Week 3: Jean Gabin II

*French Cancan* (Jean Renoir, 1955)

*General questions on the film*:

1. Examine Gabin’s role as Danglard. To what extent, and in what ways, does Gabin impose his authority on the film, given that this is a film with a much larger cast, and a less obvious primary role, than many of Gabin’s classic films of the 1930s?
2. Pay close attention to the film’s mise-en-scène. How are implications of social class – central to the film’s narrative – inscribed in this mise-en-scène?
3. *French Cancan* comes across as an extremely sensual film and one full of energy and verve. Try to account for these characteristics through an analysis of film techniques (i.e. is this above all a question of mise-en-scène, or of editing, or of performance style, etc?).

*Sequence analysis*:

Look in detail at the sequence beginning around 14 minutes (chapter 3 on the BFI DVD) to around 22 minutes and answer the following questions:

1. Describe the mise-en-scène at the beginning of this sequence and analyse its significance.
2. What is Danglard’s relationship to money? How does this compare to other Gabin roles with which you may be familiar?
3. Describe and analyse Gabin’s performance style in this sequence.
4. How does Renoir’s framing and direction of actors work to include other performers in the scene and play them off against each other?
5. What is Danglard’s relationship to the other characters? Again, compare this to other Gabin roles.
6. Comment on the mise-en-scène of the subsequent scene in Montmartre.
7. How is Danglard’s character portrayed here?
8. What is the function of music in this scene?