

Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on Cinema: Classification of Signs and Time, 1982-1983

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Transcription: [La Voix de Deleuze](#), Marie Lacire (Parts 1 et 2); additional revisions to the transcription and time stamp, Charles J. Stivale; translation by Charles J. Stivale

Part 1

... with which I would like to confront these topics. First topic, which I started in our first session, I would say everything is centered on time; all of my topics will be centered on time this year, and the first topic, I could say, basically, well, this is from a certain point of view, the relation of movement and time, [*Pause*] and thanks to the relation of movement and time, what does this first topic address? It might appear that this concerns a very different thing, but those who were here last year already know that it's not that much different. This concerns a general classification of images and signs, [*Pause*] thanks to a reflection on movement and time, to reach a general classification of images and signs, types of images and types of signs. Why? You already feel it, because perhaps the notions of movement-image, time-image, and the signs corresponding to these types of images are in play.

The main book, in my opinion, on such a classification of images and signs, is a very great book by an English philosopher of the late 19th century, which we hardly considered last year and which is by [C.S.] Peirce. [*Pause; Deleuze gets up and writes on the board*] And Peirce published little in his lifetime, and quite recently a full edition was undertaken of what he had written and had not published, or a bit of that.¹ This edition includes a large number of volumes, seven or eight volumes in English. For those who have a knowledge of English, I urge you to consider these books which are fantastic, Peirce being considered very important currently, that is, being fully rediscovered, insofar as he founded or appears to have founded what has been called and what he himself called semiology, that is, a science of signs.

Fortunately, in French, we have access to a short book, very brief, but which is the model of research, of true research. It is created by a man named [Gérard] Delédalle. It appeared at Le Seuil, under the title Peirce, *Peirce, Écrits sur le signe*.² It probably came out two years ago, I believe. And it's an immense undertaking because it's a kind of system; there are selected pieces by Peirce, there are commentaries and that give you an idea of this unusual philosopher who seems quite extraordinary to me. Because what will concern us is indeed to confront the classification of the images and the signs that Peirce proposes to us with what we are seeking, for other reasons, good or bad. And all this take place under the heading "movement and time". Good.

I add that, under this heading, I would be very happy if you agreed to read or reread a well-known author that I will need -- here, I am trying to situate things so that you find your bearings, that you have points of reference, even very obscure ones -- and who is Charles Péguy. And Péguy, we have all heard about him, we all have recollections about him, and then there is what

we know is an obscure problem of Péguy's conversion, of Péguy's faith, of Péguy's relationship with Joan of Arc, etc., etc. But, we also know, we know because it's a problem that still lingers and that I have never fully tackled, but to which I often refer, which is: what happens when, either in literature or in philosophy -- because for me it does not seem that there are fundamental differences in the conditions of these two types of work -- or even in painting or whatever, what happens when we can specify the emergence of something new?

Getting back to my concern about Bergson, is that a really important question when Bergson tells us: the object of philosophy has changed? Because we can call ancient philosophy a thought that never ceased to ask: "What is the eternal?". While our problem for us, modern philosophers or current philosophers, Bergson says, is no longer: "What is the eternal? "; it's, "What is something that is new? How is it possible to produce something new?"

Supposing that this question posed by Bergson and taken up by many philosophers in his time -- the very important English philosopher [Alfred North] Whitehead at the same period, will pose the question that he calls creativity, and creativity for him is the production of anything new whatsoever -- if this is a way of defining modern thought, having substituted the question of production of something new for the question of eternity, well, we can welcome a type of innovation when a new way of speaking, a new way of writing truly appear, a new way of painting. These innovations are rare; they are immediately, are very rapidly copied, they are, etc., but nothing erases the character of the emergence of such an innovation, and moreover, this innovation is lost in those who copy it, but it will never be lost in itself; it will forever have been eternally new and so it will remain.

But what are these innovations that can be greeted at great moments in art, at great moments in philosophy? What is it that makes us say, for example: "We have never heard of this, never", "We have never seen this"? At that point, clever people can always arrive -- there are always clever people who arrive -- and the clever ones say "ahh", and the clever ones will create a lineage, will make a comeback, and will say, "Ah it was already there, you see", etc., and they will say, "there is nothing new under the sun". They will connect with a certain ancient way of thinking. But, in a certain way, we know very well that production of innovation occurs, and that it's even from this that we both live and die, because if there is the production of innovation, the false is also produced, false innovation, and that it's perhaps very difficult to disentangle innovation from false innovation. Criteria are required, but after all, these criteria are perhaps very simple, and in any case, there are times when we cannot go wrong when we say: "Oh my God, that is new", and to our amazement, this is always what we do not expect, by definition.

Sartre had a very good reaction when he said of certain books, "Well, they were expected, so this is nothing new". This is precisely something that we did not expect, and yet which relates to us, which relates to our era. And it is this new that already exists; it is not what will repeat this innovation that is interesting; it is that this innovation insofar as being new is the repetition already of all that succeeds it. It's hard to think of an innovation that is like the repetition of everything that will succeed it. It's in this sense that Péguy, in a very beautiful page, says, you know, you know that, you remember that the painter Manet painted many, many water lilies, in other words, nenuphars. Péguy said, we believe that it is Monet's tenth water lily that repeats the first... which repeats it, perfecting it if need be.³ Well, that's not true, he said. He said, this is the

first water lily, this is Monet's first water lily -- sorry, what am I ... -- this is Manet's first water lily which repeats all the others. Likewise, he said, it is not the celebration of the storming of the Bastille that repeats the storming of the Bastille; it is the storming of the Bastille that repeats all future celebrations.

In other words, producing something new is repetition, but repeating what? Repetition turned towards the future, the repetition of what is "not yet". Strange, this idea by Péguy. Why am I saying this? Because with Péguy, what interests me is not his relationship with God, with faith, with a conversion, although after all, there must be a relationship -- but I assure you that it is not because, in my old age or due to illness, I'm tending toward some conversion, it is not that; [Laughter] we'll have to clarify why this is really a conversion or an act of faith -- but when Péguy suddenly appears -- you simply have to reread if you open a book by Péguy -- it's a tone; you can say it's a style, it's a way of speaking and writing that you have never heard, never seen. Moreover, in Péguy's case, you will never read it again.

In other words, what interests me about Péguy is not his religious conversion. It is madness, a kind of grandiose madness in his language. And this language, is it by chance that it is a language of repetition, or as he says -- which raises a problem -- it's variation? You must not ask people why they repeat themselves; but you have to ask people why they vary. And there he initiates a style of repetition, which is perhaps one of the most important changes in style in the French language. And there he writes in a way that no one has ever written. So, people talk, for example, of the mutation brought about in language, in literature afterwards by Céline. And that's very true, I believe, very strongly, about the change that Céline brought about. It turns out that, alas, in Céline's case, that was, there was a mutation, a particularly imitable innovation. Which takes nothing away from Céline's radical innovation and greatness, and which, on the contrary, emphasizes it, but resulting in those people who believe it possible to write like Céline are cursed in advance and are fundamentally dishonest.⁴

Why? Because the true relationship of an innovation with something is the relationship of an innovation with another innovation. There is no relation of an innovation to the reproduction of innovation. All those who reproduce an innovation, who believe themselves able to surpass the master because, through reproducing, in fact the technique easily becomes more perfect, these people have not understood well. How is the question of the "modern" possible? How is something new possible? That is, this means, how does something new necessarily call for something else equally new? And how is there a chain of innovations that is created through the kind of weave of ordinary things?

And in this regard, and precisely for problems of movement-time, I would really like for some of you to return to a very unusual book by Péguy, which is called *Clio, Clio*, and which is a meditation on history and time. And Péguy, rightly or wrongly, saw himself as a disciple of Bergson, the strangest disciple. Bergson was terrified, right, to see that he had produced such a disciple who spoke in such a bizarre way. Well, all that is what we have to look at in our research on Bergsonian time and on this aggregate concerning the problem of images and signs.⁵

Second topic or second objective that I would like to achieve this year. Well, last year, regarding cinema, we were led -- and also the year before, so I'm in fact reorganizing; and also the year before -- we had been led to try to construct two concepts. These concepts weren't new from me, these concepts were known; they're the aesthetic concepts of "expressionism" and "lyrical abstraction". Lyrical abstraction was a term I borrowed from [Wassily] Kandinsky, but I tried to give it a whole new meaning. So, expressionism was fairly well known; lyrical abstraction was more of a problem.

And this year as well, so I would like to return -- and I've considered, I've told myself since the summer holidays, all that -- that I believe in this topic, and that, obviously at the time, I moved past it much too quickly, that is, I've had time to think more, and at all costs, I must go back over it. Because I believe there is something in it that should be situated. And this time, the corresponding topic is the theme of light and its relationship with shadow. Sense already that this second topic, light and its relationship with shadow, is not entirely foreign to my first topic: movement and its relationship with time, that undoubtedly there will be links in such a way that my two topics will intertwine. But I am trying to clarify this second topic: light and its relationship with shadow.⁶

And I am saying, the basic text to which I want us to return here, just as I cited Peirce as the main text for the first direction -- not at all that I want those taking this course to re-read or read all of this, but you might choose to take one that will become your main focus; you have to choose what suits you in what we are doing -- I am saying, the main text is the one that I discussed, it seems to me, two years ago, but not enough, not fully : *The Theory of Colors* by Goethe.⁷ And that would be our main text, this extraordinary *Theory of Colors*, which was recently translated into French for the first time -- it took a while, you see -- in a little-known publishing house called "Triad", and which fortunately -- I think so -- is not out of print yet, is still a basic book for anyone interested in a whole range of problems, not just painting.

And so why is it that, as a function of this problem of light and shadow, I want return to these two concepts of "expressionism" and "lyrical abstraction", which we had encountered, both for painting two years ago and for the cinema last year?⁸ And here, I really want to go much more, to go much farther than I wanted to go last year, and I'm trying to tell you why right away. It's because if I try to define expressionism, both in literature and in cinema and in painting, I am trying to give it a few large characteristics, whatever might be the diversity of expressionism's representatives. For me, the consistency of a concept has never been compromised by the diversity of representatives. I mean, the concept of Romanticism strikes me as perfectly grounded, not just fully, but insofar as there is an immense diversity of writers who will be called "Romantics" and who are not so alike. Likewise, there is an immense diversity of authors who will be called "expressionists"; in the cinema, it's obvious that [Fritz] Lang and [F.W.] Murnau are not alike. And yet, the concept of expressionism seems to me to be well founded. On what? On a certain number of propositions which obviously -- since they are not philosophers, they are something else, and there is nothing to complain about -- it is not the question of situating these basic propositions.

On the other hand, the philosopher's question is to make a concept of this. I would say that if we tried to form a concept of expressionism, I would try to define it by three propositions, it's

simple, three initial propositions, and it is from there that we would have to go farther. The first proposition is that light is fundamentally related to darkness [*ténèbres*], [Pause] and the luminous principle relates to darkness as the principle of opacity. [Pause] The second proposition: shadow [Pause] is, in a different way, the expression of the varying relationships between the luminous principle and the opaque, and darkness. [Pause] The third proposition: the spirit can be understood only in its relation of struggle or conflict with darkness. [Pause] It is the luminous principle caught in his struggle with darkness, but in such complex conditions that there is also a "spirit of darkness" [*esprit des ténèbres*].

Whether you think of the cinema, or of literature, or of painting, I believe that for those known as expressionists, you will find in them the trace of these propositions which are not speculative propositions but are practical propositions. This is how they live. And, for example, if you think of Murnau's "Faust" [1926], if you think of what the expressionists borrow from Goethe, this is what they borrow from Goethe: the idea of the luminous principle in its struggle with darkness, a struggle which commits the destiny of the spirit, the spirit being the living combat of light and darkness. Fine, here one must not -- this is not open to discussion, but is so elementary -- the only complaint you could make to me is all of this is too elementary. Okay, but this is precisely our starting point.

And at that point, I am saying there is one very, very interesting thing for me: that, if I want to construct a concept of "lyrical abstraction", I take the term, I borrow it, fine, but I'm trying to give it another sense than the one Kandinsky gave to it. So, if I try to make this concept of lyrical abstraction our own -- regardless of what Kandinsky meant -- I tell myself that there is a whole other adventure of light than the expressionist adventure, and you indeed sense that, here too, I am not attempting to say one is better than the other. No, I'm trying to discover what might be different here, and around the same time, and that you'll recognize the authors. I am saying, if I then tried to look for propositions of lyrical abstraction comparable to my three propositions of expressionism earlier, I would say, the lyrical abstraction authors, you will recognize them by this. And suddenly, it is indeed the role of philosophy and of concepts in philosophy to appeal to what is most personal to you, that is, where you recognize yourself. What innovations are you? From what do you descend?

So furthermore, when one is a descendent of an innovation, maybe you are also ready to engender other innovations. "Lyrical abstraction" and "expressionism" do not cover the entire field, neither cinematographic, nor pictorial, nor literary, nor philosophical. But I am saying, if I try to define lyrical abstraction by such simple propositions, I would say the first proposition, that's what they are like, and here again, there is nothing to discuss. What interests them is not the relationship of light to darkness. That's not what interests them. Why? Once again, it's a mystery to me, the relation of the concept insofar as being a philosophical concept, with what one might call a preference, a taste -- I can't find the word; I'll have to find it during the year, I'll need, I need a word for that subjective determination that makes me stick to a concept -- so I could call it faith. Fine, very good. The condition obviously that it would no longer be a religious faith, it would be a properly philosophical faith.

What makes me, what is it that makes me tell myself: ah, this concept, I understand it? It suits me. I am concerned with it. Okay, that's strange. And there are people who tell themselves, well

no, the problem of light is not so much its relationship with the darkness. You understand, at this level, you must not exaggerate, right? Objecting becomes something so stupid. What would your objection be? These are people who are creating something, you're not going to tell them, "Hey watch out, why, why are you saying that?" That's the way they want it. Want [*envie*], that's it! A want. I could say, it is the relationship of the philosophical concept with a desire, with a want, or an impression. They have an impression. "Well, no, I have the impression," says the representative of lyrical abstraction, "that the real problem with light is not a problem with darkness." And in this, they say, this is how you recognize them ... [*Interruption of the recording*] [27:37]

... with darkness; it already was the case, a fantastic and self-sufficient creative act. It was so self-sufficient that he couldn't pose another problem except as a consequence.⁹ Of course, he would encounter the problem of whiteness, but he would only be able to encounter it afterwards. He ended up, he could only end up where the adherents of lyrical abstraction were going to start, returning the favor. But because some ended up there and others started there, everything was changed, absolutely everything. It was not the same problem. A problem that you come up with as a consequence and a problem that you pose to yourself in principle, it is not the same problem, not at all from the point of view of creation.

So, here I am saying, the proponents of lyrical abstraction arrive and tell us: you know, for us, the real problem with light -- they don't say they're correct, they say, it's our business -- our business is not the struggle of light with darkness; it is the adventure of light with whiteness. This is strange. And here they are aligning themselves with the relationship between light and white space. Fine. So, this is the first proposition that is opposed to the first proposition of expressionism.

The second proposition. Does that mean there won't be any shadow? Maybe, maybe for some there will be no shadow. For some, one must go so far as to say: shadow does not exist. Shadow is pure appearance; there is no shadow. There are only relations of light with whiteness. More nuanced people might say, of course, there is shadow, and shadow is very important, but shadow is never just a consequence. See the difference with the expressionist proposition. Whereas the expressionists told us, shadow is the expression of the relationship between the two principles, a principle of darkness, a luminous principle, they say, shadow is a consequence which follows from its premises. What premises? The premises of shadow is light and white, and shadow will only result. It's a consequence; it does not express the struggle of light and darkness. It is the consequence resulting from the luminous and whiteness. So, the two premises of shadow are the luminous and whiteness. If you give yourself the luminous and whiteness, shadow results. What an odd idea compared to ... You see, it's already a whole different world from expressionism, a status of shadow entirely different.

And third, third ... [*Pause*] The expressionists told us: henceforth, the act of the spirit is the combat of the spirit with darkness, a combat so intimate that there can be and there is a spirit of darkness: Mephisto. [*Pause*] And here it is that lyrical abstraction can be recognized by something else entirely. These are people who tell us, "You have no combat to engage in", "your spirit is not in combat". And they strongly reject the notion of combat; that's not what interests them. If they say anything about it, they'll say -- but here it gets complicated -- they'll say,

[*Pause*] they'll say, "the spirit, your spirit is in a fundamental relationship, whether it likes it or not, whether it knows it or not, with an alternative and with a fundamental choice". It doesn't have to fight at all; this is not combat with darkness, this is not a duel with shadows. Any expressionist theme, be it a duel with shadows, combat with darkness, all that, you find that in all the literature, in all painting, in all the expressionist cinema, for them, no, no, that's not it. You have a choice.

You'd better close it [*the window*], there's a draft... That's what is bothering me.... Ah, it's really like painting, it's perfect! [*Laughter; Deleuze speaks to a student*] but you are grasping certain things or...?

A woman student: It's lost in space... [*Laughter*]

Deleuze: So, you cannot close it; the others, if there were but one...

Yes, the spirit is dealing with a choice, an alternative, between what? [*Pause; several student voices are heard talking to each other*] Well, it's going to make a choice, an alternative between white and black. You will tell me: but black, where does it come from? Let's not go too fast. In any case, there will not be any combat. A choice to be made, a bet, an alternative, an "either, or". It is no longer the expressionist "against" of the duel and conflict; it is the "either, or", "either, or"; either or, what? It's something. But there we have the third proposition of lyrical abstraction.¹⁰

And there again, I appeal to you in trying to make you feel what philosophy is. Philosophy is at once the construction of concepts, but which reaches toward you like a kind of a handle, like a kind of doorknob: it's up to you to grasp it or not. If you accept the idea that concepts are creatures, entities, creations, they reach out to you, in what sense? In this sense, they are asking you, -- generally, they don't care, really, they don't care -- "Do I suit you?" If this isn't the right one for you, another will suit you. If necessary, it will be up to you to construct it. And it's in this sense that I've always told you, concepts are signed; they are creations. It happens that a number of authors have done this, and notice that they have a particular consistency because at first glance, they do not link together, as in mathematics, the three propositions of lyrical abstraction: light, a first proposition, light being in a fundamental relationship with whiteness; second proposition: shadow is never more than a consequence resulting from premises; third proposition: spirit is not in a state of combat, but in a state of alternative, of choice.

This is odd, and then these three propositions come together, form a consistent concept. If you tell yourself: "my God, my God", an act of faith, "that's just what I thought", or if you tell yourself: "Why yes, that suits me, that's how I see things", very good, it is up to you to go farther in this direction. But you can tell yourself, if it is convenient for you, if it helps you: "Ah well yes". Then you can show what you can do: are the people you like in art, for example, really those of lyrical abstraction, these men of white, of the alternative, of the shadow as a consequence?

So, I choose an example -- it seems very scary to me -- I choose an example that I had just barely begun about cinema because they rebroadcasted, they rebroadcasted ... they rebroadcasted "The Blue Angel" [1930] by [Josef von] Sternberg on TV. And it's very curious because we tell ourselves, well, people are not reasonable, really, they don't talk honestly about things. Sternberg, it's obvious that Sternberg in film is one of the very big exponents of what I call lyrical abstraction. Why? Because for him, there is only one problem: it is -- there is only a primary problem -- it is the problem of the relation of light to whiteness. That's what interests him. And his whole system of veiling, etc., is the relationship between light and whiteness.¹¹

And why is this a problem? Goethe is on both sides. You will find -- this is why I referred to *The Theory of Colors* -- you will find in *The Theory of Colors* a whole part which is: the relationship between light and darkness. And then you will find a whole another part: the light-whiteness relationship. Goethe arranges all this in his own way. He is Goethe. But it should come as no surprise that next, the next two opposing currents, expressionism and lyrical abstraction, can also claim to be from Goethe. It just won't be the same Goethe. It won't be the same Goethe.¹²

I am saying, what Sternberg would be interested in -- it's not at all that Sternberg ignores shadows; on the contrary, he makes magnificent shadows -- but for him, shadow always has the status of consequence. What interests him is the light-whiteness relationship. Why? And how is he Goethean? Because the true opacity for him is not darkness. There is no darkness. For him, there is no darkness. For an abstract lyricist, there is no darkness. Darkness is only when the light stops. It's not a principle. When light ceases, there is darkness, fine, that's of no interest. True opacity, not that which opposes light, but that the light somehow poses, is whiteness. Goethe's splendid expression: "White [is] the fortuitously opaque flash of pure transparency." White is the first opacity. White is the fortuitously opaque flash -- that is really a beautiful expression -- it is the expression of lyrical abstraction. White is the fortuitously opaque flash of pure transparency, that is, the pure luminous. It is the opacity that light poses. Then shadow will result as its consequence, fine.¹³

You will notice, if you like Sternberg, for example, in the cinema, you will notice that for him even smoke fumes are white opacities whose shadows are only consequences. It is the opposite of expressionist smoke. Expressionist smoke is the rise of darkness in relation to light. For Sternberg, that's absolutely not it. This is very, very curious. So, when we talk about Sternberg's expressionism, that strikes me as such a misunderstanding, all that. These are white spaces. So, every time you quote to me about spaces covered in shadows in a particular author, I will tell you, obviously, obviously, you must not have me babbling nonsense; I know it, I know that there are spaces covered in shadows. What interests me is the status of shadows in such spaces. In my opinion, shadows always result from the relationship of light to whiteness, and not at all shadows that result from the struggle of light with darkness as in expressionism.

As a result, if I were to continue discussing cinema -- which was my focus last year -- I could say, you recognize the other authors of lyrical abstraction, whatever their power from the perspective of shadows, by their predominant taste for the relationship between space and whiteness. And these are, for example, authors who seem very different from Sternberg, but yes, yes, these adherents are very different. It's [Carl] Dreyer. It's [Robert] Bresson. And why is there also a history of faith in Bresson linked to lyrical abstraction? And oddly enough, these authors

are so anti-expressionist that they never present us with struggles and combat. Rather, they perpetually present to us the spirit in a state of alternative or choice. Strange.

As a result, this notion of lyrical abstraction, well, would indeed be a consistent concept compared to expressionism in my common problem of light-shadow. And light-shadow, if I try - here, I have developed too much -- henceforth if I try to give it a direction in accordance with my first direction which was movement-time, I would say when I take up the question of light-shadow relations, this time it will be centered no longer on movement-time, but -- and this can be explained by itself -- on time-intensity. Time-intensity. [Pause]

As a result, in this regard, the problems, the fundamental texts that we will need will be -- and I will be very happy for a certain number of you to get started -- they will be Kant's texts, three texts, two of which are small. No, three small, three small texts, but difficult, of real philosophy, really, of real philosophy, and then of great creation of concepts. In *The Critique of Pure Reason*, about ten pages on intensive quantities, [Pause] under the title, a chapter titled "Anticipations of perception". Another short text in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, with the title is, "[Of] the Schematism of Conceptions of Understanding", on schematism, and where Kant... This text interests me, and I will have to comment on it because Kant distinguishes, in an extremely, extraordinarily new way, four points of view on time, and we will see that this is closely linked to the problem of intensity. He distinguishes: the series of time, the content of time, the order of time, and the whole [ensemble] of time. And again, if you manage to read this text, immediately the question counts less, the question "do you understand everything in the text?" counts less [than] "does this text speak to you? do you feel like you have some connection to this text?" And finally, the third, the third text by Kant that I would need in this regard, [is] in *The Critique of Judgment*, a fairly short text, also difficult, under the title of "The Theory of the Sublime". [Pause]

So, there you have it, my first research direction therefore concerns, roughly, movement-time and operates a classification of signs and images. My second research direction concerns intensity and time and proposes to operate a confrontation expressionism and lyrical abstraction based on the problem of light. Finally, my third research [direction] -- and there, I no longer even have to develop it -- this would be time for itself, that is, what does the movement-time problem, and the time-intensity problem, allow us to conclude as to time for itself? [Pause]

Hence, having better articulated this whole system of review [reprise] that I want to do this year, I am starting, here, this is really a set of modifications. I'll start over or again take up some points from our first meeting. I can assume you forgot certain things, not forgot, etc., but, or after this first session, some of you told me or wrote to me pointing out that, in fact, things that I considered as taken for granted were causing difficulties. And for me, that's good. My goal this year -- that's why I insist, it suits me very particularly -- I am again returning, that's why, I could return to for the tenth time if there is one among you who can tell me that there is still something wrong. Well, this is perfect because it seems to me that it gives us, that this method of "ironing out" (*repassage*), of perpetual modification, might possibly teach us a lot.

And I was saying the last time, here we are, well, we are starting, we are starting from this first chapter of Bergson's *Matter and Memory*. And in that, I will not go back over it again. I'm just

saying: [*Deleuze moves towards the blackboard*] with Bergson, we gave ourselves -- we trusted him -- we gave ourselves what I called -- the terms were not Bergsonian, but no matter, I will specify it each time -- a kind of plane. But "plane" is a way of speaking since we did not take into account the dimensions. So why was it called a plane since it wasn't about size? Because at this point, something presented itself -- and we used the plane in the sense of a plane of presentation -- we called it "plane of immanence".

What was this plane of immanence? Well, it was solely an infinite set of images in movement, that is, an infinite set of images that kept acting and reacting to each other, to each upon one another. [*Deleuze marks points on the board*] What are these images? What is that? Well, we could care less ... An infinite set of any images whatsoever which are defined solely by this: they never cease to vary, to act and to react in relation to each other, and -- here these are Bergsonian terms -- "on all their facets and in all their parts". [*Pause*] You will ask me, but what is it? Any image at all! What is an image? Let's wait. For the moment, what we call "image", henceforth, is everything that acts and reacts. Everything that acts and reacts to anything is image. Let's not try to find out why again; let's accept it. We have to let ourselves go. It was the startling beginning of *Matter and Memory* by Bergson. "We will call image everything that acts and reacts on all its facets and in all its parts".¹⁴

I would say, but what is it? You're going to say, am I one? Am I one of these images? Absolutely yes. Each of you is one of those images, as you keep undergoing actions and executing reactions. Your eye, oh yeah, your eye, that's an image on this plane. It undergoes actions, it has reactions. Your eye, yes. Your brain, well yeah, your brain is an image. As a parenthesis, don't say that these images present themselves to your eye. Your eye is just one image among others. By what right would you dare to think that as all of these images vary from one another and your eye is one image among the others, how can you think that images present themselves to your eye? That's just wrong. Your eye is one of those images on the plane of immanence. Your brain is one of those images. Absolutely everything. Moreover, no one can say at this level, me, what would that mean? There is a system of universal variation, or at your choice, of universal lapping [*clapotement*], universal vibration. You can say as well, these are atoms, or these are waves. They are atoms, or they are waves. What difference would it make? Both are true. [*Pause; Deleuze goes back to his seat*]

Short text by Bergson in this first chapter: "Compose the universe" -- what he calls universe is this plane of immanence -- "Compose the universe with atoms" -- well -- "each of them is subject, [in quantity and quality] variables according to the distance, to the actions exerted by all the other atoms of matter". In this case, you will say, images are atoms. "[Compose the universe on the contrary] With centers of force?" In this case, "the lines of force emitted in every direction by every center bring to bear on each center the influences of the whole material world".¹⁵ So, you can have waves, lines of force, atoms, all of that is images. What matters is only an infinite set of images which vary from one to another on all their facets and in all their parts.

There we are, this infinite set, I call it for convenience, so -- you remember well, that is the essential point, "infinite set of images which vary with respect to each other on all their facets and in all their parts" whatever this might be -- I call it "plane of immanence". You will say to me, "whatever this might be": here this is already becoming so difficult to understand. You

understand, this is the construction of a concept; you always have to speak as if "whatever this might be". I told you, while fully opening up this plane of immanence to you, that each of you is there insofar as you receive actions and execute reactions. And your eye is there, your brain is there, and the atoms that keep composing you, recomposing you, they're there. [*Deleuze returns to the blackboard*]

But finally, it's an odd system, this system of the universal variation or the great lapping, or the waving [*ondulation*]. I can call it the system of universal variation, universal lapping, of waving. It changes nothing. It changes nothing. If you grant me that, in any case, it's "this infinite set of images varying with respect to each other on all their facets and in all their parts", you may very well place yourself therein. Through an effort of thought, settle yourself onto this plane. At this point, it goes without saying that you have no right to say, "me"; there is no "me" in there. Why? "Me" implies a privileged center. "Me" implies a privileged image. "Me", what does that imply? "Me" implies, when you say, "me", it means: I am, if only for "me", a privileged image in relation to which the other images are organized. This is what you mean by saying "I perceive".

At the point we've reached, these statements are unintelligible. At the point we've reached, these statements are meaningless. So, when I say, "you are, you, on this plane of immanence," it is you without you, it is the people of your atoms. There it's there, the people of your atoms. Why? Because I am trying to, once I've given myself -- it's a consistent notion -- I've given myself that, you can tell me, "Oh, that doesn't mean anything to me," but if that doesn't mean anything to you, well, that's your business. Again, I wouldn't blame you for that.

This is what I always insist. Objections are truly stupidity [*connerie*]. What do you want to say to Bergson in this splendid first chapter? You have to try to understand it, and then if that doesn't suit you, well, you look elsewhere. But to tell him, you're not going to argue by saying, "oh no, no, it's not, that's not it." Of course, it may not be it. If this idea of a plane of immanence thus defined -- an infinite set of images, etc. -- seems to you meaningless or irrelevant, that's because -- and there is no shame in it -- you cannot relate to that concept. You will do without it as it will do without you. [*Laughter*]. It's not complicated. On the contrary, if you feel that you might relate to it a little bit, then you are a little bit Bergsonian.

A student: Does an image remain an image... [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: That's what I was getting to.

The student: And at the extreme, wouldn't it be idiotic even to conceive of this degree of absolute immobility?

Deleuze: Fine, fine. That's right, many of you told me that. I can't tell yet. I have to go very slowly. But your question is absolutely, is absolutely valid. But for now, we still trust him while still keeping that in mind. But I'm trying to clarify other things on this plane of immanence, if you grant this to me. Understand well that it goes so far, this system of images in perpetual variation, that not only there's no question of there being selves, even that you, you are there, and you have deposited your quality of being a self when you are on this plane. You are a set of atoms or a set of images in this infinite set, that's all. And you have no privilege.

Furthermore, I would say, this plane has no dimensions, or it has small "n" dimensions. All I can say is that it does not benefit from any dimensions supplementary to the number of dimensions occurring on it. Above all, it has no axis. It has no axis. That is very important. I mean, it doesn't have a vertical. This is why I insist: whatever the number of dimensions, there is no dimension supplementary to the number of dimensions occurring on that plane. That means, you won't establish a vertical axis there. In my presentation -- in my uniquely special presentation, which is therefore very incorrect, I am forced to speak like that, words, which have a limit -- I would say, it is a pure horizontal plane. It cannot be otherwise. A vertical axis would imply the establishment of a privileged center, at the point where the vertical axis crosses the plane. It has absolutely no axis. It's an absolutely acentric world. It is an absolutely acentric world which excludes any axis. It excludes any axis; this is very important.

I am telling myself, let's take a break, let's have a little rest since we really have time. I would like to provide us with the time, each time, to try to constitute this concept, of the plane of immanence. It does not mean anything to you, that; it does not have an axis, fine, it does not have a vertical axis.¹⁶ Suddenly, fine, what is it? And in fact, having no vertical axis, that has consequences; if it has no vertical axis, it also has neither right nor left. Right and left, that doesn't imply two things, it implies three things. It implies an East, a West and an above. [Pause] Well, it doesn't have, it doesn't have, it doesn't have an axis. So, there is no right and left. So, fine. It is obviously omnidirectional, so, fine, very good, and it gets complicated. It has no axis, it has no right and no left.

Yet there are substances in nature. So, it's not even a plane of nature because there are famous substances in nature. There are famous substances -- I speak for those who have studied a little chemistry, so they might recall, otherwise it doesn't matter -- there are chemical substances which are known to rotate the plane of polarization, what is called the plane of polarization, to the right or to the left. These are particularly important substances for the emergence of life. Yes, but chemists basically agree -- to put it very simply, you'll allow me all the simplest popularizations since I am trying to specify a very, very precise point which, for his part, is not popularization -- those substances that rotate the plane of polarization to the right or to the left, that is, that ultimately they are necessarily triadic substances where one must have an East, a West, but also an axis, fine, on these substances, all chemists agree in saying: they could not be produced when the earth was very hot. For us, this will be, this will bring us a lot; when the earth was very hot, there were none.

Well, well, in the era when the earth was very hot, let's go to the extreme, fine, there were none, there were none. Was there a right and a left when the earth was very hot? That is, were there such orientations? That's not certain. The plane of immanence, my plane of immanence, isn't that a plane, there where the earth was very hot? And where it was so hot as what? Because -- I am linking, I am linking at random, like that; we do a kind of linkage to see if we find our way there -- because after all, my plan of immanence, Bergson just told us, just suggested to us, and you are on it, of course -- but it was a way of joking; philosophers laugh all the time, they laugh at things which do not make others laugh, but which make them laugh a lot -- he [Bergson] said,

obviously, you are there, I put you on my plane. Except that, oh horror, he put you there in a strange form, the collection of our atoms.

Well, the moment you were saying, well, I'm there, nope, not at all, you weren't there, necessarily. This is a prehuman world. It's a prehuman world. That interests me because it's a prehuman and pre-ape world; it's a world, whatever you want. Obviously, this is a world when it was very hot, so hot that, that what? I tell myself, even atoms, isn't that too much? Because, finally, Bergson tells us, these atoms are strictly inseparable from the actions they produce on other atoms and from the reactions they have on other atoms. So, these are funny atoms. They are atoms inseparable from clusters of actions and reactions, that is, they are strictly inseparable atoms, say, from waves. Fine, in other words, on this plane, are there any solid bodies? Maybe not. Maybe there is nothing solid on this plane. And the atom, it's already just like when I was saying, you are there, that's just a way of speaking, there are atoms on this plane. There are no atoms; there are bundles of actions and reactions. And this is what we will call "image", bundles of actions and reactions in all senses and in all directions.

And this is what we are going to call "image" and what we are going to call movement-image since these bundles are strictly identical to the movement that they execute as actions on something else or reactions from something else. But these things, in turn, are bundles of actions and reactions. It really is the universal variation. It's movement-image at all levels. There is nothing I can say about "there you have one thing". There are no things. And what is it that we, we call "things" at the same time that we distinguish a right and a left, at the same time as the earth has cooled, at the same time as substances formed which caused the plane of polarization to rotate to the right and to the left, giving us a right and a left, and endowing us with what? With a solid body. All that happened long after, and why and how, and we don't know, we don't know yet. What is all that, these solid bodies?

Well, last year we were discussing it about cinema, and now I need to pick it up again.¹⁷ I am starting again from really easy popularization. How do we distinguish between states of matter: solids, liquids, gases? What is a solid? Our perception is a perception of solid. Well, there is nothing we can do about it, we are doomed to solid perception and solids. We are solids, and we have a perception adapted to the solid.

What does a solid mean? That means a body whose molecules don't enjoy a movement [*parcours*], generally speaking, right? I mean, there it is said, it's not science, it's like a definition; it's like a basic, elementary, philosophical concept. You will call a solid a body whose molecules do not enjoy any movement, at the extreme, the ideal solid. In fact, indeed, [*Deleuze draws these molecules*] molecules are pressed against each other so that each molecule is condemned by its neighbors to occupy a very restricted space, that is, oscillates around an average position. That's a little more scientific, what I'm saying. Each molecule is forced by its neighbors by virtue of its contact with the neighbors and forced by contact to occupy a minimum space, that is, a position, that is, an average vibration around a position, no... of a vibration around an average position. This is what you will call a solid.

You will call a liquid, a body whose molecules have a movement [*parcours*], but not free, not free. That is, molecules are moving, they are in motion, they are not immobilized, they are in

motion. But they stay in contact with each other and move between each other, a kind of sliding. That's liquid, an entirely simple kind ... [*Interruption of the recording*] [1 :10 :34]

Part 2

... And then you have gases; a gas, what is it? It is a body where molecules not only have a movement [*parcours*], but a free movement. What is "free movement" called? We call "free movement" the distance traveled by a molecule -- you see that there, it's gained, something there is gained -- the distance traveled by a molecule between two shocks, with another molecule. The average distance traveled by a molecule between two shocks defines the free path of each molecule. A gaseous body, this free movement is variable -- this is well known -- with "pressure". [*Pause*]

What happens -- last point to understand -- what happens when a solid body is heated? I discover my theme of heat. When it is heated via fusion, it loses its solid state, that is, its molecules are no longer constrained by contact to each having only a very small variation compared to a constant mean position, and they tend toward the gaseous state where each molecule has a free movement. Okay, so, in a certain way, it just needs to heat up; at the same time, in a certain way, life is no longer possible, right? This is ... Okay, very good, very good. That's what I wanted to say.

You remember last year, with regard to cinema, we had studied precisely the question of a solid perception, of a liquid perception -- in particular of the role of liquid perception in the French cinema school, in the French pre-war school -- and then of a "gaseous" perception in experimental cinema, with all their stories of photograms, of photograms that burn, of loops, of flickering, of vibration-flickering, etc., etc. , and it seemed to us the cinematographic approach of gaseous perception. And that seemed to us to be explicitly desired by certain representatives of experimental cinema. Let's rediscover this here. [*Deleuze indicates his drawing*] Finally, on my plane of immanence, I believe that as I reach something like a universal variation, it is like a kind of gaseous state of matter which implies a very great heat of the plane. This heat, it will come from where? That we'll need to answer; that will be necessary.

Fine, so let's try to liven this up. I am saying a world without axis, without right or left, without solid bodies, you see, at the extreme, my plane of immanence is obtained, at the extreme ... [*Interruption of the recording*] [74: 21]

... which react on each other. Okay, but still, is this foreign to us? No, what would you like ..., what can thought be practiced on? On what can art be practiced, if not in a certain way to create the world before man, or what amounts to the same thing, to create the world after man? What good is the philosophy of art, etc.? Of course, it is about speaking to us about man, but it also about speaking to us about the non-human, that is, of one before man, one after man, which is surely not the same as that of science.

What is happening today? I would say that today, the plane of immanence without axis, without solid bodies, without right or left, etc., the world of movement-images, the world of movement-images in a pure state, in some ways, one is usually in pursuit. We keep on ... why is it pursuit? It would be a question, to know why. What ... Maybe we have the feeling that we would understand many things if we reached it and many things happen there that go in this direction.

So let's try to define. Okay, we're not arguing; is that a good concept or not? Modernity, I would say modernity, oh well, it's like everything, right? There are good and bad; there's no need for concern, right? So, let's try, we can define it, "modernity", our own modernity, which is dear to us. How to define it? We can define it in many ways, but we can pick out some definitions, at least the ones that suit us right now. Modernity, I tell myself -- you see, it seems that we've left Bergson behind, but actually, we have not, you understand -- I tell myself, if I tried to define modernity, I would say, there are two things that seem to me as striking among a thousand others. On the one hand, it is because we no longer have, we no longer have, and this is very serious, that is a very serious moment, it's that the vertical axis is collapsing. That's annoying, or else it's quite joyful. It all depends on what you do with it, right? But we can see that it is starting, we are living in very strange times because the vertical axis is starting to melt. And we can always say -- here you know we always tend a bit to create the vast panorama -- we can say that the world has existed for a very long time by placing all kinds of things into question, but we did not question the vertical axis. What was the vertical axis? It was the posture of man as a standing.

And now, hasn't that been in the process of disappearing for quite some time? Isn't it disappearing and in a thousand ways, all very interesting, some horrible and abject, others splendid, and then sometimes very confused, both very confused? Well, I'm not even saying which ones strike me as abject and which ones strike me as splendid. But still, there is a growing number of people who exist lying down. What does that mean, "to exist lying down"? One must consider modern diseases. It's very interesting how they relate to the abandonment of a vertical stature. You can't ask, was the vertical stature good? In any case, soon we'll be trying some others. What are we shown constantly in stories about interstellar travel? Well, we are shown that essentially, essentially people who no longer have a vertical axis -- that's absolutely finished, and it is pretty besides -- it is good, these beings without vertical axis. They lost the vertical axis. Well, I would say technologically, this questioning of the vertical axis is constant, which was the human posture on earth, the human as king of the earth. Ah yes.

Okay, but let's add, there must be echoes elsewhere. In art, in art, it's very interesting, but the vertical axis, it's taking a huge hit, in all directions, and the more inconsistent it is, the more that interests me, I want say, the more it's independent. Here I am struck by an area which I know nothing about, so I am speaking about it all the more cheerfully, while surely among you, there are some who are familiar with it, and I would like, in our next session, well, that those who might be familiar with this area to talk about it. I saw it on TV, because for once, they did some programs on stories of modern dance, and something strikes me. So, I have been looking for a representative who seems magnificent to me for this "modern dance" named Brigitte Marbin. I want to know at all costs who Brigitte Marbin is, who is a choreographer of this trend. And in "modern dance", what little that I saw there like that, I tell myself it's very, very curious anyway

-- I'm exaggerating, right? I'm simplifying -- but that's one of the trends, I'm not saying that's "modern dance".¹⁸

When they are standing up, they have to form a group. They tend to form a kind of conglomerate -- very curious, right? -- to lean on each other, with very, very, very large rhythmic effects. At that point, these are group rhythms that animate them as if they are standing so badly that, if they didn't not support each other, they would collapse. And that's what happens, and out of that, a flexibility, a rhythm, a fantastic freedom of movement, purely horizontal, lying on the ground. Good. So, even in things better known like [Maurice] Béjart, we see the elements of that. We see them as much calmer, much more ... But this is evident in modern ballet, the loss, the loss of the reference of the vertical axis, of the privilege of the vertical axis.

A completely different example that I take at random, a completely different example: painting, painting. Yet in the 19th century, there is something that is very important. It's, as they say, easel paint, and what does one paint on when it wasn't easel paint? Let's assume it was fresco. Fresco consists of painting a wall. Fresco is inseparable from the wall. So, of course, it's flat. There is a flatness. Maybe there has always been a flatness of painting. This has been assumed in a very different way in the history of painting. Well, that does not prevent that, compared to this flatness of the painting, [*Deleuze draws on the board*] the vertical axis kept its privilege. Something started when obviously people said, for example, "oh Picasso, we can turn it around, it's not ..." Which is absolutely wrong about Picasso, but that doesn't matter. Morons are always right because they are not right about what they say, but they are right about something else. It's obvious. It turns out that this was wrong for Picasso because in all Cubism, there is still -- and again, maybe not really, maybe I'm wrong to say that -- but you could say that there is still a reference. On the other hand, perhaps in some of [Marcel] Duchamp's paintings, there is no longer this reference to the vertical axis. But it doesn't matter. We could discuss at what point, in what first great works.

To me, it seems obvious that, for example, in modern American painting, the reference to the vertical axis is questioned more and more, to the point that the moment will quickly come when paintings will lose their apparent reference to the vertical axis, that is, the very fact that they are being put on the walls. The very act of putting a painting on a wall still involves a reference to the vertical axis. Okay, that will tend to disappear because I can't say that's very important, the moment painting ceased to be easel painting. But already at the time when it was easel painting, there are wonderful letters from both Cézanne and Van Gogh, when they do easel painting, when they say in what state they must put themselves to seize, for example, a setting sun. They must lie down on the ground. Van Gogh has fantastic letters on how he comes home at night. After that, that he seems completely crazy in his village, it is obvious; in positions, he has to plant his easel, push it down more and more, the vertical axis already. Already the post-impressionists can no longer, can no longer maintain the vertical axis, it might already be... so we don't know.

Good, but anyway, if I think of a painter like [Jackson] Pollock, is there a vertical axis that still makes sense for him? Some say yes. They want, in any case, everyone agrees on one point: that a revolution took place around 1950 in painting, which was the American revolution, but which consists less in what is usually said, but there is an American critic who saw it very clearly when he said, around 1950, this revolution which is perhaps only a growing awareness of what Pollock

had prepared, it is [Robert] Rauschenberg's revolution.¹⁹ And the Rauschenberg revolution is the deliberate and voluntary abandonment of the vertical axis. Good.

But first, is literature behind? In literature, it's been years and years since Beckett had offered us a number of characters, and these characters were essentially and literally dealing with the vertical axis and the question of how to let go of the vertical axis. How to stop standing? And we always translated that -- and it's both moronic and not moronic; things, they're so ambiguous, you know -- we translated that as, "ah, Beckett's despair, ah", etc., etc.! Yes, that's not wrong, although Beckett must be one of the funniest writers. He's one of the funniest writers, and at the same time, he's not a very cheerful author, he's not an author -- it even clashes -- he possesses a fundamental sense of the comic, and at the same time, he relates stories that are more about garbage, about ... well, fine.

But what is important about this? What is the problem for a Beckett character? We talked about it with "Film" when, in our first session, when, what is it? He's the guy, he still walks, Buster Keaton, he still walks along his wall in Beckett's "Film". And then he reaches his room, he closes everything, no longer to be perceived, no longer to act, etc.; he puts himself in Beckett's sacred instrument in all of his work: the rocking chair. He gets into the rocking chair, but as Beckett often says, the only position better than sitting is lying down. There is only one better position, we are not talking about standing. It's better to sit than to stand, that's the Beckettian principle; sitting is better than standing but lying down is better than sitting.

However, however, there is a law, there is a law of the inhuman world, it is the law of movement. You have to move. And a famous Beckett hero,²⁰ in one of the most beautiful pages of Beckett, says: "despite orders" -- unfortunately I am not quoting exactly -- "despite orders" -- the order to move, to move at any cost -- "despite orders, I would collapse with my face on a pile of dead leaves and hit my forehead, I tell myself" -- that's always adorable when Beckett's characters talk to themselves, we must expect the best, that is, the worst -- "I tell myself, but you forgot to crawl". [*Laughter*] He's forgotten to crawl where he's going to start crawling, right, in a very, very strange way.

So, what is this? What is it? What one can name as a waste, a waste of humanity, is also a fantastic conquest, a conquest of the world without verticality. If you read it like garbage, trash, what happens? At that point, the ideal -- and Beckett says this, there are so many levels of reading in a great author -- this is how to be still, not how to get to be still. And in fact, if we read it the other way, what we took in relation to our own world as production of waste, in fact from another point of view is a conquest, a conquest of a world without verticality, a conquest of a world which has lost this privileged axis, and which will therefore open us to other things. At that point, the question is no longer one of stillness; it is one of connecting, how to connect with the plane of immanence, how to connect with the universal lapping, how to connect with the universal vibration, how to connect with the universal variation of movement-images which vary not with respect to a privileged image which would be endowed with verticality -- that's all over -- but which all vary with respect to each other on all their facets and in all their parts. Good.²¹

And in the cinema, the same thing, the same thing. One of the greats of experimental cinema that we talked about last year, Michael Snow, what is he doing? Well, he's making a film like

“Central Region” which is a masterpiece.²² They show it periodically; those who haven't seen him don't have ... What is he doing? He invents a very, very expensive, a very, very expensive device [*Pause*] which consists in making the camera independent from human movement. No more problem... It is this device that will rotate the camera, which gives it a system of rotation in all directions and in all senses, and a continuous system, continuous movement. It never stops. And these movements are then commanded by sound waves, hence the importance of sound, which is fundamental, but I will skip over it because these sound waves, here I'll say it right away, it would suit me a lot more, but it would only have been possible if these had been light waves. But that doesn't matter, it could have been. These are sound waves; I don't want to introduce the problem of sound images into this, although it would be, it would be possible.

And what does that produce? He says it himself. It produces -- and in his opinion, the result is not yet perfect, we can trust him, he will succeed -- it essentially produces, not essentially, among other things, it first produces a continuous movement where all the images vary with respect to each other on all their facets and in all their parts. It results in the radical destruction of any privileged axis of reference, any vertical axis. You could say that cinema was still held by a vertical axis, and you know what the vertical axis is in the cinema, which is like a witness to the stature of man. It is finally the parade of the succession of images on the film. [*Pause*]

The first to have questioned -- we would have to look at this -- the first to have questioned the vertical axis is the person who placed this verticality of the succession of images on film, namely [Abel] Gance, it's Gance, it's Gance, when he said, we must not, we must go beyond the vertical succession of images -- and here I am not inventing; in all his texts, he uses the expression “vertical succession” -- we must go beyond the vertical succession of images in favor of what? In favor of “simultaneism” -- and here I am quoting exact words, I am not quoting an exact text, but I am quoting words which are all from him -- a simultaneism composed of movement of movement. And that's what he'll call “polyvision”.²³ Well, I don't mean that Gance is Snow's forerunner. I am saying that with Gance, there was already a confidence in the cinema to place in question a verticality which is the verticality of the succession of images on film. With Snow, it is then, it then takes a whole other, it is really reaching universal variation where you no longer have an axis of reference. In other words, as Snow says in the “Central Region”, there is no more up and no down. There is no more up nor down. There we have the essential point; this is the important point. Good.

That would be the first characteristic of modernity, I would say, you see. In a certain way, that would answer the question: how do we who are still human -- and I hope that we will remain so, so I do not mean at all that it would be a shame -- but how insofar as human, can we all still settle ourselves on such a plane, which at first sight, in everything I have just said, rejected us, expelled us in advance? Well, we have ways to approach it; we even have the means to fabricate such planes.

And we see that different arts work in all these directions, and if I tried to state a second characteristic of modernity, I would say, well then, there is someone who said it very well -- I am ashamed of my sources -- he was a “futurist”, he said it in an article in *Monde Dimanche*, which however is ... But it was a very, very intelligent interview. So, I pay homage to him, and I no longer know his name so... But he said something like this -- I do not absolutely remember --

anyway, he said: "our relationships with movement are completely in the process of changing". He said, "Look at sports, look at how sports work today". There are the old sports and there are the new sports. Sports working today -- so I'm translating it into my own language, it has to coincide with what he's saying, let's hope -- it was ultimately about propulsion. In old sports, you were engaged in propulsion, or production of energy. That is, you were engaged in action in the sense of "human action".²⁴

What is human action? Bergson will define human action very well. He will say: there is human action when a movement is no longer considered as such but is considered in relation to a result to be obtained, or in relation to a design to be achieved, that is, when -- here I am playing with words -- it is when movement has been replaced by the design of the movement, there is human action. Ok? You see roughly what that means. He is saying, whereas in matter, it is quite evident that the movement of matter does not propose any result, and it has no intention. This is our plane of immanence: universal variation of all the images relative to each other on all their facets and in all their parts, and that does not stop. Ok? So that was old fashioned sports. We were engaged in human action, producing energy; we engaged in propulsion, we propelled ourselves with our own body. There was a system besides ... The image was still the old image of the lever [*Pause*] or the springboard. So, we indeed see a propulsion system that produces energy, all that.

In sports now, which are really popular now, eh, there is no more of that, or it's still there, of course, it's there, the sports that I call old still remain -- bicycling, football or soccer, the shotput, all that, these are propulsion sports -- but it's not about that anymore. One senses that modern sports are not about that anymore. It is no longer about producing energy; what is it about? It's about placing oneself on an energy band [*faisceau énergétique*]. You see what I'm referring to, a series of sports the names of which I don't even know, [*Laughter*] and you might know, you. It's about throwing yourself onto an energy band. It's not about producing energy; what is it? Instead of producing energy, this is exactly what physicists call low frequency wave-action. It's not mechanics at all.²⁵

Old sports are of a mechanical type, solid body, with a border for swimming, but current sports, hang-gliding -- hey, I found a name -- aquaplane, so there are others, surfing, lots of others -- there are lots of others that I don't remember -- in all of those sports, it comes down to, you take great risks; it's not without risk either. You might miss your set-up on the band, so it's entirely different. It is no longer about the origin and destination of a movement. Look at the old boxing, right? There is an origin and a destination of movement; you even have to hide the origin for the movement to happen. [*Laughter*] But we can see that everything is there, the lever, energy production, support on one foot, it's a sport of a mechanical type. I don't mean to say mechanical sports are wrong, mechanical sports. They are huge, but they are about mechanics. It's not energetics, whereas in modern sports, they're much more of a wave type. We haven't finished having some fun on this path. [*Laughter*]

Now, I'm just saying -- you can surely complete all this a lot better than I can, some of you -- and I'm saying, aren't my two characteristics very related? Here, I don't need to try to search, I feel that they are linked, so we will search, you will search on your side, and I will search, namely the abandonment of the vertical center and the abandonment of the solid world. Mechanical movements, all of that is absolutely linked. Positioning yourself on an energy band, there is no

longer any, no longer any privilege of verticality. On the contrary, these are positions, these are anti-vertical positions.

You will tell me that the abandonment of verticality already started in mechanical sports, it is true. It's true. I remember, a long time ago, I was interested in a course -- we don't have time -- it interested me a lot, I worked on series, yet I did not know, but I spotted some things on the evolution of techniques in certain sports, especially in hurdles, and how at the start of the hurdle, they jumped like that. [*Deleuze draws a figure on the board*] They were indicating the obstacle. They were marking the obstacle. They were already going very fast. And then more and more, this time in profile, a position like that, laying down completely over the hurdle. So instead of recognizing and indicating the obstacle mechanically, they denied it. It's just a slightly longer stride. There we already have a kind of questioning of verticality. We should also see how tennis was played forty years ago, all that. We would have to undertake studies on this evolution of styles, but that must be done by athletes, I suppose. We would see that perhaps there was ... [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence*]²⁶

In any case, the two are linked: the abandonment, the tendency to abandon -- that's why I said two characteristics among others of a possible modernity -- the abandonment, the abandonment of the axis of verticality, and the abandonment of the solid mechanical model in favor of energy bands. If I say that, it's a way by which, I am saying, all that is a kind of way of approaching, of living what I called the plane of immanence, namely the system of movement-images. And the system of movement-images is, once again, any set of images insofar as they constantly vary with respect to each other [*Pause*] on all their facets and in all of their dimensions.

From that point, if you understood me, you remember, and it is about this that I would like to go very quickly, one realizes that, there... no, if you understood me, it is necessary to go over this point again that I had completely neglected: by what right do we call that "image"? Because it's still strange. He's exaggerating, Bergson. So, there we come back to Bergson. All I did was merely to show, through my developments, that I felt like a Bergsonian, that this notion of plane of immanence, I liked to call it that because what Bergson said, that suited me, I found it good, I found it very good. I thought it was fine. So, I tell myself, but why and how can he call it "image"? Because generally, "image" means that it is, that there is someone watching. And this plane of immanence, this infinite set of images, is not for anyone. Literally, there is still no one who is not part of the plane. And all the eyes that you want will be on this plane, but only as they are undergoing actions and exerting reactions. These will be images among others. So, who is this set of images for?

That's what, especially in Bergson, scandalized Sartre by saying ... but Sartre was not mistaken, he felt that this was Bergson's innovation, and that was what Sartre did not want, because for Sartre, that did not suit him, all that, this whole thing, it absolutely did not suit him. What suited Sartre -- I'm not going to say it was worse -- was all consciousness is consciousness of something. All consciousness is consciousness of something, and you won't get him to change that, which conversely implies, everything is the correlate of consciousness, and you wouldn't get him to change that.

Now, you realize, this Bergsonian world, a world of images that Bergson dares to call “images”, a world that we call "world of movement-images" for our use, which is not an image for any consciousness, there is no consciousness, there isn't any. At this level, there isn't any. So, then what? So, then what? Why isn't it arbitrary like that? Well, I'll tell you, I'll tell you why he calls it "image". Because in a way, he simply has no choice. He calls it "image" because, and he will eventually clarify, yes, they are images, but they are images in themselves. They are images in themselves, that is, they are not images for someone. This becomes more and more obscure: what can a world of images be in themselves, whereas for everyone up to Bergson, the image has always referred to an eye?

Well, it is the eye that is an image like any other. So, images cannot refer to an eye. It's a wonder, this thing. I think the only answer he would have would be -- but he hides it, he doesn't have to say it, he has so much to say, how..., he can't answer everything, right? -- if we look for it fully, it seems that it is there: the only answer is that it is because this world is pure light, and that this world is ultimately less about movement than about light. In other words, this plane of immanence as he has just defined is only made of lines of light.

Ah, it's interesting -- well, I don't know if you find it interesting -- suddenly, we get it. If I'm right, if that's indeed what he wants to tell us, this world is a world of pure lines of light, how does that allow the word "image"? Let's not go too fast. That brings us closer to an answer. You see, if it's pure light, is there a big disadvantage in saying, let's call lines of light "images"? If it's solely lines of light [that] we call it images, why, to indicate what? To indicate that these are not things. This is still the best word: to indicate intention, it is not things. And in fact, as we have seen, things are solid, they are rigid. And there are no things on the plane of immanence. There won't be things until much later, and we'll see under what influence. Things will be able to form on this plane, but for the moment, they cannot, there are no things -- [*Deleuze whispers to a student near him*] But it's not working? It must be later.... Don't move... Is it noon? [*Someone answers: Yes*] We're going to stop soon because I can't take it anymore ... Are you moving? [*Laughter*] --

There are no more, you understand... Light -- we are moving forward a little bit -- a line of light, there we have a funny notion, a line of light. This plane would then not be made, there would be no things, there would be nothing. We'd even have to go farther: there would be no gaseous state, it would not be gaseous states on my plane of immanence. It would be nothing but traversed by lines of light. Obviously, there would be no solid. What is solid? It's a set of rigid lines. Okay, that's a set of rigid lines. Should this suggest anything to some of you? I don't make the slightest reproach to those for whom this does not mean anything. I am saying rigid lines, lines of light. What is this story? This story is a story that is very, very present in Bergson's time and has passed from his letters to us in our time, namely, it is the history of limited relativity. This is Einstein's story. This is Einstein's story.²⁷

Because one of the ways, one of the ways, one of the crude ways of expressing the innovation of Einstein's theory of relativity, what does it consist of? To say something like this -- and Einstein sometimes spoke like this -- to say something like this: supposing that one distinguishes in the world two kinds of lines, some luminous -- lines of a luminous ray which returns onto itself -- some luminous, others geometric or rigid, the old physics told us that it is the invariance of

geometric lines which guarantees the equations of lines of light. [Pause] The theory of relativity produces the absolute reversal which will have enormous consequences in physics, namely that rigid lines are only appearances, geometric lines are only appearances, and their invariance results from a new type of equation between lines of light. So that's what limited relativity does – it doesn't matter what you may know, it's just that I need this point, among other things, among other things; I'm not saying it boils down to that -- it is a fundamental reversal of the relationship conceived between luminous lines, lines of light, and rigid or geometric lines.

And that's how Bergson will present it. In a chapter of the book that he writes on his relations with the theory of relativity, on his relations with Einstein -- this book being *Duration and Simultaneity* - and in *Duration and Simultaneity*, Bergson will say, one of the great innovations of the theory of relativity is to have reversed the relation between rigid lines, luminous lines, or as he says, in an even more beautiful way, geometric figures, figures of light. [Pause] In other words, it's a world of light. What does that mean?

This is Bergson's dream. Remember, I said that last year. Bergson is scandalized by this, by one thing ... -- [Pause] Five after 12, fine -- He's scandalized by one thing and, or there's one thing he finds wrong. He said: it's still curious, science, it has completely changed; it has changed greatly. But philosophy has not changed. We continue to do philosophy as did Plato. And that's not bad; that does not mean that Plato is surpassable or that we should no longer read Plato. On the contrary, we must read Plato. But we should read Plato all the more so when we are doing something else. Because it is not normal to be in a world where philosophy grasps onto Plato when, on the other hand, our science is no longer the science of Antiquity at all. And it is necessary, he said, that philosophy make for its own benefit a revolution analogous to the one science carried out on its own behalf. So, what did that mean? Well, let it transform its problems. So, it did so to some extent, but by giving up on itself when it became epistemology. At that point, it told itself, well, we're going to reflect on science! At that point, there is no more philosophy, it's screwed.

What Bergson meant was something else entirely: to be able to create a philosophy which is to modern science what the philosophy of the Ancients was to ancient science. And in that, the Ancients succeeded. So, why don't we succeed, and why did Bergson think he could? As a result, I believe that Bergson is incomprehensible without an idea which was his secret: that he would succeed in creating the philosophy corresponding to modern science, to the science of the 20th century, which was also Whitehead's idea at the same time. After all, there is reason to console oneself since there are many similarities between those who have set themselves this goal. And above all, for them, the man who was currently shaking up science in their day was Einstein. As a result, Bergson's great topic was to show that the theory of relativity does not give us a true philosophy and that we have to find the philosophy that truly corresponds to the theory of relativity.

Hence the controversy, which we have not understood at all, between Bergson and Einstein, in which Bergson writes this book *Duration and Simultaneity*, the republication of which he will prohibit. And it was believed that he prohibited republication because he believed himself to have been scientifically wrong. But I believe that is absolutely wrong. Bergson had a very, very strong mathematical background which enabled him in any case not to speak nonsense in

mathematics and physics. So that he understood the theory of relativity, that went without saying. On the other hand, his book was not understood at all because people believed Bergson was claiming to discuss the results of Einstein's theory of relativity. Not being crazy, Bergson would never have allowed himself such a thing, would never have believed that he was capable of discussing the results of the theory of ..., something which, on the other hand, absolutely made no sense.

What Bergson set out to do was to show that Einstein, on the contrary, was quite incapable of providing the philosophy which corresponded to relativity and that he, Bergson, could do so. Hence his attack on Einstein which is essentially against Einstein's idea that there would be a plurality of times belonging to different systems. That's what interests him. But since his book was not understood at all, and Bergson didn't want to explain himself so much, he thought to himself, well, that's a failure. He banned republication, so the book is ..., but it has finally been reissued today despite Bergson's express wishes in his will. So fortunately, you can find it.

But you see why I'm bringing this in. It's just that this whole story of the plane of immanence, of the system of the movement-image, I think only applies with this perspective of relativity. That only applies if you finally understand that this ever-changing world of movement-image is what? These are the lines of light. These are lines of light that make up the material universe. And this is what constitutes the material universe of lines of light. Henceforth, the set of lines of light will be called images. Why? Because they are not rigid things, because they are not things. So, the image, for whom? Pure light. The light is in itself. Okay, these are images in themselves.

Ah! These are images in themselves, the light is in itself, what does that mean? See how my first topic is already preparing my second topic which I would be eager to tackle immediately, on light and shadow. What is this pure light? Well, yes, the plane of immanence is any-space-whatever [*espace quelconque*] crossed and occupied by lines of light, [*Pause*] "light which is always propagating" -- here I am quoting Bergson -- "light which is always propagates" -- we are told in *Matter and Memory* -- "cannot be revealed", "light which is always propagating cannot be revealed", magnificent.²⁸

That's strange, what does he mean? This is the state of light's diffusion. What reveals the light? Bergson will say it. When is the light reflected? So there, it reveals itself when it is forced to reflect itself. It is forced to reflect itself on a solid body, for example. It is forced to reflect itself when it is "stopped" ... [*Interruption of the recording*] [2 :01 :06]

... In the plane of immanence, on the plane of immanence, Bergson tells us "The photo... is drawn into things." In other words, "the thing" in quotes -- we saw that this is a misuse of the word, but we must speak properly -- the photo is drawn in "things", that is, things are luminous in themselves. "Things" are phosphorescent. [*Pause*] This is the identity of the thing and of the light that "image" signifies.²⁹

In other words, he completely reverses the consciousness-thing relationship. In what sense? For everyone, strictly everyone before Bergson, consciousness is a light which comes to snatch things from darkness, including for phenomenology, including for Sartre. Bergson's stroke of genius is -- to my knowledge, it's the only one, and that's from Plato to Sartre; for Plato, light is

on the side of consciousness, consciousness is the image of light, the mind is on the side of light, etc. -- Bergson is undertaking a reversal that really strikes me as an incredible reversal, namely, it is matter which is light -- and this is how Einstein passed through this obviously -- it is matter which is light. That is, these are things that are luminous; these are things, there are no other things than figures of light. And what consciousness brings is the opposite of light: it is the black screen. This is the zone of darkness without which the light could not reveal itself, would never be revealed. [Pause] This is a huge reversal, it seems to me, in the history of thought.

So, I've answered the question; if you will, we'll take this up next time, because I can't continue anymore. In what sense and why do we call this world a set of movement-images? My answer is only as a function -- or it is above all, we will see next week if you have any remarks to make -- as a function of the luminous and exclusively luminous nature of what is happening on this plane of immanence. This plane of immanence as such does not include a black screen. It only encompasses light that is propagated. The photo is drawn into things; only since there is no black screen, it is translucent, it is even transparent. These are images in themselves, images for no individual; these are figures of light that constitute the universe.

There you are, fine. Next time for what comes next. Thank you. [2 :04 :29]

Notes

¹ C.S. Peirce, *Writings of C.S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000).

² Gérard Delédalle, *Peirce, Écrits sur le signe* (Paris : Seuil, 1978); Deleuze referred to this text the previous spring, in session 12 of the seminar Cinema I, March 9 1982.

³ Deleuze means Manet, since he corrects himself below, although Monet is equally logical.

⁴ On Péguy, Céline and style, see "S as in Style" in the DVD *Gilles Deleuze: From A to Z* (Cambridge MA: MIT/Semiotext(e), 2012); *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, dir. Pierre-André Boutang (1996; Paris: Editions Montparnasse, 2004).

⁵ Péguy, *Clio* (Paris: Gallimard, 1931). Deleuze returns to discuss this book in session 15 of the seminar on Leibniz and the Baroque, April 28, 1987, and also at the end of chapter IV of *What Is Philosophy?* pp. 110-112 (*Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* pp. 106-108).

⁶ Deleuze introduces these same themes in chapter 6 of *The Movement-Image*, pp. 91-94, and then chapter 7, pp. 112-118, and chapter 8, pp. 134-139 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 131-133, then 158-166 and 188-194).

⁷ Cf. Goethe's *Theory of Colors* [1810], Project Gutenberg pdf, translation by Charles Locke Eastlake. The French edition to this work is *Traité de couleurs*, translation by Henriette Bideau (Paris: Éditions Triade, 2000). Deleuze refers frequently in this seminar to Goethe's work, as well as in sessions 6 and 7 of the Painting seminar, 19 and 26 May 1981, and in session 11 of the Leibniz and the Baroque seminar, 3 March 1987; on Goethe and this work, see also *The Movement-Image*, pp. 49-54, 93-95 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 73-80, 132-133).

⁸ In the Cinema I seminar, see sessions 9, 10, 11 and 15, respectively, 2 and 23 February, 2 March, and 20 April 1982.

⁹ In the context of the preceding paragraph, the reference here would be to the representative of lyrical abstraction. However, some of these representatives are discussed from this perspective in *The Movement-Image*, pp. 112-116 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 158-163).

¹⁰ On this “either, or” choice, see *The Movement-Image*, pp. 112-113 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 158-159).

¹¹ On these relationships in Sternberg, see seminars 8, 9, and 10 of the Cinema I seminar, respectively, January 26, February 2 and 23, 1982, as well as *The Movement-Image*, pp. 93-85 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 131-135).

¹² On these relationships in Goethe's work, see especially seminar 11 of the Cinema I seminar, 2 March 1982.

¹³ Goethe, *Theory of Colors*, paragraph 495. On this expression, see *The Movement-Image*, p. 93 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, p. 133).

¹⁴ The reference to this quote is in *The Movement-Image*, p. 226, note 6. However, the precise edition in this reference to Bergson's *Matter and Memory* is entirely unclear in this translation since the first reference provides no bibliographical details. See *The Movement-Image*, pp. 58-59.

¹⁵ See *Matter and Memory*, translation Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Humanities Press Inc., 1911; 1970), p. 31.

¹⁶ On universal undulation without axes, see *The Movement-Image*, pp. 58-60 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 86-87).

¹⁷ On these following points, solid, liquid and gas, see chapter 5 of *The Movement-Image* as well as sessions 5 to 8 of the seminar Cinema I.

¹⁸ Unfortunately, not only is it unclear who this choreographer was, but there is no follow-up in successive sessions on this direction.

¹⁹ The American critic is undoubtedly Clement Greenberg whom Deleuze quotes in several sessions in the seminar on Painting, notably sessions 3, 4, and 6, for example, “After Abstract Expressionism,” *Art International* 6.8 (October 1962).

²⁰ The reference is not doubt to Beckett's Molloy (in *Molloy*, 1951).

²¹ On the universal lapping in Beckett, see *The Movement-Image*, p. 68 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, p. 100).

²² On Snow's "Central Region", see session 12 of the seminar Cinema I, March 9, 1982, and *The Movement-Image*, pp. 84-85, 121-122, and *The Time-Image*, pp. 266-267 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, p. 122, 171; and *L'Image-Temps*, p. 348).

²³ On Gance, see *The Movement-Image*, pp.45-48 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 67-72).

²⁴ This is an article by Gérard Rabinovitch (*Le Monde*, July 27, 1980, p. xiii) that Deleuze quotes on this subject in *The Time-Image*, p. 291, note 30 (*L'Image-Temps*, p. 89, note 27).

²⁵ On this low frequency wave-action, see *The Time-Image*, p. 66 (*L'Image-Temps*, p. 89).

²⁶ See “S as in Style” and “T as in Tennis” in *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, and in *Negotiations*, see “Mediators”, pp. 131-132 (*Pourparlers*, “Les Intercesseurs”, pp. 179-181).

²⁷ See “the confrontation between Bergson and Einstein” in *The Movement-Image*, pp. 58-60 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, pp. 88-89), including reference to *Duration and Simultaneity*.

²⁸ Deleuze quotes this text in *The Movement-Image*, p. 60 (*L'Image-Mouvement*, p. 89, note 15).

²⁹ Deleuze quote Bergson in this way: "Photography, if there is photography, is already snapped, already shot, in the very interior of things and for all the pints of space...", *The Movement-Image*, p. 60 (from *Matter and Movement*).