity of time and its resultant sense of futility:

What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest

loneliness and say to you: 'This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more' ... Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment when you would have answered him: 'You are a god and never have I heard anything more divine.' (341)

Harold Ramis's *Groundhog Day* is formulated on this concept of circularity that is an untried and unexpected development. The film establishes a romantic comedy in the mould of alternative timeline events, and conforms to a 'movement,' and as such, a singular event. The film ultimately does not establish a 'time image' as it progressively unfolds along the same striated space even across multiple timelines, and also reflects Heidegger's accusations against cinema as destroying spatio-temporal locations in reality. In this post-Berlin Wall and pre-9/11 film, the element of time loop is a historical composition of the moral fable or allegory of punishment. The psychological impact is resounding but the social factors are minimal. Although one can see the possibilities of a class-commentary arising within the Sisyphus-like temporal shifts of the film, one is unlikely to witness a philosophical movement that validates the temporal shift to be greater consequence than the immediate. In its own way, *Groundhog Day* is a mainstream appropriation of the "statistical probabilism" of Resnais more so than the "indeterminism of the quantum type" in Robbe-Grillet (Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 120).

Contrasted with the narrative of personalised event in *Groundhog Day*, Tom Tykwer's *Lola rennt* (*Run Lola Run*) is an expansion on the genre of national-/ist cinema. The time loops in the latter are resonant with the historical epoch that is the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany. Despite the portrayal of a singular event, the omnilinear narratives in the film do not portray movement in spatial terms but rather as temporal alterations. Considering the underlying nationalist tones and the philosophical implications of *Lola rennt*, the invocation of a particular strand of Deleuzian cinematic concept is necessary rather than a broad induction of the theme. In Deleuze's appropriation of 'eternal recurrence' "a univocal All underpins the repetitions [...] for each ending suggests a new point of departure, a new fork for another possible world" (Kunkle 143). The film involves the 'journey' of the eponymous character across multiple temporal planes to create or re-create the effect of saving her lover. The socio-political historical commentary in these repetitions is centred on the dialogue between political revision and moderated climate and the recurrence of the verisimilar attitudes that led to the pre-existing national and historiographical conditions. What we may also analyse here is Deleuze's concept of repetition "where what is repeated is difference—a different pathway, a different chain of causal events, different choices, sacrifices [...] which is directly opposed to Lacan's reference to repetition especially as it bears on the love relation. In Lacan's logic, love vis-à-vis the object *a*, compels a repetition and offers the subject an enjoyment in the very movement itself" (ibid). The repetition is not necessarily a fictitious tool or temporal accessory to retrace the national identity through a pluralisation of the individual but also a study of class and majoritarian discourse through a psychological affectation. The artefacts in both films discussed so far being love the differentiation comes in the form of a heightened national consciousness through ahistorical repetition in the latter instance. And despite Kunkle's objections to the Sisyphean concept being at odds with Lacanian percept of time, the protagonists in both instances have a sense of contentment with the repetition of events.

This leads us to the third film in consideration, Eric Bress and J. Mackye Gruber's *The Butterfly Effect* which takes the Deleuzian cinematic event beyond the two stages of cinema and onto a third plane: the 'neuro image' that Patricia Pisters has suggested as an extension to the twofold Deleuzian cinematic schema. Although the mainstream Hollywood impetus on a romantic relationship at the

base of the narrative is suggestively telltale of a prospective star vehicle, the final film of the three idyllic time loop films is the only consciously well-rounded issuance of a national/-ist fervour infused venture into the element of temporal ascension. “For Deleuze, a topology is presented where time occurs in ‘sheets,’ and the present is identified by ‘peaks’” (143)—and the current topology is inclusive of the post-Cold War euphoria at the end of the war, the national crisis with the loss of the twin towers and the subsequent wars, leading to multiple ‘presents’ rather than one ‘peak’. The infusion of a ‘butterfly effect’ and active chaos theory into the rubric of narrative has had its impact on the sequencing and enabling of commentaries that evaluate social, cultural, psychological, historical, political issues while being valid on a specific temporal/contemporary timeframe. The repetitions being actively ‘chaotic’ here only serve to assert the importance of the Deleuzian framework of ‘difference and repetition’ rather vigorously:

By contrast with the actual infinite, where the concept is sufficient by right to distinguish its object from *every* other object, [in the case of a concept with virtually indefinite comprehension] the concept can pursue its comprehension indefinitely, always subsuming a plurality of objects which is itself indefinite. [...] We must therefore recognise the existence of non-conceptual differences between these objects.” (*Difference and Repetition* 16)

The resultant class narrative following the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall leading to the erasure of socialism as an alternative and the destruction of a capitalist landmark in the form of the World Trade Center caused the psychosocial desire to attempt a revision of each epoch, which often ends in failures. Therefore, the ‘ouroboros’-like³ ascension of the psyche is a non-native signifier of the inner dichotomies that produce the actuality of the time event, furthered through psycho-spatiality of through the complex interaction of science proper with social severity. The permutations and combinations for this statement of virtual time in a social space can be traced back to Heinrich Heine:

[T]ime is infinite, but the things in time, the concrete bodies, are finite. They may indeed disperse into the smallest particles; but these particles, the atoms, have their determinate numbers, and the numbers of the configurations which, all of themselves, are formed out of them is also determinate. Now, however long a time may pass, according to the eternal laws governing the combinations of this eternal play of repetition, all configurations which have previously existed on this earth must yet meet, attract, repulse, kiss, and corrupt each other again . . . (cited in Kaufmann 376)

Post-postal Chronicity: Externalising Compressions of Spatio-temporality

The end of the Cold War also caused another paradigm shift in critical thought which was the end of seminal concepts. The mushroom cloud of 1945 and the *evenement* of 1968 both resulted in critical thought taking drastic and often innovative cultural shifts, resulting in cataclysmic difference mechanisms being brought into operation. While the previous critical atmosphere was conducive to such thinking, the post-Cold War era led to a sudden introduction of causality and an apex setting of *amor fati*:

The world is going badly. It is worn but its wear no longer counts. Old age or youth—one no longer counts in that way. The world has more than one age. We lack the measure of the measure. We no longer take account of it as of a single age in the progress of history. Neither maturation, nor crisis, nor even agony. Something else. What is happening is happening to age itself, it strikes

a blow at the teleological order of history. What is coming, in which the untimely appears, is happening to time but it does not happen in time. Contretemps. *The time is out of joint*. (Derrida 96)

While Derrida's pseudo-apocalypticism may be dismissed as a latent despair over the caesura of competitive idealisms, the innate contestation is with the concept of time. What happens to time in an absence of temporality? Time that is forever present ceases to be time and becomes a set of organic necessities. The next set of time loop films, occupying a post-postal genre beyond the ambit of postmodernism, post-Marxism, and poststructuralism, aims to distend the essentiality that curbs temporal thought.

The films that correspond to this extensive line of thought creating the line of distention between psychological time loop and pro-scientific actualisation of time that we will discuss in this section are *12 Monkeys* (1995), *Donnie Darko* (2001), *Primer* (2004), *Looper* (2012) and *Interstellar* (2014). An interesting intersection also takes place here as the most neurologically accurate time-space compression film from the previous section, *The Butterfly Effect*, was released the same year as the micro-budget, indie science fiction, pseudo-arthouse film, *Primer*. The 9/11 as a watershed event also coincided with the release year of *Donnie Darko*, a film where the temporal alternations feature a plane crash quite prominently. The five films in this section possess the distinction of post-causal artefaction of cinema. Nietzschean eternal return is by far a secondary concern for the more politically aware and scientifically accurate filmmakers, who present cinematic equivalents of time loop through a refutation of the concept that had already been suggested by Walter Kaufmann:

Even if there were exceedingly few things in a finite space in an infinite time, they would not have to repeat in the same configurations. Suppose there were three wheels of equal size, rotating on the same axis, one point marked on the circumference of each wheel, and these three points lined up in one straight line. If the second wheel rotated twice as fast as the first, and if the speed of the third wheel was $1/\pi$ of the speed of the first, the initial line-up would never recur. (327)

With these films, the unalterable quantum flow of time is finally and successfully liberated, displaying finality in its construction and shaping. Unlike the chrono-materialistic outlook of the other time loop films, these films are more definitive of a reactionary alteration, or a transculturation even, of the event that leads to the timeline shift. The event-span here is not as cataclysmic as the pre-intervention cognitive euthanasia of *The Butterfly Effect* or the non-event of such end of Cold War films as *Jacob's Ladder* (1990). With the post-neuro shift in time-loop cinema, expanding to the schizoid space of David Fincher's *Fight Club* (1999), time-space compression finally becomes a political instrument proper—as a rallying cry against the excesses of governmental intervention, panopticism, global warming, and the negative effects of ultra-materialist capitalism.

The abstract politics of dystopian vision enshrined in two of the five films that coincidentally star Bruce Willis as the protagonist, *12 Monkeys* and *Looper*, are more spatial and interconnected with corollary ideological concerns than with the formulation of a narrative that provides a theory for time travel or time-space compression, or even a solution to the segmentation of the Novikov self-consistency principle in time loop cinema. The levels of violence here are much more intensified and projected as the consequence of the possibilities of temporal revisioning than contemporary pure politics, a state of pure difference that Deleuze contends is non-spatio-temporal. The extension in these two films is less chronic and more symbolic in nature, furnishing the theorisation of the same with a popular cultural model of cinematic politicisation.

The subsequent two films belonging to this second tier of post-1990s time loop cinema, *Donnie Darko* and *Primer* are more elaborate set-pieces despite both being indie films with restrictive budget. The moving away from pop-culturation has ensured a more elaborate and intricate narrativising that theorises the time travel mechanism of the respective films. While *Donnie Darko* has a more fantastic, surreal and almost magical realist structure with its own non-physics and quantum-obsolete model of spiritual time travel, the plot compensates with a tight integration of symbolisms that construe manifest political and social definitions. The angst that one experiences through an envisioning of the irreversibility of time is the motif that is immediately recognizable in the unexpectedly concurrent collapse of the twin towers. *Primer*, on the other hand, is director Shane Carruth's directorial opus, much like *Donnie Darko* was Richard Kelly's. The film, crafted with meticulous theoretical distinction, was aimed to recreate an aura of authenticity that was absent from other films of the genre. The space of pure politics in the two films is not because they endorse their own radical brands of realism or authenticity but because they create ontology of sci-fi filmmaking that is reactionary against the pre-millennium structures that prevailed in this genre of filmmaking. In their own crucial ways, the two films were spiritual predecessors to the final film in our assessment, *Interstellar*. Despite the latter being a projected blockbuster, the film possessed the intricacies that were a systemic attribute across all the post-1990s films, only sharpening focus to be more specific in its concerns and more accurate in its depiction of the mechanism and the seismic impact of human activities—potentially criticising the aggravated acts of industrialisation that are bound to lead to exhaustion of resources and the eventual instatement of a bleak future.

Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* possesses a uniquely distinct statement that develops from a system that has moved away from terra firma to cosmic spatio-temporal distortions—from topological dismemberment to homotopy, across compacting and expanding spatio-temporal accesses—passages of time as juxtaposing between ebb and flow, systolic and diastolic inconsistencies. This is thematically synchronous with Deleuze's concept of the fold where he appropriates Leibniz as well as Deleuze's conical concept of time from *Difference and Repetition* that is derived from Simondon. *Interstellar* operates on paradigms that are closest to Indian schools of thought on time, using the proposition of “*anādi*” (“beginningless”⁴) to appropriate the momentum of time span and true space-time compression. The nature of time here is contingent with Deleuze's dual system of cinematic image simultaneously—while the chronicity of actual time is questioned, virtual time remains constant and unchanging. The viewer is able to follow the events of transformation across multiple expanding and compacting trajectories of time. The background of the closure of the space race and the economic depletion, America as saviour and figurative identifiers of political strife and conflict, dystopian control of learning and activity, class divisions on the primacy of core activities and a return to agrarian society, the socialist ideological entrenchment that invariably is produced through a depletion of scarce but necessary resources are all part of the commentary, either manifested or latently through depictive politics. This thesis is applicable on the film through its scientific parameter and accurate representation of cosmic activities, but a paradox is consolidated—a paradox that is apparently one of physics but is trenchantly a social paradox—where does class go? This circularity of the paradox can be considered in light of the circularity or the paradox of being:

This apparent paradox is understood in relation to the notion of singularity, which can only be ‘known’ to be singular through its iterable transference and is, therefore, both a closed and open system. The figure, or trope, of the circle is appropriate as a metaphor, if not an example of catechresis, signifier of a signifier without relation, because, in moving over itself, it completes itself, and so intimates completion and full sameness. However, at the same time, in

passing through its own motion, it becomes a palimpsest of itself, a reinscription, which is also, partly, an erasure, an over-layering and occlusion. (Wolfreys 198)

Within the temporal concerns of Deleuzian notion of repetition there exists a continuous dialogue between the three dimensions, allowing multiplicity not only of time to exist but also of event and the possibility of interplaning between the consequential planes. Perhaps a slightly roundabout way of addressing the Deleuzian schema in such omnilinear films is by understanding how Deleuze locates a passive synthesis of time in the idea of repetition: “the passive synthesis of time is not the cause of expectation in the sense of particular event X being the particular cause of particular event Y. It is, rather, that any case of expectation is only possible because there is a passive synthesis of time—the past is projected into the future through the present” (Williams 86-87). The continuity that is established through each present would by default revert to a time loop and validate the presence of virtual multiplicities. Although adorning the domain of speculative fiction and science fiction cinema, time loop cinema has the distinction of perhaps adding to a genre that is laden with rhizomatic possibilities and reaffirms the notion of eternal return while also imbibing the contemporary concerns of physics through the conscious realisation of ‘difference and repetition’. By adjoining the concern of economics and society, one can only assign the signifiers that were absent from Deleuzian film studies, especially in connection with time loop cinema.

Conclusion

In the 1960s, French films such as *La Jetée* and *J'taime* offered the viewers alternatively a post-mushroom cloud temporal tectonic alteration that could reverse the thermonuclear historical projection closing the Second World War and a psychological revaluation of our existence in a truly post-ontological world of the previous event. Even more recent films such as generic Hollywood blockbusters like *Edge of Tomorrow* (2014), although adapted from fictive sources, shift from earlier concerns towards more recent phenomena, possessing a keen sense of xenophobia with their clear sight of distinguishing between ‘home’ and ‘abroad,’ or unsustainable ‘imaginary homelands.’ While jingoism and strong American sensationalism, coupled with the saviour syndrome that appears as a hangover from the Cold War era appear in such films, they showcase time travel with the intent to reverse an external invasion. This distinguishes the fragmentary politics of ethical concerns of contemporary science fiction from the imagination that persisted in 1960s or 70s films and later evolved into post-Cold War political machines.

The ‘scientifying’ of time loop as a gradual move away from the fairytale dislocation of the issue has been contested by a more conscious policing of affects and allied factors in such films. While the subtle backdrop of creating a nuclear warhead was a comic relief in *Back to the Future*, subsequent time loops, be it potboilers such as *Source Code* (2011) or more complex indie ventures such as *Primer* as discussed above, are more sensitive to the inclusion of issues that have concentrated consequences in contemporary affairs. The amplification of affect is, following the postmodern and Žižekian turn towards the sublime, a concentration that applies the concept of fragment into whole. This serio-dramatic momentum is a circularity of time loop methods themselves that were visible in auteur time loop cinema. To aptly sum up the socioethical punctuation provided by time loop cinema in the social paradigms of society and also to highlight the post-Cold War transmogrifications of Deleuzian film theories as creating a virtuality that exceeds and moves away from the apparitions of artificial or manufactured political reality we may cite Žižek:

A new field of objects thus opens up that is not only ‘wider’ than reality but constitutes a separate level of its own: objects are determined only by their

quality, *Sosein*, irrespective of their real existence or even of their mere possibility — in a sense, they ‘take off’ from reality. (156)

END NOTES

¹ The Novikov self-consistency principle, “also known as the Novikov self-consistency conjecture, is a principle developed by Russian physicist Igor Dmitriyevich Novikov in the mid-1980s to solve the problem of paradoxes in time travel, which is theoretically permitted in certain solutions of general relativity that contain what are known as closed timelike curves. The principle asserts that that if an event exists that would give rise to a paradox, or to any ‘change’ to the past whatsoever, then the probability of that event is zero. It would thus be impossible to create time paradoxes.” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novikov_self-consistency_principle)

² The term ‘omnilinear’ has been derived from computational physics where a given input has multiple variables of access and output. The genre of time loop cinema too operates on such a principle, utilising the quantum theory of time where it is essentially unalterable. The course of events and of occurrence may be changed but not the result itself. For a consistent principle in omnilinearity of time sequences refer to the trajectory from H.G. Wells’ *Time Machine* to the late twentieth century works in the genre.

³ “The term ouroboros is derived from two words in ancient Greek language. The first word is ‘oura’ which means ‘the tail’ while the second word being ‘boros’ which means ‘eating’. Combined, these two words give the meaning ‘he/it that eats his/its tail’ or ‘tail eater’. A serpent eating its own tail has been depicted in different versions of the infinity symbol” (<http://www.mythologian.net/ouroboros-symbol-of-infinity/>). The symbol of ouroboros is appropriated by Lacan to represent circularity, in a very literal form, which also corresponds to Nietzsche’s concept of the circular flatness of eternity.

⁴ “Any term of a beginningless series can only be said to be earlier or later in *relation* to others; there is nothing like an *absolute* first in such a series” (Chatterjee and Datta 23).

REFERENCES

- Aristotle. “Physics.” Trans. R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye. *The Basic Works*. Richard McKeon (Ed.). New York: Random House, 1941. Print.
- Borg, Ruben. *The Measureless Time of Joyce, Deleuze and Derrida*. New York and London: Continuum, 2007. Print.
- Bress, Eric and J. Mackye Gruber (Dir.). *The Butterfly Effect*. New Line Cinema, 2004.
- Chatterjee, Satishchandra and Dhirendramohan Datta. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. New Delhi: Rupa, 2007. Print.
- Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*. 1983. Trans. H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam. London: Athlone, 1986. Print.
- . *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. 1985. Trans. H. Tomlinson and R. Galeta. London: Athlone, 1989. Print.
- . *The Logic of Sense*. 1969. Trans. M. Lester with C.J. Stivale, C. Boundas (ed.). New York: Columbia University Press, 1990. Print.
- . 1988. *Bergsonism*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. New York: Zone Books, 1991. Print.
- . 1968. *Difference and Repetition*. Trans. Paul Patton. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. Print.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. Trans. Peggy Kamuf. New York and London: Routledge, 1994. Print.
- Donnie Darko*. Dir. Richard Kelly. Perf. Jake Gyllenhal, Jena Malone, and Drew Barrymore. Prod. Sean Mckittrick, Nancy Juvonen, and Adam Fields. Flower Films, 2001.

- Durie, Robin. "Introduction." Henry Bergson's *Duration and Simultaneity*. 1921. Manchester: Clinamen Press, 1999. Print.
- Groundhog Day*. Dir. Harold Ramis. Perf. Bill Murray and Andie Mac Dowell. Prod. Trevor Albert and Harold Ramis. Columbia Pictures, 1993.
- Interstellar*. Dir. Christopher Nolan. Perf. Matthew McConaughey and Anne Hathaway. Prod. Emma Thomas, Christopher Nolan, and Lynda Obst. Warner Bros., Paramount Pictures, and Legendary Pictures, 2014.
- Jung, Berenike. *Narrating Violence in Post-9/11 Action Cinema: Terrorist Narratives, Cinematic Narration, and Referentiality*. Heidelberg: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010. Print.
- Kaufmann, Walter. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*. 4th Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959. Print.
- Kunkle, Sheila. "Against Limits: Deleuze, Lacan and the Possibility of Love." *Psychoanalyzing Cinema: A Productive Encounter with Lacan, Deleuze, and Žižek*. Ed. Jan Jagodzinski. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 129-46. Print.
- La Jetée* ("The Jetty"). Dir. Chris Marker. Argos Films, 1962.
- Looper*. Dir. Rian Johnson. Perf. Bruce Willis, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, and Emily Blunt. Prod. Ram Bergman and James D. Stern. TriStar Pictures, 2012.
- Martin-Jones, David. *Deleuze, Cinema and National Identity: Narrative Time and National Contexts*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006. Print.
- Primer*. Dir. Shane Carruth. Perf. Shane Carruth and David Sullivan. Prod. Shane Carruth. StudioCanal, 2004.
- Run Lola Run* (Ger.: *Lola rennt*). Dir. Tom Tykwer. Perf. Franka Potente and Moritz Bleibtreu. Prod. Stefan Arndt. X-Filme Creative Pool, WDR, and Arte, 1998.
- Sutton, Damian. *Photography, Cinema, Memory: The Crystal Image of Time*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2009. Print.
- Williams, James. *Gilles Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: A Critical Introduction and Guide*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003. Print.
- Wolfe, Julian. *Literature in Theory: Tropes, Subjectivities, Responses and Responsibilities*. London and New York: Continuum, 2010. Print.
- Žižek, Slavoj. *Interrogating the Real*. Ed. Rex Butler and Scott Stephens. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013 (2005). Print.
- 12 Monkeys*. Dir. Terry Gilliam. Perf. Bruce Willis, Madeleine Stowe, and Brad Pitt. Prod. Charles Roven. Atlas Entertainment, 1995.