Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on Painting & the Question of Concepts

March-June 1981

Gilles Deleuze

Painting and the Question of Concepts / Spinoza, The Velocities of Thought

Session 1, 31 March 1981 / Session 15 (Spinoza)

Transcriptions: Voix de Deleuze, Part 1, Cécile Lathuillère (duration 46 :52); Part 2, Eva Szarzynski (duration 46:47); Parts 3 & 4, Lucie Marchadié (duration 46 :55 + 11 :36) ; augmented transcription and time stamp, Charles J. Stivale

Translation by Charles J. Stivale

[*After 54 minutes of discussion with which the Spinoza seminar end, here begins the new seminar, on painting*]

Gilles Deleuze: So, there you are, you understand that this introduces us well to what I would like to do for the rest of the year, and this presumes that I am speaking to those here… [It's] yet another reason for me not to pretend to say things with any great depth (*grand savoir*). I'd like to speak about painting, and in what way? So, I'd like to speak about painting. I myself am not sure – we'll see how it goes – that philosophy has brought anything at all to painting; it's even… I don't know… And then, perhaps this isn't the way to pose questions. But I'd rather ask the question in reverse, to wit: the possibility that painting has something to bring to philosophy and that the answer might not be completely in one direction. I mean that we cannot transfer the same answer for music onto painting. For music, we've encountered the need – in this, it wasn't through preference or choice of a path -- to need to refer to it because, in previous years, we expected something I don't know what from it. What can philosophy expect from things like painting, like music? What it can expect is, once again, some very, very different things. We have to… If philosophy expects something from painting, it's something that only painting can offer it.

So, what is it? What is it? Perhaps some concept, but does painting concern itself with concepts? Fine, but since we've already asked the question, is color a concept? Is color a concept? I don't know; what is a color concept? What is color as a concept? This would be… If painting brings that into philosophy, where is that going to lead philosophy? I mean, how do we proceed? How do I proceed so that… Here, I'd like to… There's a also a problem of speaking about painting; what does "speaking about painting" mean? So I believe that it means precisely forming concepts that are in direct relation with painting and only with painting. At that point, in fact, the reference to painting becomes essential. If you understand, even in a vague way, what I mean, at that point, I've already resolved a question. – [*Deleuze questions his own grammar, the past participle of* résoudre] I've "résous"? "Résolu"? What do we say? [*Claire Parnet :* Résolu] – I've resolved a question, specifically: speaking about painting, fine, I assume that those who will listen to this will know as much as me, and sometimes much more, about painting. What I don't want to do is to bring in any reproductions, to show [them] to you… So, we'd even no longer have any desire to talk… We'd say: "Oh, bah, yes, what's there to say?" So, I will call upon your memory. Only in some very rare cases will I show a small image, when we will really need to do so. Otherwise, you will recall from memory, or you can go see them or else… But this will go easily, with no need for any reproductions.

So here we are, each time perhaps… Nor am I pretending to say, to reflect on what the essence of painting is. So, each time, I'd like for those attending the sessions on this research topic to be able … I will try to indicate more or less precisely the theme that I am following each time and the painters to whom I am referring because there is no reason – the unity of painting poses a problem – there is not reason to establish one [a unity], I mean… There's no reason to establish one.

For example, we'll nonetheless again be led to consider, on the level of materials, if that might have something to do with philosophical concepts, even in associated things: watercolor and oil, and oil and acrylics today, all that, fine, because are these not the same things? Where is the unity of painting located? Is there a common genre for watercolor, for oil, for acrylics? I don't know; we take nothing for granted (*on ne se donne rien*). I've chosen the themes that interested me, and sometimes they will flow into philosophy – those will be good moments for me. This will happen when painting will inspire a spark within me, a new spark for me onto philosophical concepts. Fine, so let's give it a try.

So, today I am saying that my whole research endeavor is extended onto this notion about which I once spoke, the notion of catastrophe, the notion of catastrophe, which assumes what? This obviously assumes that painting has a very special relation with catastrophe. And first of all, I won't try to found [the relation] theoretically. It's rather an impression, a very special relation [which] means that writing and music wouldn't have this relation with catastrophe, or not the same kind, or not as direct, and very precise painters. But I'd just like for you to sense precisely the extent to which these are limited examples so that we can then consider if they indicate something more general about painting or if that's only valid for certain painters. I don't know anything in advance. The painters on which I would like to establish this are chosen within a relatively similar and relatively recent period. I am taking them – I am stating immediately [that] I'd like to base myself on this series "the catastrophe," and we shall see where it leads us – I am choosing, for example, Turner, an English painter, nineteenth [century], a great, great English painter – I'm only choosing great ones, of course! – Turner, Cézanne, Van Gogh, Paul Klee, and another English modern, [Francis] Bacon.

Fine, so that's what I want to say – and I am immediately careful, very, very careful. I am saying that, when we go to a museum, we are immediately taken, struck by a certain number of paintings. There are very few museums that don't offer some paintings of this type, paintings that depict a catastrophe, and what kind of catastrophe? For example, when the painting presents mountains to us – paintings of an avalanche, paintings of storms, the storm, the avalanche, etc., fine, this [is] a comment having entirely no interest. There is even a Romanticist painting in which this theme of a certain kind of catastrophe seems… [*Deleuze does not complete this*] Fine, what does all that mean? It's idiotic, really, it's idiotic. But, no it's not because I notice that these paintings of catastrophes extend into the entire painting something that is always present in… that is perhaps very often – yes, you correct this yourself; I never say "always" – that is very often present in painting, to wit, they extend into the entire painting, these paintings of catastrophes, they extend into the entire painting, they generalize a kind of imbalance, of things that are falling, collapsing, kinds of disequilibrium.

And painting following a particular manner has always meant painting local imbalances. Why? Why is this theme of the thing in disequilibrium so important? One of the writers who wrote the most deeply, truly the most deeply, about painting is [Paul] Claudel, notably in a splendid book titled *The Eye Listens* and that especially addresses the Dutch [painters]. And Claudel says it very well; he says, "What is a composition?" You see, this is a pictorial term. What is a composition in painting? He says, "It's an aggregate (*ensemble*)". He says something very odd, as he says this precisely about the Dutch masters that he was considering. "A composition is always an aggregate, a structure, but in the process of becoming imbalanced or in the process of coming apart." Fine, we will only hold onto this for the moment: the point of collapse, a glass about which we'd say it's going to tip over, a curtain about which we'd say it's going to fall back. So fine, here, there is no need to refer to Cézanne, the pots by Cézanne, the strange imbalance of these pots, as if they were really grasped at the moment, at the birth of a collapse. Fine, I tell myself good, very good. I no longer know who, there's a contemporary of Cézanne who spoke about the drunken pottery, the tipsy pots.

So, I tell myself, fine, a painting of an avalanche, all that, this is generalized disequilibrium, ok. But in the end, this doesn't go that far because, at first glance, we remain within the painting, within what the painting represents. So, I am also going to refer to another catastrophe in painting, specifically a catastrophe that would affect the act of painting itself. You see, we are going from the represented catastrophe, either the local catastrophe or the catastrophe of the aggregate within the painting, to a more greatly secret catastrophe, one that affects the act of painting itself. [*Pause*]

And my question becomes, good, in this way, can the act of painting be defined without this reference to a catastrophe that affects it? Doesn't the act of painting, at the deepest depth within in itself – I'll make corrections, I'll adjust for certain painters, etc., we shall see – confront, encompass this catastrophe, even when what is represented is not a catastrophe? In fact, Cézanne's pottery isn't a catastrophe; there was no earthquake. For Rembrandt's glasses, there was no catastrophe, fine. So, it's a matter of a deeper catastrophe that affects the act of painting in itself. What would this be, to the point that the act of painting could not be so defined otherwise?

The example – I'd like to provide examples, as one offers musical examples, so to take up pictorial examples – for me, the fundamental example is that of Turner, since in Turner, we would see this as a kind of typical example. Also, in his initial [period]… He had something like two periods, two great periods, and in the first one, he paints a lot of catastrophes. What interests him in the sea is storms; what interests him in the mountains is often avalanches. So, this is a painting of avalanches, storms, fine. He already shows great genius.

What happens around 18.. – Is everyone fine with this assignment of dates? – around 1830? I'll need that [date] later, as if this catastrophe that affects the act of painting, well, could be strangely dated overall. For Turner, [it's] 1830. Around 1830, ok, everything unfolds as if he entered into a new element, in fact so deeply that it remains linked to his first manner of painting.

What is this new element? Catastrophe is at the heart of the act of painting. As it is said, the forms vanish. What is painted and the act of painting tend to be identified with each other, and in what form? In the form of gusts of steam, of balls of fire, in which no form any longer maintains its integrity, or in which some strokes are merely suggestive. We proceed through strokes, into what? Into a kind of furnace (*brasier*), as if the entire painting there emerged from a furnace. A ball of fire, the famous dominant, Turner's famous dominant, the golden yellow. A kind of oven (*fournaise*), fine, boats split open by this oven.

A typical example – try to go see a reproduction – a painting with a complicated title: "Light and color". He himself called it "Light and color," and in parentheses "Goethe's Theory", since Goethe created a theory of colors. So the title is: "Light and Color (Goethe's Theory, the Morning After the Deluge)". We will need all that, so try to go see it. And the painting is dominated by a gigantic and admirable ball of fire, a golden ball that provides a kind of gravitation for the entire painting. So then… What? Yes?

[*Interruption by someone outside the classroom, inaudible comments; Deleuze briefly speaks to her about a scheduling matter*.]

Yes, why is this title important? In this as well, Turner left stacks of watercolors in groups; you know, Turner's history at the end is very, very… As is said, he was so much, so much, so much ahead of his time that he didn't exhibit his paintings; he stored them away, all that. He left all of that to the State, England, which left that for a long while in crates. And then there's [John] Ruskin, at once admirable and vexing, who was his passionate admirer, who burned many of them because some were pornographic, so in the end, this was catastrophic. There's a text by Ruskin, a declaration that makes one shiver – well, in the end, no one can condemn anyone – in which Ruskin says: "I'm proud, quite proud to have done that, to have burned all kinds of stacks of Turner's drawing and watercolors." But in the end, Ruskin's merit remains for having been one of the few to understand Turner while he was alive. So, Ruskin baptizes all kinds of stacks of watercolors: "the birth or the start of color".

For this introduction, I don't want to say more. If you will, here we have Turner who I am using to present one case. It's not at all that this is general, that we pass from one kind of painting that in certain cases represents avalanche-type catastrophe, storm-types, into a infinitely deeper catastrophe, a catastrophe that concerns the act of painting, that affects the deepest aspect of the act of painting. And I am adding – this is all we can grasp for the moment – this catastrophe is inseparable, in the act of painting, this catastrophe is inseparable from a birth. A birth of what? The birth of color. We almost have a problem here, you see; we constructed it almost voluntarily. Was it necessary for the act of painting to pass through this catastrophe in order to engender this creative element, specifically, color? Was it necessary to pass through the catastrophe in the act of painting so that color would be born, color as pictorial creation?

Good, so at that point, we have to believe that the catastrophe affecting the act of painting is also something other than catastrophe. What is it? We haven't made much progress. What is this catastrophe? If you see a Turner from the end of his career, I am assuming that if you have it in mind, or if you go see it, you accept the term "catastrophe", and why at that point, coming to our aid – I see this as something else – are painters who use the word, who use the word, who say, yes, painting the act of painting passes through chaos or through catastrophe. And they add, but see here, something emerges from this. And our idea is confirmed, the necessity for catastrophe in the act of painting so that something might emerge.

What emerges? It's strange in that perhaps I'm choosing painters of the same tendency; I don't know, but the answer is the same: in order for color to emerge, for color to emerge… And who are these catastrophe painters? There's Cézanne fine statement, that catastrophe affects the act of painting, so that what emerges? Color, according to Cézanne, so that color arises. And [from] Paul Klee, the necessity of chaos for the emergence of what he calls the egg, cosmogenesis, the egg or cosmogenesis, and at the same time, panic, my God, or at least the painters' God, preventing catastrophe from seizing everything.

What happens if catastrophe seizes everything so that nothing emerges? So, in this regard, would there be on this level a danger in painting? There would be a danger in painting; what is it? If the painter confronts – even here, we've left literature behind, I believe – if there is indeed this kind of catastrophe for the painter himself, for something that concerns the painter, if he confronts this catastrophe in the act of painting, if he cannot paint without a catastrophe affecting his act at the deepest level, but at the same time, the catastrophe must be like what? What does this mean? To control. What happens if nothing emerges, if the catastrophe spreads, if it creates a mess? Fine, don't we have the impression that in certain cases, right, the painting gets ruined. Painters never cease failing; they never cease throwing out their paintings. Painters are astonishing, right? There's a kind of destruction, consumption, consuming of the painting. Fine, when catastrophe overwhelms, can one again control a catastrophe? Certain [painters], Van Gogh, that's right, that's right. As it's said, he brushes against something. Good, where does Van Gogh's madness come from? Does it come from his relations with his father, or from these relations with color? [*Laughter*] I have no idea. In any case, color is perhaps more interesting, right?

So, our task now is going to be to look at two texts, since after all this has laid out our problem, I have not yet spoken about any painters' texts. I believe that the manner in which a painter speaks about his painting is not analogous or the same thing as the manner in which a musician speaks about his music. There is a relation, in both cases; I am not saying one is better than the other. I am saying that we can expect from a painter's text some things that aren't at all, that are of a very special type. I am going to refer to some texts presumably by Cézanne and a formal text by Klee, that have in common to speak deliberately about catastrophe in its relations with painting. Fine, I am going to the secretary's off, so take a break. [*Brief pause in the session*] [1:18:07]

[…] And with him and named [Joachim] Gasquet. And Gasquet created a book on Cézanne, a very important one, and in this book, he reestablishes, he takes himself a bit for Socrates's Plato, that is, he reconstitutes dialogues and conversations with Cézanne. But it's not transcriptions; it's many years later, and it's not transcription. And the question is: What does Gasquet – who wasn't a painter, but a writer – what does Gasquet reinsert of himself? Many critics are suspicious of this text for this reason.

As for me, I am entirely following [Henri] Maldiney on this point who, on the contrary considers this to be a text that truly risks being very faithful because the arguments there are very strange. You know that there is a kind of – I am saying this in passing – there's a kind of thing, an expression, rumors, that painters are always treated a bit as if they were uneducated creatures or not very clever. As soon as we read what painters write, we're reassured; it's neither of these things at all. And one of the reasons the authenticity of Gasquet's text gets discussed is that Cézanne strangely starts speaking from time to time like a post-Kantian, so people say its… [*Deleuze doesn't finish the sentence*]

But Cézanne, in fact, greatly enjoyed speaking with people, when he trusted them. He would ask them lots of things. On the other hand, Cézanne was very, very educated; he didn't reveal it, or did so rarely. He played an astonishing role as, really, as a peasant, a dung-dweller (*bouseux*), whereas he had considerable knowledge, and read a lot. It's difficult to understand. Painters always pretend to have seen nothing, to know nothing. I think that they read a lot at night. [*Laughter*] And one easily imagines even that Gasquet told Cézanne some things about Kant, and what Cézanne understood is quite fine because he understood much more than someone university educated.

Following Gasquet, [Cézanne] at one point makes this great statement, indeed: "I'd like to paint space and time so that they become the forms of the sensibility of colors, because I sometimes imagine colors as great noumenal entities, as living ideas, as beings of pure reason." So, as commentators have said, "Cézanne couldn't have said that; it's Gasquet that attributes it to him." I'm not sure that, one evening, they weren't talking about Kant, whom Cézanne understood quite well, because when I say that he understood better than a philosopher, he saw very well that in Kant, the noumen/phenomenon relation was particular (*était tel*). To some extent, the phemonenon was the appearance of the noumen, hence the reflection [that] colors are noumenal ideas. Colors are noumens, and space and time are the form of the appearance of noumens, that is, of colors, of colors appearing in space and in time, but in themselves, they are neither space nor time. This seems to me to be a very, very interesting idea; in this, I only see great similarities that… [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence*]

So, of course, at the same time, Gasquet's text takes things from letters sent to him by Cézanne, so he creates mixtures, yes, but concerning what's essential, everything is fine for us since, in the text that I am going to read, I am going to take as it unfolds. Cézanne – I am commenting on this almost logically – distinguishes two moments in the act of painting. So, he is going to bring things to us fully situated within our problem. And in one of these moments, he calls it "chaos" or "abyss", chaos or abyss, and the second moment -- if you read the text closely, since it's not clear, in fact, but it's a supposed conversation – he calls the second moment: "catastrophe", fine. And so, in the end, the text is very logically and very rigorously organized; in the act of painting, there is the moment of chaos, then the moment of catastrophe, and something emerges from this, from chaos-catastrophe, which is color. When it emerges! Once again, there is still the possibility that nothing emerges, one is never certain; in this, nothing is given in advance.

Here's the text; I am beginning with the first aspect. I'll indicate when, in my view, the first moment ends: "In order to paint a landscape, I must discover first the geological strata (*assises*). Recall that the history of the world saw the light of day when two atoms encountered each other, when two tornados, two chemical dances were combined." – If I am mixing up everything, no matter, it's not far off – "These great rainbows, these great cosmic prisms, this dawn of ourselves above nothingness." Fine, the style is good, but some might say this is from Turner. So yes, why not? The history of the world, what does that mean? What interests us in this? It’s the first time that one finds a theme that, in my view, traverses most of the great painters, the theme of "they never paint but one thing: the start of the world," that’s their business: they depict the beginning of the world.

Fine, so what is the beginning of the world? It’s the world before the world, that is, something exists; it’s not yet the world. It’s really the birth of the world. Henceforth, why can painters be Christians? Can the history of creation be of interest to them? Insofar as someone is a painter, it’s obvious. It’s obvious that they are involved in something that concerns the creation of the world. You understand that each day, I should add a coefficient of essentiality to this; I mean, it’s an essential concern of painting, having us face all this.

Fine, "recall that this history of the world saw the light of day when two atoms encountered each other, two tornados, two chemical dances." -- [For] Turner, it’s about chemical dances, of, fine. Yes, these are chemical dances of color. -- "This dawn of ourselves about the nothingness, I see them rise, I drench myself with them by reading Lucretius". And then, in fact, Cézanne read lots of Lucretius, fine. And, in fact, Lucretius’s interest concerns atoms, of course, the dance of atoms, but equally strangely, it concerns colors and light. There’s no question of understanding anything in Lucretius if one doesn’t attend to what he says about color and light in relation to the atom, fine.

"These great rainbows, these cosmic prisms… these great rainbows, these cosmic prisms, this dawn of ourselves about the nothingness, I see them rise, I drench myself with them by reading Lucretius. Under this fine rain" – he’s standing under a fine rain – "under this fine rain" – that’s what his subject is for painting, this fine rain. And understand, although he creates a portrait, although he creates a pot, although he paints a woman, fine, one mustn’t forget this, that’s it’s always about expressing the fine rain, or expressing something of this order – "Under this fine rain, I breathe in the virginity of the world." What does "the virginity of the world" mean? It’s the world before man and before the world, before man and before the world. Fine, but what is this?

"A sharp sense of nuances labors within me. I feel myself colored by all the nuances of the infinite. At that point, I am simply but one with my painting (*mon tableau*)." This is strange, "I am simply but one with my painting"; what does that mean? We have to comment on this precisely, my painting in waiting since -- as the rest will remind us even more precisely – he hasn’t yet begun to paint. Perhaps we even have a reason for already understanding better, or for anticipating why the catastrophe belongs to the act of painting. [The painting] comes before. It occurs during as well. But it begins before the catastrophe. The painting is yet to be painted.

"Under this fine rain, I breathe in the virginity of the world." A sharp sense of the labor, it’s the pre-pictorial labor, and here, the catastrophe is already pre-pictorial. That at once suits us fine and yet bothers us because at that point, a definition for it, also pre-pictorial, is necessary. It’s as if the condition for painting comes before the act of painting.

"A sharp sense of nuances labors within me. I feel myself colored by all the nuances of the infinite. At that point, I am simply but one with my painting. We exist" – me and the painting.

Hey, to go back to the other [earlier] point, this is really the composition of the third side, the painting not yet undertaken and the painter not yet having started to paint. "We are an iridescent chaos." – We are an iridescent chaos – "I arrive to face my motif" – you see, he hasn't painted anything yet – "I arrive to face my motif, I get lost. I am musing (*je songe*), wandering." – He gets lost facing his motif, a chaos – "The sun enters me silently like a faraway friend who rekindles my laziness. We germinate." Hey, if he comes from the seed, this will literally recur with the same term used by Klee. "We germinate. It seems to me, when night comes, that I will not paint and that I will never paint." All this is pre-pictorial; it's the "before painting" for eternity. "The night is necessary so that I can detach my eyes from the earth, from this bit of earth into which I have melted. One fine morning, the next day" – I'm no longer in the first moment, and you see, this pre-pictorial moment of chaos has taken place. He no longer sees; he merges with his motif; he no longer sees anything, night is falling.

As he says, explaining in a letter, "my wife scolds me because when I return, my eyes are red." What does that mean? He no longer sees anything. The eye, we have to ask: what is the eye? What is an eye? A painter's eye? What does an eye in painting mean? How does it function, an eye? Fine, so, it's already a reddened eye. "One fine morning, the next day, slowly, the geological bases" – that's what he was confusedly looking for; he had started, "In order to paint a landscape, I must discover first the geological strata" -- "One fine morning, the next day, slowly, the geological bases appear before me, the levels are established, the great planes of my canvas. I mentally sketch out its rocky skeleton." If you see the landscapes of Aix by Cézanne, you immediately see what he is calling the rocky skeleton. "[I sketch] the great planes of my canvas. I mentally decide" – you see, he still hasn't yet begun – "I mentally sketch out its rocky skeleton, I see the rocks peeking up under the water, the sky bearing down, everything falling upright." – Everything falls upright – "A pale palpitation envelops the linear aspects. Red patches of earth emerge from an abyss." – The abyss is the chaos seen earlier. It's the previous evening's chaos – "Red patches of earth emerge from an abyss." – But what form of red ? These must be brownish red patches of earth; these must be darkish purple, tending toward black – "Red patches of earth emerge from an abyss. I am beginning to separate myself from the landscape, to see it." – You see, this is also a genesis of the eye, this tale, at the moment of pure chaos; no eye, it's melted, the eye is completely red, it no longer sees anything – "I am beginning to see the landscape. I break loose from it with this first" – I break loose from the landscape, meaning that there's a relation with vision – "I break loose from it with this first geological outline, the geological lines, the geometry, measurement of the earth." In other words, the geometry is identical with the geology.

Fine. What am I saying, to sum up? I am saying that this first, very pictorial moment is the moment of chaos. One has to pass through this chaos. And according to Cézanne, what emerges from this chaos? The sheathing of the canvas. Here we have the great planes being sketched out. "Everything falls upright": this is already dangerous. There's a letter in which Cézanne says, "This isn't going well." He says, "The planes are falling onto each other." There, in that moment, everything could collapse; it's the first coefficient of a possible collapse. The distinction of planes might very well not succeed in occurring. The distinction of planes emerges from chaos, fine. If chaos seizes everything, if nothing emerges from chaos, if everything remains chaos, the planes fall onto each other, instead of falling upright. The painting is already ruined; it's already ruined before having started. That's what shit is, and it's true that in the painter's experiences, there are things, it goes fine, it doesn't go well at all, I'm blocked off, I'm not blocked off… [*Interruption of recording*] [1:33:42]

Part 3

Deleuze: Yes, perhaps, right ?

Anne Querrien: [*Comments barely audible*] . . . on the great debate that occurs at the end of the eighteenth [century] about the sublime and the picturesque. And precisely, within the picturesque, they pass through three stages whereas, in the sublime, they only keep two of them, and they raise up the sublime directly through its opposition to chaos. And finally, chaos comes first. From chaos, they construct the sublime, and either they remain within the sublime, that is, geometrical lines, etc., or they manage to pass into the picturesque, that is, into color and all that. … [*Inaudible comments*], and it was by inheriting, by composing with what his architect friends told him in their discussion about the sublime and the picturesque and about what you were telling us about Kant and the sublime and chaos in Kant… [*End of comments are inaudible*]

Deleuze: Well, in that case, we'd have to, perhaps it might be better, in fact, to go back, but to do that is beyond us. Let me indicate for those who might find this point of interest, there's a book by Kant that, I believe, is one of the most important books in all of philosophy, the *Critique of Judgment*, that Kant wrote at a very, very old age and that contains one of the first great philosophical aesthetics. There's a theory of the sublime, and Kant distinguishes two aspects or two moments of the sublime. One he names the "geometric or mathematical sublime", and the other, "the dynamic sublime." And here, if we really wanted to, in fact, one would have to – for those interested in this, consult his texts – they are quite difficult, but if we have the time, perhaps I will make some comments about them. This would be quite curious; in fact, perhaps we could create, without forcing the texts too much, an intersection of Cézanne's two moments with Kant's two moments of the sublime, the first one being a geometrical sublime according… the expression itself, or "geological", according to Cézanne's very expression. But Kant's text is extraordinary. It's one of the great founding texts of Romanticism.

Fine, we are now moving into the second moment. You see that the first moment is chaos, and something emerges from it, specifically the framework (*armature*). The second moment, "a tender emotion grips me", a tender emotion grips me. "From the roots of this emotion, the sap rises up, colors, a kind of deliverance, the expansion (*rayonnement*) of the soul, the gaze, the exteriorized mystery, the exchange between the earth and the sun, colors, an aerial logic" – before, there was a terrestrial, earthly logic in play, with the geological strata – "an aerial logic, color brusquely replacing the dark, the stubborn geometry." -- This is a beautiful text. You see, elements are being changed -- "An aerial logic, color brusquely replacing the dark, the stubborn geometry. Everything becomes organized, the trees, the fields, the houses." – Hey, by commenting in this way, I… [*Deleuze does not finish*]

But then, everything wasn't organized, yet the planes were falling upright, and all that. – "Everything becomes organized" – As if he was recommencing from zero. This is strange. "I am seeing. I am seeing" – and there's a second genesis of the eye – "I am seeing in patches the geological stratum." This is what will reveal the secret to us. This is strange, he doesn't say it; he seems to be starting again from zero. Whereas "I am seeing", he already said this, "I am beginning to see", and here he acts as if he were seeing for the very first time. What has happened? There's only one answer: it's that the first time, it was chaos or the abyss and something emerged from it, specifically the framework, and so what emerged at the first moment, the framework, collapsed once again, in fact, collapsed again: "I am seeing in patches the geological stratum, the preparatory labor." There he says it formally: the entire first moment was a preparatory, pre-pictorial labor: "… the geological stratum, the preparatory labor, the world of the drawing plunges, collapsing like a catastrophe."

What makes this text very, very interesting to me is that [Cézanne], in his own name, in his own experience, distinguishes, in what we can call "the catastrophe" in general, he distinguishes two moments: a moment of chaos-abyss from which the "strata" or "the framework" emerges; and then a second moment, the catastrophe that sweeps away the strata and the framework, and what is going to emerge? "The geological stratum, the preparatory labor, the world of the drawing plunges, collapsing like a catastrophe. A cataclysm has swept it away. A new period arises, the true one, the one in which nothing escapes me, in which everything is dense and fluid at the same time, natural. There are only colors and, in them, clarity, the being that thinks them, this rising of the earth toward the sun, this exhalation of the depths toward love."

This is odd because, as [Henri] Maldiney points out here, we could make a connection not only with Kant's texts on the sublime, but term for term, the equivalent would be located as well in texts by Schelling, the Schelling who is associated greatly with painting. That's quite bizarre. Fine.

"I want to take hold of this idea, this spurt of emotion, this burst of being" – color is rising – "of this burst of being over the universal furnace". Here as well, this is a way of honing a description of Turner's painting. And it's not about Turner that he is saying this; it's about his own paintings, it's about what he wants to create: "this universal furnace".

So look, I am starting over: a first, decomposed moment in two aspects, the "chaos-abyss", I am seeing nothing; a second aspect of the first moment: something emerges from the "chaos-abyss", the great planes, the framework, geology. A second moment: catastrophe sweeps away the strata and the great planes. Catastrophe carries them off, that is, we again start from zero. We again start toward a new conquest, and yet if the first moment hadn't been there, no doubt this would not work. And again, there's a danger that catastrophe might seize everything and that color wouldn't arise.

Hey, let's consider a bit of progress: what happens when color does not rise, when color does not set within the furnace? Color has to emerge from this kind of furnace, from this catastrophe furnace. If it does not emerge, if it doesn't cook or it cooks badly… It's odd, it's as if the painter… [*Deleuze does not finish*] Fine, is the painter concerned with ceramics? Yes, obviously yes. He uses other means, but he has his furnace; there's no color that doesn't emerge from this kind of, from a furnace which is what? Well, which is at the same time on the canvas. It's the globe of fire, Turner's globe of light. What will it be for Cézanne, and what do we call it? We don't know yet. Color is supposed to emerge from it, but if it doesn't emerge, what is it? What do we say about a painting in which the color doesn't rise, doesn't emerge? If color rises, what does one have to grasp? Is this a metaphor? No, it's no metaphor, obviously not for Cézanne. That means that color is a matter of ascending scales (*gammes ascendantes*). It must rise. Fine, must it rise? Is this true for all painters? Obviously not. No, on the contrary, there are painters for whom there are descending scales. It happens that, for Cézanne, we'll see why, [it's] ascending scales, such that what seems to be like metaphors are not metaphors.

Anne Querrien: And so, that rises toward white.

Deleuze: Ah, it rises toward white? No, not really.

Claire Parnet: [It's] toward blue.

Anne Querrien: No, no, because [*Inaudible comments; we hear Deleuze groaning*] there's an ascending scale toward black; it's the intense black body. So, one has to know…

Deleuze: Yes, but for Cézanne, it doesn't rise toward white. It rises.

Anne Querrien: So, it's colors. [Deleuze: Yes…] So, that goes into light…

Deleuze: No, these are ascending scales; it's within the order… In the end, it's… Well, we'll see that.

Anne Querrien: No, because in the interwar period, in the exhibition of forms of realism of the interwar years… [*Inaudible comments*] there are people who were beginning to promote black and darkness as intensity.

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, but here, this is Cézanne, right? So, what does it mean when the color does not rise, when it doesn't set, when it doesn't cook? People say: oh, all that? It was… Oh, la, la, the planes fall on top of each other; they are not upright, the failure of geology. They aren't upright. And what does upright mean? Since it's an uprightness that only exists in the painting; is it the uprightness of resemblance? It's necessary that… Otherwise, if the planes topple on each other, the painting is already ruined.

Fine. You see, this is much more important than the problem of depth. The problem of depth is completely subordinate to the problem of planes and of how planes fall. Planes have to fall and not onto each other. All kinds of creation are permitted as far as depth is concerned. But we always get exactly the depth we deserve as a function of the way in which we cause the planes to fall. That's the painter's problem. The painter never had the least problem with depth. The problem of depth is a joke (*c'est pour rire*).

Fine, the second [moment], colors don't rise, so what is the danger? The danger is – it's stated quite well; painters say it quite well – it's… what is it? It's swampy colors; it's a swamp, a marsh, it's a mess, a mess, I've created a mess. It's grey; it's greyness (*grisaille*). The colors don't rise, the planes don't fall, it's awful. It's… [they] fall on each other. It's confusion. [If] the colors don't rise, it's greyness. Hey, it's greyness. Oh yeh? Isn't this going to help us a bit? It's greyness. In fact, that creates paintings, in the end, at the extreme, dirty paintings. Gauguin was very annoyed because a very great critic of the era had said: all the colors are "muted and scabby" (*sourdes et teigneuses*). [*Laughter*] For that, [Gauguin] was unforgiving; twenty years laters, he remembered that, "the muted and scabby color", that someone said that about him. Color is difficult; it's difficult to get away from the muted, the scabby, the grayness.

Ah good, but then, what would this be? How does that occur? Why am I introducing this idea? It's because… [*Deleuze does not finish*] There's a famous text that all painters always repeated, a text by Delacroix in which he says: "Grey is the enemy of color; it's the enemy of painting." We indeed see that what means, right? At the extreme, what is grey? It's where white and black are mixed together, at the extreme, where all colors are mixed together. All colors are mixed together; colors do not rise. It's greyness.

Likewise, not long after this text that I just read, Cézanne said this; listen a bit. He said to Gasquet: "I was at Talloire. You want to see greys? There you have them, and greens, all the grey-greens (*verts de gris*) on the global map. The surrounding hills are rather high, it seemed to me. They appear low, and it's raining. There's a lake between two bottlenecks, a lake of English style. The album leaves fall completely watercolored from trees. Certainly it's still nature, but not as I see it, understand? Grey on grey." -- Grey on grey. – "One isn't a painter so long as one doesn't paint a grey. The enemy of all painting is grey, Delacroix says. No, one isn't a painter so long as one doesn't paint a grey."

What does he mean? It's fine, because he's wrong to criticize Delacroix. Delacroix's text is as important and passionate as Cézanne's, and furthermore, they are saying exactly the same thing. There's a grey that is the grey of failure. And then, there's another grey. There's another grey. What is it? There's a grey that's one of the colors that rise. Would there be two greys? There I feel that we can… This touches so much on… Or else, there are a lot of greys, there might be a huge number of greys. In any case, it's not the same grey. The grey of colors mixing together, that's the grey of failure, and then [there's] an essentially luminous grey, a grey from which colors emerge.

We have to proceed very carefully because it's known that there are two manners of creating grey. Kandinsky recalls this; he has a beautiful text about this, on the two greys, a passive grey and an active grey. There's the grey that's the mixture of black and white and, at the same time, we can't limit ourselves to that. I emphasize this immediately to avoid objections. There's a grey, let's say, that's a mixture of black and white, and then there's a grey that is a mixture, the great grey, and it's not the same, that is the mixture of green and red, or in an even more extended manner, that's a mixture of two complementary colors, but above all, a mixture of green and red. And Delacroix spoke about this other grey, that grey, of green-red. It's obviously not the same grey.

So, this would be easy for us to say: "Ah well yes, there's a grey of colors that are mixed, it's the white-black grey." And then, there's a grey that is like the matrix of colors, the green-red grey. Kandinsky calls the green-red grey a truly "dynamic" grey, in his theory of colors, a grey that rises, that rises to color. Good, but why is it not enough to say that? Because if, for example, we take Chinese or Japanese painting, it's well known that they already obtain all the nuances that we'd like, but an infinite series of nuances of grey beginning with white and black. So, we cannot say that the mixture of white-black isn’t also a matrix. I am simply posing the question of grey. Why am I posing the question? No doubt in order to move from Cézanne to Klee, because we’re going to see the story of grey return again.

I am summarizing everything regarding Cézanne. Here’s what he tells us: he nonetheless gave us significant information for our work: "Catastrophe belongs so much to the act of painting that it’s already there before the painter can begin his task." He has given us a detail. It’s a detail, and it’s one that we haven’t worked through, you see? Why does this interest me? Because what it that we are in the process of grasping, of beginning to grasp? We are in the process, and that interests me; at least for my own purposes, that interests me.

It doesn’t suffice to place painting in relation with space because this is obvious. I even believe that in order to understand its relation with space, we have to take a detour. What detour? The detour of placing [painting] in relation with time, a time that’s specific to painting, to treat a painting as if a painting already operated a synthesis of time, to say that a tableau implies a synthesis of time, to say: careful, painting concerns a properly pictorial time and the act of painting is defined by this synthesis of time. So, this would be a synthesis of time that is suitable only for painting.

If I tell myself how to find and how to manage to define – if this hypothesis is correct – how to manage to define the synthesis of time that I could call properly pictorial, we are beginning to understand. Let’s suppose that the act of painting refers necessarily to a pre-pictorial condition, and on the other hand, that something has to emerge from what the act confronts. The act of painting must confront its pre-pictorial condition in order for something to emerge. There I indeed have a synthesis of time. In what form? A temporality belonging to painting in the form of a pre-pictorial, before the painter begins, of an act of painting and of something that emerges from this act, fine, and all of that would be within the painting. This would be the time belonging to the painting to the extent that about any painting, I would have the right to say: What is the pre-pictorial condition of this painting? These are not at all general categories. Where is, where is, show me that act of painting in this painting, and what emerges from this painting? I would therefore have my synthesis of properly pictorial time.

So, if I take, if I summarize Cézanne’s topic from this perspective, first of all, pre-pictorial conditions: chaos, chaos or abyss, from which the great projected planes emerge. So, that’s the first [time].

Secondly, time : the act of painting as catastrophe. The great planes must be swept away by catastrophe. And what emerges from this? Color. Fine, I’m moving on.

Above all, you must not relax nor reflect, not that. I am moving on to Paul Klee. For Paul Klee, there was always a very strange matter in all his, in many of his texts. It’s recurrent: the topic of the grey point, what he calls the grey point. And we sense that he has a relation with the grey point; it’s his own private matter, and that’s how he can explain what painting means to him. And it’s not to a particular text; for example, there is in what’s been translated under the title *Theory of Modern Art* (in the French edition Médiations), there’s a text by Klee titled "Notes on the grey point", p. 56.[1] But all the way through it, he won’t abandon his idea of the grey point and the adventures of the grey point. He discusses it everywhere, or rather, he talks about it often. And here’s what he tells us; I’ll read this very quickly:

"Chaos as the antithesis of order is not properly chaos; it’s not true chaos. It’s a localized notion, relative to the notion of cosmic order. True chaos couldn’t place itself on the disc of a scale, but forever remains imponderable and incommensurable. It would correspond rather to the center of the scale." In fact, it doesn’t correspond; he says "rather". You are going to see why it doesn’t correspond. What does he tell us here? He is very philosophical; he says, if you talk about chaos, you know, you cannot just take it on like that because if you do, you cannot get out of it. I say, I’m ready to take it on. I’m ready to take it on because I’m a painter. But you cannot, from a logical perspective, take on chaos as if it were the antithesis of something because chaos seizes everything, and it risks seizing it all. You cannot call chaos the opposite of order. Chaos is relative to nothing. It is opposed to nothing; it’s relative to nothing; it seizes everything. And so, from the start, it already places in question any logical thought of chaos. Chaos has no opposite; no, it has no opposite. If you take on chaos, how are you going to get out of it? Klee is going to try to say how, for himself, he gets out of a chaos that has no opposite, a chaos that’s not relative.

He says, so chaos is a non-concept. That’s interesting for my question: can painters bring concepts to us? Yes, he starts by telling us, you know, chaos, you know, if you take seriously the idea of chaos as a non-concept. The symbol of this non-concept is the point. So good, we say, "aha", we must discover this text with pleasure, with delight. So, it’s not a question of discussing nor even asking him why; we have to allow ourselves to consult the text. "The symbol of this non-concept is the point, not a real point, but a mathematical point," that is, a point that has no dimension. This is what he means. "This being-nothingness or this nothingness-being" – Klee is very philosophical – "This being-nothingness or this nothingness-being is the non-conceptual concept of non-contradiction," of non-contradiction since it is opposed to nothing, since it’s not relative, it’s absolute. Chaos is absolute. He says, it’s completely simple. "To bring it into view," that is, in order to have a visible approximation of it – "coming to something like a decision on this matter, one must reach out to the concept of grey, to the grey point, the fateful point between what becomes and what dies."

You see, it’s the grey point that is responsible for being like the pictorial sign of chaos, of absolute chaos. "This point is grey, because it’s neither white, nor black or because it’s white as much as it’s black." You see, this grey that he’s discussing, it’s the grey of black-white. He says it there explicitly. "It’s grey because it’s neither high nor low, or because it’s above as much as it’s down ; [it’s] grey because it’s neither hot nor cold." In terms of colors, you know, hot colors [are] with expansive movement, cold colors [are] with contracting movement. "[It’s] grey because it’s neither hot nor cold, grey because [it’s a] non-dimensional point" – this text is beautiful; we don’t know where he’s going, but he’s going there with a sense of rigor – "grey because [it’s a] non-dimensional point, a point between dimensions, between dimensions and at their intersection, at the crossroads of paths." There you are; there’s the grey point-chaos.

He continues, and here, I am going to combine texts. He continues the very text I am quoting: "To establish a point in chaos is necessarily to recognize it as ‘grey’ by reason of its principaled concentration and to confer on it the character of an original center from which the order of the universe is going to spring forth and emanate in all dimensions. To realize a point with a central merit is to transform it into the locus of cosmogenesis. To this becoming corresponds the idea of every beginning, or better yet, the concept of the egg." Well, well. He brings two concepts to us: the non-conceptual concept of grey and the concept of egg. Fine. If you were listening to the second paragraph, I'll re-read it very rapidly: "To establish a point in chaos is necessarily to recognize it as 'grey' by reason of its principled concentration and to confer on it the character of an original center from which the order of the universe is going to spring forth and emanate in all dimensions."

That's where we are, on this second level; we are at the genesis of dimensions. The first grey point is "non-dimensional". The second paragraph evidently speaks to us about a second grey point. What is this second grey point? This time, in contrast to the first one, or rather, it's the first one, but how is it first? [It's] affixed (*fixé*). It's the centered first one. If you understand something, you see here the echo of Cézanne's text. The planes topple down. Ah! I have affixed the non-dimensional grey point. I've affixed it; I've made it the center. In itself, it's not at all the center, not at all. Here, I've affixed it; I've made it a center, so that it becomes the matrix of dimensions. The first point was unidimensional, the second is the same as the first, but affixed, centered.

In another text – this is why I need other texts – he has an even stranger expression, it's very, very odd – "The established grey point," that is, understand this well, the grey point once it's affixed (*une fois fixé*), once it's taken as center. It's a cosmogenesis of painting that he is trying to create here, I believe. "The established grey point jumps past itself" – you see that it's the same and not the same – "the established grey point jumps past itself into the field where it creates order." The first point was the grey chaos, non-dimensional point. The second one is the same, but the same in another form, at an entirely different level, at another moment. There are two moments of the grey point.

This time, it's the grey point [that's] become center, henceforth the matrix of dimensions, to the extent that it is established, that is, between the two, that has jumped beyond itself. And as Klee adored creating little drawings of his cosmogenesis – you see quite well the grey point that jumps beyond itself – what does that mean? Consulting yet another text, I add that [the cosmogenesis] so obsesses the tale of the grey point, this text, this excerpt from Klee, seems to be extremely valuable for us. "If the grey point is dilated" – it's a question of the second grey point as center that's become matrix of dimensions – "If the grey point is dilated and occupies the totality of the visible, then chaos changes its meaning and the egg becomes dead."

This is the Paul Klee version of the question we were asking earlier: And if chaos seizes everything? So, if chaos seizes everything, well, we have to pass through chaos, but something has to emerge from it. And if nothing emerges, if chaos seizes everything, if the grey point doesn't jump beyond itself, then the egg is dead. What is the egg? It's obviously the painting. The painting is an egg, matrix of dimensions. So what is Klee's idea? I'd say, to create a parallel with Cézanne's text:

First moment: the grey chaos point, it's absolute. Obviously, this is prior to painting. There's no question of painting this grey chaos point. And yet it has an impact fundamentally. Painting, the act of painting, begins when? It's on both sides at once (*à cheval*). The act of painting, if I dare say, has a foot, a hand in the pre-pictorial condition, and the other hand within itself. In what sense? The act of painting is the act that seizes the grey point in order to "affix" it, in order to make it into the center of dimensions. That is, it's the act that results in… that makes the grey point jump beyond itself. The grey point jumps beyond itself and, at that moment, it engenders *order* or the egg. If it doesn't jump beyond itself, it's ruined, the egg is dead.

So, the two moments, grey point and chaos, grey point matrix between the two, the grey point has jumped beyond itself, and that's the act of painting. It was necessary to pass through chaos because it's in chaos that the pre-pictorial condition is located.

So, since here Klee does it explicitly, even more directly than Cézanne, can we reconnect with the problem of color and grey? Fine, is it the same grey? Can we say, is it enough to say – there would even be all sorts of questions – can one say, yes, perhaps? One can say approximately yes, the first grey, the grey chaos point, is the grey of black-white. [*Pause*] The grey point that jumped beyond itself is not the same. It's the same and not the same. It's still the grey point, but this time, when it jumped beyond itself, wouldn't this be this "other" grey, the grey of green-red, the grey that organizes the dimensions and, henceforth, simultaneously, organizes colors, the matrix of dimensions and colors? Can we say this? Yes, we can. Yes, certainly. Is it enough to say this? No, because it would be stupid to say that the grey of black-white isn't also already the entire egg, the entire rhythm of painting, everything. So, it's a way of saying all that. Fine.

How to get beyond this? We are very slowly making progress, that is, we are beginning to perceive [that] this synthesis of time is present. In my view, this is how when we can, if you will, it's really a question of assignment (*assignation*). In a painting, well yes, that works for Turner, evidently. That works for Cézanne; for Klee as well, certainly. And you see why henceforth they can be linked so much to the idea of a beginning of the world. The beginning of the world is their business, their business, their direct business. I want to suggest that if [Gabriel] Faure, for example… Does music have a relation with the beginning of the world? Yes, yes certainly. In what way? I don't know, I really don't know. Here, one has to think for the… In any case, we cannot mix everything up. So, there you are, you understand.

Fine, we feel blocked. So, each time we feel blocked, we have to jump to another painter, but perhaps among you, there are some… What am I looking for? Well, I'm looking for something to help me move forward a little. So, I shift to a painter that's going to come… These connections are not required, but it's connections of painters that I'm undertaking. I'm going to look into this current painter, this contemporary painter, Bacon, because I've been very impressed, and I'm staying with texts. The next time perhaps, I'll show you exceptionally a small painting, one small painting so that you see what he is trying to say, perhaps, but maybe not.

There's a very, very odd text. Bacon did some interviews that have been published in the Skira Editions. And there's a passage that seems to me completely bizarre because he also is lucky enough to be English, well, English, Irish, and he makes a statement, a statement that the English greatly admire – and this statement then, perhaps we shall find salvation there in our… Here's the text. Why am I citing this text right now? For me, it comes now because Bacon says that, before painting, there are many things that have occurred. Before even starting to paint, there are many things that have occurred. What? Well, let's leave that aside. And this is why painting precisely implies a kind of catastrophe; why? It implies a kind of catastrophe on the painting, in order to undo everything that precedes, everything that weighs on the painting before the painting has even started. [It's] as if the painter had to get rid of something; so what do we call these things that he has to get rid of? What are these ghosts of which the painter… What is this struggle with ghosts that precedes painting?

Painters have often provided an almost technical term in their own vocabulary: clichés. We might say that cliches are already on the painting before they've even begun, that the worst is already there, that all the abominations of what is bad in painting are already there. Cézanne knew about clichés, the struggle against the cliché before even starting to paint. As if clichés were there like animals rushing in, already there on the painting before the painter had even picked up his brush. One has to – here we understand a bit better perhaps if that's it; we will understand why painting is necessarily a flood – one has to drown all that, one has to prevent all that, one has to kill all that, prevent all these dangers that already weigh down on the canvas by virtue of its pre-pictorial character or its pre-pictorial condition. All that must be undone, and even if we don't see it, they're there, these kinds of ectoplasms that are already… So where are they? Well, in one's head, in one's heart? They're everywhere. In the room, they are here in the room. It's great, these are ghosts! They're there; we don't see them, they're already here. If you don't move your painting into a catastrophe like a furnace or a storm, etc., you will only produce clichés. People will say, oh! what a lovely brush stroke! Ah, that's nice, quite decorative, from a decorator. Yes, it's lovely, quite lovely! It's nicely done, oh yes, nice! Or else [it's] a fashion design; fashion designers know how to sketch quite well, and it's also shit, with no interest, none, zero, fine, zero.

We must not believe that a painter, a great painter, has less danger than another. It's simply that in what matters to him, he knows all that. That is, they all know how to create a perfect drawing. They may not seem to, but they know this quite well; sometimes they have even learned this in academies where at one time they learned to do this quite well. And so, we do not even conceive of a great painter who doesn't know quite well how to create these kinds of reproductions. They've all been through this, all of them, all. Fine, but they know that this is what one has to bring through the catastrophe. You see, if catastrophe – we are beginning to specify a bit, and yet this is very insufficient what I am saying; I'm not at all saying that we will remain here – but I am saying, if the act of painting is essentially concerned with a catastrophe, it's first of all because it's in necessary relation with a pre-pictorial condition and, on the other hand, because in this relation with a pre-pictorial condition, it must make impossible everything that is already "danger" on the canvas, in the room, in his head, in his heart. So, the painter has to throw himself into this kind of storm, which is going to what? Which is precisely going to cancel and cause clichés to flee. [It's] the struggle against the cliché. Fine.

So, let's assume that for Cézanne, in fact, the struggle against the cliché for Cézanne is almost a, it's a thing in which, understand, if someone devotes his whole life to painting and the struggle against the cliché, it's not a schoolroom exercise. It's something in which he risks… You understand, it's awful. You're trapped, at first glance; at least the painter is trapped: if he doesn't pass through catastrophe, he'll remain doomed to the cliché. And even if you tell him, "oh still, that's really beautiful, not at all clichés," that might not be clichés for others, but for him, it will be. There are some Cézannes that are not clichés for us. For him, they were. [*Pause*] Fine. So, we have to talk about all this; it’s so very complicated. This is why painters are so severe, great painters, about their own works, and this is why they throw out so many things.

So, that’s a first danger. One doesn’t pass through catastrophe. Catastrophe is avoided. Are there great painters who avoided catastrophe, or else reduced it to a minimum, such a minimum that it’s no longer visible at all? Perhaps there are great painters who were sufficiently… I don’t know, so this is for later… They appear to pass for… But nothing at all. And then there’s the other danger: one passes through catastrophe and stays within it. The painting stays within it. Well, this occurs all the time. As Klee says, "the grey point has dilated." The grey point has dilated instead of jumping beyond itself.

Here we have Bacon’s text… Oh, la, la, so I don’t have time. I don’t have time. Well, here we are, you see, we have a text by Bacon who says… Here’s what he says. Fine, no, I want to read it but this… It’s silly; do you want it?

Several students: Yes. [*Pause while some students exit, apparently making noise*\

Deleuze: Yes, because this will let you… I’d like for you to think about this for the next class.

[*Several students ask those leaving to make less noise:* Shhh!]

Deleuze (*He reads and quotes*): "I am making marks." – His painting, it’s about the moment when he has… It’s Cézanne’s moment in which he has the great planes – "I am making marks" – It’s what he calls random marks. You see, it’s really a kind of… Or what he calls "cleanup"; he takes a brush or a rag, and he cleans part of the painting, one part. Always recall that this is not taking everything over, that catastrophe isn’t seizing it all. He is establishing his own catastrophe – "The random marks are created," he says, "and the thing is being considered" – that is, the painting with one part cleaned – "and the thing is being considered as one might do with a kind of diagram." – Marvelous, marvelous, this is going to launch us forward; retain this word, diagram; he calls it that – "And we see within this diagram how all kinds of factual possibilities are implanted". – He’s not saying, we don’t see facts… [*Interruption of recording*] [2 :20 :37]

Part 4

"And suddenly, this diagram" – Understand, it’s bad if it’s not through the diagram; if it’s not through the diagram, that would produce a caricature -- what he’s just said -- that is, something not very strong – "At a certain moment, you’ve placed the mouth somewhere, but you suddenly see through the diagram that the mouth could go" – could go from one point – "from one side of the face to the other". Fine, a huge mouth, you stretch out the feature; so there you state explicitly that it’s a diagramatic feature. – "And in some ways" – here’s what’s most important to me – "And in some ways, in a portrait you’d like to be able to create a Sahara in appearance." – Act so that the painting becomes a Sahara. – "Create the portrait so faithfully, although it seems to contain the distances of the Sahara."

That means, and I hold onto this: establishing in the painting a diagram from which the work will emerge: the diagram is precisely the equivalent of the grey point of… there, completely; and this diagram is exactly like a Sahara, a Sahara, from which the portrait will emerge, creating the portrait so faithfully although it seems to contain the distances of the Sahara.

What is this and why does this word "diagram" interest me? Because this is why I ask, is this random? I don't know if it's random, but I assume that Bacon as well, like so many painters, is well read. "Diagram" is a notion that has taken on great importance in contemporary English logic. Fine, that's good for us, so… It's even a way of seeing what the logicians, certain logicians, call "diagram." Notably it's a notion from which a great logician named [C.S.] Peirce created an extremely complex theory, the theory of diagrams, that has great importance today within logic.

Nor is this very far from a notion that I'm aware of, Wittgenstein rarely using the word "diagram". But Wittgenstein, on the other hand, speaks frequently of factual possibilities. So I don't even exclude the possibility that Bacon here is winking at people by whom he became aware of these conceptions, whose books he read, because the word "diagram" is strange. At the extreme, he might very well not have read these and takes the word "diagram" that, I believe, has a certain contemporary usage in English.

And what is he telling us here? What do I find of interest? You see, the diagram is this cleanup zone that, at the same time creates catastrophe on the painting, that is, erases all the previous clichés, even if these were virtual clichés. He sweeps everything into a catastrophe, and it's from the diagram, that is, the initiation of this Sahara within the painting. It's from the diagram that the Figure will emerge, what Bacon calls the Figure.

Fine, so I'd ask, if here, the word "diagram" can be useful for us? Yes, to some extent, because I'd say, following Bacon, let's call "diagram" this dual notion, around which we've been circling from the start, [this dual notion] of germinal catastrophe or germinal chaos. The diagram would be the germinal chaos. This would be the germinal chaos since both for the cases of Cézanne and Klee, we saw [that] there is, in this very special instance the catastrophe in such a way that it's catastrophic and, in some ways, is rhythm, color, whatever you'd like. And so, this unit (*unité*) for making palpable this germinal catastrophe, this germinal chaos, that's what it is, that's what it is, the diagram. Henceforth, the diagram would have all the preceding aspect, specifically, its tension toward the pre-pictorial condition. On the one hand, it would be at the heart of the act of painting, and on the other hand, from within it something must emerge.

If the diagram extends to the whole painting, overtakes it all, everything is ruined. If there is no diagram, if there's no cleanup zone, if there isn't this kind of crazy zone unleashed within the painting so that the dimensions and also colors emerge, if there isn't this grey of the green-red kind, from which all the colors will arise, from which all colors will arise and create their ascending scales, there is nothing left.

Hence, everything that seemed complex to us – we've made an enormous leap -- everything that seemed complex to us in these dual ideas of "germinal chaos-catastrophe", we can at least unify them within the proposition of a notion that would be properly pictorial, specifically, a diagram. At that point, what is a painter's diagram? Fine, the notion has to become pictorial. That opens lots of new horizons for us, logical horizons, creating a logic of the diagram. Perhaps this would be the same thing as a logic of painting if it's oriented in this direction. But on the other hand, would a painter have one or several diagrams? What would a painter's diagram be? It's not the same for all painters, otherwise it's a notion that wouldn't be painting. We'd ought to find each painter's diagram. This might be interesting, and then perhaps they change diagrams. Perhaps there is… We might even be able perhaps to assign dates to diagrams. What would a diagram be that could be revealed in the painting, variable according to each painter, at the extreme even variable according to eras, that could be dated? I am saying a Turner 1830 diagram, what is it? Are these Platonist ideas? No, since they have dates, they have proper names, and that's what is the deepest in painting. What is Turner's diagram? Fine. I'm not going to summarize it in a painting.

A Van Gogh diagram. Here we're comfortable because this is one of those painters whose diagrams can be seen best. That doesn't mean he had a formula (*recette*). But in his work, everything occurs as if the relation with catastrophe was so greatly exacerbated that the diagram almost appears in a pure state. Everyone know what a Van Gogh diagram is: it's this infinite world of tiny scratches, tiny commas, tiny crosses that go, according to the paintings – and obviously, this isn't a formula – that sometimes cause the sky to throb, sometimes cause the earth to rock, sometimes completely sweep away a tree. So you are also going to find – which is nothing to do with the general idea – but you are going to find this in a tree, in the sky, on the earth, and which will be Van Gogh's treatment of color. And this diagram, I can date it. In what sense can I date it? Entirely like the completely different diagram that's Turner's. I can say, yes, this diagram of tiny commas, of tiny crosses, of tiny roofs, etc., I can show how from the start, in a rather obtuse and stubborn way, Van Gogh deliberately sought that kind of thing,

But is it by chance, and for our own comfort as we come to an end, that Van Gogh discovers color quite late, that this genius devoted to color spends his whole life in what? In non-color, in black and white, as if color terrorized him and that he put off, that he always put off to the following year, the apprenticeship to color, and that he wallows in greyness (*grisaille*), but then really in the black-white grey, and he lives from that and sends his drawings to his brother. He constantly demands him to send mountain chalk. I don't know what mountain chalk is, but it's the best chalk. He says, mountain chalk, send me mountain chalk, I'm not finding any here. Fine, charcoal and mountain chalk and all that, that's how he spends his time. And he flails about… It goes badly, very badly. How will he return to color? What will occur when he enters into color, and what entry will he make into color after having held himself back so much?

So, then, Klee's story becomes vital, dramatic. The grey point jumps beyond him. The black and white grey point becomes the matrix of all colors. That becomes the green-red grey point or the grey point of complementary colors. He has jumped beyond himself. Van Gogh entered into color, and did so because he confronted his diagram. And what is his diagram? It's the catastrophe, it's the germinal catastrophe, specifically these kinds of tiny commas, tiny colored hooks with which he is going to undertake his entire apprenticeship and mastery of color.

And what's going to occur? What experience will he have? And I can date it; in general, I can date it, yes generally. Just like for Turner's diagram, one must say 1830 because that's when Turner, however strong he may have been before his own diagram, directly confronts the diagram.

And [for] Van Gogh, [it’s] 1888. It’s at the start of 1888 that his diagram truly becomes something mastered, something… and at the same time, something fully varied since his little commas, you’ll notice in all Van Goghs, sometimes they’re straight, sometimes they’re curved, they never have the same curve, etc.

That’s what the variability of a diagram is. The diagram is, in fact, a chance for infinite paintings, an infinite chance at paintings. It’s not at all a general idea. It’s dated, it has a proper name, the diagram of one, then another, and in the end, that’s what creates a painter’s style. So there certainly is a Bacon diagram. When did he find his diagram? Fine, there are painters that change diagrams. Yes, there are some that don’t change; that doesn’t mean they repeat themselves, not at all. It’s means that they never finish… analyzing their diagram. Hence, we’ve reached this question, good. There we have perhaps an adequate notion of this history of the catastrophe and of the seed in the act of painting: this would precisely be this notion of the diagram.

Oh, la, la, one-twenty, my God… [*Crowd noises are heard; end of the cassette*] [2:32:12]

Gilles Deleuze

Painting and the Question of Concepts

Session 2, 7 April 1981

Transcriptions: Voix de Deleuze, Part 1, Véronique Boudon (duration 34:58); Part 2, Chloé Molina-Vée (duration 46:55); Parts 3 & 4, Damien Houssier (duration 1:07:04)

Translated by Alina Cherry

Part 1

Forgive my hesitations in advance. So, last time, we started this kind of... I don't know what, about painting and I tried to grasp something that... Because this strikes me. Again, what I say has no value, it goes without saying, no universal value. Every time I would like – it's up to you to see if another painter of whom I haven't thought, if something is suitable or not – anyway, what struck me in a certain number of painters, was the presence on the canvas of a true catastrophe.

And my question was, actually, what is this rapport, not between painting and catastrophe, but this deeper rapport between a catastrophe and the act of painting? As if the painter had to pass through this catastrophe. Henceforth I tried, and this is all we did last time, I tried to see if there was something we could call, I don't know, by a very vague word, a first, not absolute first, but for us, a first concept peculiar to painting, a kind of pictorial concept.

And with the help of texts written by painters, we created a kind of concept, a first concept of catastrophe germ, or chaos germ, as if the painting contained this catastrophe germ from which something would emerge. And, in a certain number of painters, this catastrophe germ is visible. So, that obviously poses a problem. In those where it is not visible, can we say that it is still there, but virtual or invisible? These are things I dare not even address, we must be more solid to even ask this question, without it being completely verbal or completely literary; but anyway, in certain painters, it [catastrophe germ] is obvious. And certain painters tell us about this catastrophe through which they pass, again, not personally, although it can have many personal consequences on their own equilibrium; but it's not about saying that they pass through it personally because this is very secondary; what passes through it is the painting, it's their painting. And perhaps the most striking text was by Paul Klee, when he talks about these two moments: the gray point as chaos and this gray point that leaps over itself in order to unfold as a germ of space, it leaps over itself and I was trying at least to understand or to interpret it as if there were two grays, these two states of gray, the gray black-white leaps over itself, becoming the gray green-red, that is to say the matrix of color.

Fine, is then this chaos germ that through which the painting must pass in order to... what? For the light to be born, or – and here we see all kinds of possible answers – for the color to be born?

Hence, the admirable title of Turner's stacks: "Birth of color," "beginning of color," and this theme that traverses all the painters, that finally the painting, the painter puts himself in the situation of a creation of the world or a beginning of the world. What would that mean if not precisely that he passes through this chaos catastrophe, he introduces it on the canvas so that something might emerge from it, which is what? Which is obviously no longer the world of objects. It can no longer be under any circumstances the world of objects, but the world of light-color. Now, you understand that – I was insisting on this – there is no general formula for the chaos catastrophe, the chaos germ or the catastrophe germ. It's obvious that Van Gogh's chaos germ is completely different – and I'm giving examples from close time frames – from Cézanne's chaos germ. In addition, it is also completely different from Gauguin's chaos germ, all of this is... all the more so from Klee's chaos germ. So, there are chaos germs that are very, very singularized, on which will already play what we'll call the style of the painter; and what will emerge from them will also be very different.

The painters of light, I think that – although the painters of light can be great colorists – I think that the painters of light who attain color through light, and the painters of color who attain – don't know, I believe I've made a mistake -- the painters of light, who attain color through light, and the painters of color, the colorists who attain light through color, well, you see, there are absolutely different techniques, it goes without saying.

So, when I talk about a chaos germ, I don't mean at all something undifferentiated, on the contrary, it is rather signed, there is already the signature of the painter. And so, last time I was just saying chaos germ; it so happens that a contemporary painter has a word that intrigues me and is of great use to me, so I repeat, it's Bacon, when he calls this chaos germ a diagram. He says: "yes, in a painting, there is a diagram", and it was the quote that I had read to you, even in a portrait, well, in a portrait, and what is a diagram? He tells us, "The diagram," and I think we need to pay attention to the word he uses. "A diagram is a possibility of fact," and so what interested me – it almost gives me the idea, finally, of what we're doing here, talking about painting – was a logic of painting, which doesn't mean at all reducing painting to logic, but considering that there is a logic peculiar to painting.

Well, this word, "diagram," would serve me all the more that it is frequently and currently used, as I was telling you, by certain British and American logicians; the theories of the diagram are everywhere, and what I would like to do, among other things, in order to reach more logical or philosophical considerations, would be to try to see if painting can provide us with the elements, some elements in any case, for a theory of the diagram. But you see, for the time being, because I tried to situate this diagram or this chaos germ in the time of the act of painting, and I say: yes, very simply, could we not say this, even if we are to correct it later: well, it's like the second moment in the three moments of the act of painting. It's in that sense that I was saying, you know, in a painting, there is always an implicit synthesis of time.

And what are these three moments? Well, I was saying that the painting is in immediate communication with a before-painting moment (*un avant-peindre*). The painting cannot be thought prior to a before-painting (*un avant-peindre*), that is to say, the painting fundamentally has a pre-pictorial dimension. And I refer to this long text by Cézanne, where he talks about everything that happens before he starts painting. It's precisely this pre-pictorial dimension that already belongs to the painting. Now, it's according to this pre-pictorial dimension that the diagram positions itself as a second moment, hence this question: "What is it [the diagram] going to do with respect to the second moment?" "What is it going to do, sorry, with respect to the first moment?"

If there is definitely visible or non-visible in the painting, a belonging and a pre-pictorial dimension, we don't know yet in what this dimension consists. All I can say is that the necessity or the chaos-germ, that is to say, the diagram, will find its necessity in a certain function that it performs in relation to this first pre-pictorial dimension. What is it [the diagram] going to do? It is going to act, literally, as a kind of scrambled, wiped-off zone, in order to allow what? To allow, undoubtedly, the advent of painting. We're going to have to clean up, to scramble.

Fine, let's suppose that for the third moment to come out... So, you see, I have my kind of temporal dimension of the act of painting, the pre-pictorial dimension, the diagram that is going to act we don't know yet how on this dimension, in such a way that might emerge from the diagram what? Let's go back to Bacon's words. The diagram is not yet the pictorial fact. Oh, so there would be a pictorial fact? Perhaps there is a pictorial fact.

Why is it that when critics speak about painting, there is always a word that everybody, many people use, the theme of presence? Presence, presence, it is the simplest word to describe the effect of painting on us, and you notice that I'm not making any distinction for the time being, there is no reason for it, whether it is a Mondrian square or a figure of very classical painting, there is no need for it, there is a kind of presence. Presence, what does it mean when critics use this word? It is used to tell us – and obviously what we know well thanks to them, thanks to ourselves, uh – it's not representation. Presence is... what is it? We don't know very well; we know above all that it is different from representation. The painter has brought forth a presence, namely a portraitist, well, he doesn't represent the king, he doesn't represent the queen, he doesn't represent the little princess, he brings forth a presence.

Okay, then it's a convenient word. It's another way of saying that there is a pictorial fact. Where does the pictorial fact come from? Well, after all, all the vocabularies suit us, so my three moments: the pre-pictorial moment, which, in a way, I insist again, belongs to the painting; then the diagram; then the pictorial fact that emerges from the diagram.

Okay, we take this as a point, again it's a hypothesis because it'll have to be revised, all that. Let's speak Latin because it is... I'm thinking of a text by Kant, in a completely different field, where he uses a Latin terminology distinguishing... It's good actually, it is a beautiful passage where he distinguishes the *datum* and the *factum*, that is to say, in French it's less pretty, the given and the fact. And he says: "you know the fact is something completely different from the given." Well, I'd say that my first stage, the pre-pictorial dimension, is the world of the givens. What is given? So, my question becomes more specific, it will help us: what is given on the canvas before the painting begins?

Fine, I emphasize this because there is a kind of platitude, quite recent, which is a catastrophe, it seems to me, it is a catastrophe because it's such a distortion of the real problem – either to write or to paint – that it makes everything childish. And I think it's a theme that, generally those who support it claim to be influenced by Blanchot – but it’s simply an erroneous interpretation of Blanchot who never said anything stupid – whereas the theme they draw from him is incredibly stupid.

This theme, which is ruinous in literature, is the theme of the writer in front of a blank page. It’s silly, but ridiculously silly, and henceforth the problem of writing is: “my God, how I am going to fill this blank page?” [*Laughter*] So, there are people who write books about this, about the vertigo of the blank page. [*Laughter*]

You understand, we don’t really see why someone would want to fill a blank page, there is nothing missing from a blank page, I mean, I see very few themes as stupid as this one, which is entirely clichéd. The anxiety of the blank page, you can even add a bit of psychoanalysis to this, the blank page... And sometimes people write novels of up to eighty pages, a hundred and twenty, a hundred and forty pages about this relation of the writer with the blank page.

I’m saying that this is of an unfathomable stupidity, because if someone sits in front of a blank page, he is not going to fill it, it’s forced; moreover, this is accompanied by such a stupid conception of writing that, you understand, it’s just the opposite. When you have something to write, or when you estimate, I’m not saying at all... I’m not making a distinction between true and fake writers, it’s more general... if you have something to write you mustn’t think that you are... it’s the third, it’s the one looking over your shoulder who says: “oh, he hasn’t written anything yet...” “Okay, I haven’t written anything yet.”

But what is the difference between... my poor head, my excited brain and the page? None, in my opinion, none. Namely, there are already many things, there are far too many things on the page, there is no blank page. There is a blank page objectively, that is to say, a false objectivity for the third party who is watching, but when it comes to your own page, it is cluttered, it is completely cluttered, and that’s exactly what writing means. That the page is so cluttered that there is no room to add anything at all.

As a result, writing will fundamentally be “erasing,” it will fundamentally be “deleting.” What is on the page before I start writing? I would say there is the infinite world, forgive me, the infinite world of stupidity. There is this infinite world... or rather, how is writing a test? It’s just that you don’t write like this, with nothing in your head, you have many things in your head. But in your head, in a way, everything is on the same plane, namely what is good about an idea and what is easy and clichéd. It’s on the same plane, it’s only when you act through the activity of writing that this bizarre selection where you become “act” happens, I’d say the same thing for speaking. When you have something in your head, before speaking, but there are plenty of things, yet everything is on the same plane... no, in a way not everything is on the same plane, but it’s useless editing in your head, there is the test of acting it out either by talking or by writing, which is a fantastic elimination, a fantastic purging.

So, your page is full. Full of what? I would say of ready-made ideas, and you would have a difficult time finding them original. Ready-made ideas, that doesn’t necessarily mean ideas that others also have, you may very well have your own ready-made ideas, entirely your own, although they are ready-made. They are ready-made ideas. Facile, facile, the type of ideas you have when you are eighteen years old and of which you are ashamed when you wake up. No, [it's] too facile all that, not serious. You understand, the world of ideas, once again, has never been justiciable of the true and the false. It is justiciable of much finer categories. The important, the essential and the inessential, the remarkable and the ordinary, etc. As long as it is in your head, well, you can take very ordinary things for remarkable things. But it's not innocent, this kind of confusion, when you take something ordinary for something remarkable, it affects the content of the idea. Not just formal stuff, so that's why you always have books about which you say... I don't know if you've had this experience, but anyway, no, this is not ok, it's childish. And we would have a difficult time saying in what respect this is false. No, it's not false, it's nothing. While the guy seems to find his ideas great, there is something in you... and there are no grounds for discussion.

That's why discussions are always shit, you know. This is not the place for a discussion at all. I cannot tell someone why their idea isn't splendid, eh, it's impossible to say. Fine, that's simply what we have in our head, the world of ready-made ideas, either collective ideas or even personal ideas. A personal idea is not a good idea because it's personal... There are some ready-made ideas that are, however, just mine, that are facile; at a pinch, I can mention them in conversation, but if I test them in writing, I say to myself: But what on earth is this? What am I saying, is it worth writing this down? Well, if we ask ourselves that a lot, I'm not saying that we succeed, we can be wrong like everyone else, but we are mistaken less often, we must have urgent questions… [*Brief interruption of the recording*] [22:11]

I turn to painting, that's what interests me: it's also idiotic to think that the canvas is a blank surface, no more than paper. A canvas is not a blank surface, I think painters know that well. Before they start, the canvas is already full, it is filled with what, before they start? Again, this is for the eye of the guy who walks around and sees... so, he sees a painter, he looks and then says: "you haven't done much there, huh, there's nothing." As for the painter, if he has trouble getting started, it's precisely because his canvas is full. Full of what? Full of the worst. And you understand that, otherwise painting wouldn't be a job... the canvas is full of the worst, the problem will be to remove, to really remove these things, these invisible things that have already overtaken the canvas, which is to say, evil is already there. What is evil? What are the ready-made ideas about painting? Painters have always used a word to designate, well not always, but there is a word that's prevailed for designating what fills the canvas before the painter begins, it's cliché, one cliché, several clichés. The canvas is already filled with clichés.

Consequently, there will be in the act of painting, like in the act of writing, that which has to be presented, although it is quite insufficient, a series of subtractions, of deletions. The necessity to clean the canvas. So, would that be the role, at least a role, the negative role of the diagram? The necessity to clean the canvas to prevent the clichés from taking. What's so terrible about clichés? Well, we can say, and in fact people do say that, after all, painters are currently worse than before, and if we had to comment, it's true in a way. I don't want to repeat those analyses on the existence of a world of simulacra, authors like [Pierre] Klossowski, for instance, have done them too well; although Klossowski understands simulacrum in a very erudite way, it also includes this aspect, the cliché, the ready-made. We live, we are often told, we live in a world of simulacra, in a world of clichés. No doubt, it is necessary to question progress, certain technical developments in the field of images, the photo-image, the cinema-image, the television-image, etc. Oh well, this whole world of images... but this doesn't exist only on screens, it exists in our heads, it exists in rooms, it exists in a room, it's truly Lucretian, you know when Lucretius talks about simulacra that go around the world, that cross spaces in order to come from some place to hit our heads, to hit our brains, all that. We live in a world of clichés, there are posters, there is all that... Fine. In the end, all of that is on the canvas before the painter begins.[2]

And what is catastrophic is that as soon as a painter has found something, it becomes a cliché, and very quickly nowadays there is a production, infinite reproduction of the cliché, which makes the consumption extremely quick. Well, war against the cliché, that is the painter's battle cry, I think. Now, the painter knows that there are personal clichés as well as collective clichés, that the painter can have his little cerebral idea, his little idea of something new. But every cerebral idea in painting is a cliché. Even if that's his own personal cliché, it's still a cliché. I don't like very much the phrase by Oscar Wilde that's always quoted, namely, "it is nature that starts to resemble such painter." It's not the painter that copies nature, it's nature that once the painter exists, then indeed, for instance, we start to say of a landscape, oh look, this is a Renoir. To me, this doesn't seem so complimentary to the painter, it only really shows the speed with which an act of painting becomes a cliché. I start saying in front of a woman: "ah, a real Van Dongen," in front of a landscape: "oh, this is a Renoir," cliché, cliché, cliché. Perhaps the painter who struggled... eventually, his clichés, you'll tell me, don't have any objective existence on the canvas. Okay, I'm saying that they have a virtual existence, a force, a weight. How will the painter avoid the clichés, both the clichés that come from outside and already force themselves on the canvas, and the clichés that come from him?

It will be a struggle with the shadow because his clichés don't exist objectively, once again we believe in the blank surface, and yet, they [the clichés] are there. In any case, for the painter, they are there. The one who pushed, to my knowledge... I don't know, all of them had this drama, how to escape the clichés, even a cliché that would be entirely theirs, it's a frightening struggle.

Regarding the rapports between painting and photography about which I'd like to speak later, but for now, I would still launch a theme, because I find it relevant at this point. Regarding the rapports between painting and photography and what painters may have learned from photography, or the relevance of photography in relation to painting, two things seem to me very, very questionable. Um, you understand, you have to distinguish, you have to distinguish because even the painters who use photos, what is this about? What is this about, the painters who use photos today? I'm thinking of a painter, I don't know what you think of him, if um, maybe, he only suffers from an excess of talent.

There is something... it's [Gérard] Fromanger. In one of his periods, Fromanger used photos in a way that seems very interesting to me. This was his method. We'll see if we won't find again our diagram story. What was he doing? During one of his periods, it was the time when he used photos the most, he would go walking in the street – well, it was his way of looking for the motif – he would stroll in the street, with a photographer, a press photographer, a newspaper photographer. And he would photograph street scenes, especially shops, several shots; that's what he was doing and I'm asking you to see where the act of painting starts in this process. He wasn't the one taking the photos, he makes that very clear, and it's obvious that when we see a photo, um, esthetically worthless, [there is] no esthetic claim. Does the photo have the right to make aesthetic claims? It’s a very interesting problem, I think, quite interesting. But that wasn’t even in question, since the photos were purposely instant press photos; he would take twelve photos of the same scene or of the same shop. Fromanger would select from the twelve photos, he would select, he would select.

That’s where the act of painting was already starting, yet he had painted nothing. There was already an act there, he chose a photo, based on what? He had an idea in his head, what was his idea? There is clearly an intention, what was the intention to paint, and to paint what in Fromanger’s case, from the point of view of that technique? Well, what was his idea, his little idea? He would choose a photo from twelve or ten, depending on a color, which had to be, which had to become the dominant color of the painting to be made. Yes, they were black and white photos, oh yes, I forgot to specify that they were back and white photos. Fine, he would select a photo, like this, so he had twelve photos, he would look at the technical quality of the photo, but if needed, he would pick a photo of a lower technical quality because it seemed more compatible with... the scene vaguely brought to his mind a color. Let’s imagine a scene that would evoke for him a violet, a very specific violet, he would say: “oh, well yes, that scene, I see it in violet.” Then, he would choose the photo that seemed to him the most compatible with – it was already a painter’s choice – this violet he had in his head, that the scene had vaguely evoked for him.

What was he doing with it? -- And I can already say: the act of painting began at the level of this first choice. -- He would project the photo on the canvas. Fine, he would project the photo on the canvas. [*Pause*] I like this technique a lot because, I’m not saying that it is a technique that’s the most… [*the gap is from Deleuze*] besides, it must be abandoned -- one can makes a series, a painter can make a series like that, and if he stops there, it obviously becomes a “cliché” in turn. He had an idea, in fact pop art sometimes had similar techniques, but that specific technique, no, it was a little variation, it was a Fromanger variation.

Okay, so what did he do from that point on? You see, he wasn’t painting at all on a virgin canvas, even apparently. There was a kind of truth of painting, which was already emerging, there was the projection of the photo on his canvas. Photo of no aesthetic value, and deliberately worthless. If there had been a photo with even the slightest artistic claim, he wouldn’t have been able to work, I think. So, his canvas had to be filled with the image of the image, with the projection of the photo. I think that finally... [*Interruption of the recording*] [35:00]

Part 2

... his idea of a dominant color, well, his violet for instance, and he would make a first scale. He was a painter, that’s what being a painter meant. He would make a first scale. Scale that I’m going to call, you’ll see why, “scale of light.” He would make his scale of light. You see to what extent we are already, it’s getting very close, indeed, you will have to ask me the question I won’t answer... And he would replace the initial cliché with a new cliché. Obviously, that’s why he couldn’t carry on with this technique for a long time.

Fine, he would make his scale of light, and what does that mean? He would have the photo projected and he would paint everything in violet, the chosen violet, but going from light zones to dark zones. What did that mean in terms of painting? It means that for the light zones, he mixed his violet with white -- this is an act of painting -- and for the dark zones there was less and less white and, in the end, no white at all, it was the pure violet that gushed straight out of the tube. Let’s see. He would make a scale of light, of luminosity, obtained through the variable mixture of white and this violet. Fine. Then, what was he doing? That was for the background. Or, for example, for the shop. But the photographer had shot a street scene, I made it clear, that is to say, people passing in front of the shop or people coming out of the shop, all that... The violet he had chosen was, technically, for those who know this color, a Bayeux violet, namely, a violet that we call “warm.”

Later we’ll talk about color more specifically, but most of you already know this, the contrast of colors from the point of view of tonality, the fundamental opposition is between warm and cool colors. Warm generally speaking... all of this is quite insufficient because I’m not yet talking about color, warm being a sort of... defining a color with a vector of “expansion,” of movement of expansion; cool with a movement of “contraction.” Among the elementary colors, yellow is called “warm,” blue is called “cool.” Fine.

So, his Bayeux violet was a warm violet. He had thus established his scale of light, and he was moving to a scale of colors. He would make an ascending scale of light, towards the pure Bayeux violet. He would then make a scale of colors. Namely, the dominant “violet” being warm, he was going to paint a man in green, for example, a cool green, since there are cool greens, warm and cool being relative and dependent on hues. He would create a cool green.

So, from a color standpoint, there was this opposition between the cool green, the man in cool green and the dominant “violet.” What was its purpose? The juxtaposition of the “cool green” zone in relation to violet was intended, as painters say, to warm the violet even more. Fine, let’s admit that. We’ll look at all this from the point of view of a very simple conception of colors. You see, when you are, for instance, in front of an impressionist painting, you always have these things, these themes: the complementary relations, the relations between warm and cool colors, how a cool color warms up more, heats up even more a warm color, etc.

Fine, so the cool green warmed the violet even more. Fine. But in relation to the cool green as a new element, what was he going to do? At that moment a whole circuit of colors appears. He was going to paint another man in yellow, in warm yellow. This time, the warm yellow, you see, wasn’t in direct relation with the violet, but it was in relation with the violet via the cool green, etc., etc. He was going to do his scale of colors until the entire painting was filled.

What had he done? – to get back to our theme -- How is there a kind of diagram? Where was the diagram located? From the very beginning it was about one thing, it’s a bad case, precisely a bad example and we’ll have to ask ourselves if that’s not always the case with the painters who have had a relationship with photographs. Far from using the photo as if it were an element of art, he completely neutralized the photo and the cliché. He neutralized the cliché in the following way, he projected it on his canvas (but it was a way of avoiding the cliché, much more than using it) because the act of painting only started from the moment the photo was going to be cancelled in favor of a first scale of light, of an ascending scale of light and a scale of colors. Fine.

So here, we rediscover my three moments: the pre-pictorial moment, cliché, cliché, nothing but clichés. The necessity of a diagram that will blur, that will clean the cliché so that something might emerge, the diagram being only a possibility of fact, the cliché is the given, that which is given, given in the mind, in the street, in the perception, given, given everywhere. Fine. You see then, the diagram acts as that which will blur the cliché so that the painting might emerge. Fine. I find my three moments there.[3]

But I'm saying that perhaps nobody has waged the "fight against the cliché" as passionately, as – I would say, even if I had to justify this word later – as hysterically as Cézanne. It seems to me that there is an extraordinary conscience in Cézanne: "my canvas is full of clichés even before I start painting" and the kind of exigency that's never satisfied in Cézanne is: "how to get rid of all these clichés that are already occupying the canvas?" It's a struggle with the shadow, only, my question – and we'll see what that can mean – I feel that the true struggles are always struggles with the shadow. There are no other struggles but the struggle with the shadow. The clichés are already there, they are in my head, they are in me, they don't need... and when Fromanger brings them out, to put them on his canvas in order to destroy them and to bring out a pictorial fact, it's already a way of avoiding them. They are already there, and they are already there to such a great extent that I resume the list of dangers.

If you don't pass through the chaos catastrophe, you will remain a prisoner of the clichés and people could say: "oh yes, he has a nice brushstroke." It will be worthless, and the painter himself will undoubtedly know that it is worth nothing. Thus, not passing through the chaos catastrophe, that is, not having a diagram, is very, very unfortunate, it means not having anything to say, not having anything to paint. There are many painters who paint and who have nothing to paint. Fine. But there is another thing: mauling the cliché. Mauling, manipulating the cliché. It seems very close to the diagram, to the chaos catastrophe and yet you must feel that it is... I'm trying to... it's like a premonition of all the dangers, all the practical dangers. It's far too deliberate, "mauling the cliché." Photographers keep doing it. That's not how they become painters. Fine, you can always maul the cliché, manipulate it. [*Pause*] It's not... that's not okay either.

On the other hand, I was saying, the danger that Klee pointed out, if the cliché [*Deleuze corrects himself*], if the diagram, if the catastrophe, if chaos overtakes everything, it's not good either. In other words, we are constantly surrounded by dangers, very formidable dangers. So, I'm thinking of a text, I'm not going to read it because I have trouble reading, I'm saying that I would have liked to read it to you, it's a text by Lawrence, I think I talked to you about it, you'll read it yourselves, it's in the collection of articles that appeared in French under the title" "Eros et les chiens" where there is a splendid text on Cézanne.[4] Splendid. I find the theme of the text so beautiful... [D.H.] Lawrence, you know, was painting with watercolors, especially towards the end of his life, they are not very good, but he knew it, he knew it, he needed them. Miller also did watercolors, Churchill too but they are even worse. [*Laughter*]

A student [*near Deleuze*]: Barthes too?

Deleuze: Barthes was doing watercolors? Well, maybe they were good. Fine. Lawrence said: "well, there you go, you understand, this is what Cézanne is all about." And that's why I'd like you to read this text that says: “never has a painter gone so far in the preliminary fight against the cliché.” Before painting. And he says, and that’s where Lawrence’s text interests me a lot: “but you know, Cézanne had his own clichés.” And indeed, he could do... The painter who submits to his own clichés, what is it? It’s when the true painter is missing; as if we were saying: “Oh, this, of course, is a Cézanne, but it’s very close to a fake Cézanne.” You have the feeling that he wasn’t himself. For those who saw it, I was not long ago at the Modigliani exhibition, and curiously, there are Modiglianis, you almost feel... they are admirable, prodigious, but it’s a painter, I don’t know, there was something, forgive me, I feel a little embarrassed, as if he had been too gifted, as if there were Modiglianis at the extreme, [there was] an excess of gift or an excess of ease. Fortunately, Cézanne had no gift. No gift at all.

So then, his fight against the cliché led him to what? To what did it lead him, this fight against the cliché? Lawrence’s passages are very beautiful. At the end, he says: “well, yes... What did Cézanne achieve?” And there is this very beautiful phrase: “well yes, he finally understood the fact pictorially”; what is Cézanne’s fact? What he captured, what he did, what led him to painting is “the fact of the apple.” The apple, he understood the apple very, very well, nobody has ever understood an apple like that. What does it mean, “to understand as a painter?” Understanding an apple, that is going to be our problem, but that means making it happen as “fact,” what Lawrence calls “the appleyness of the apple” (*le caractère pommesque de la pomme*). That’s what Cézanne was able to paint, “the appleyness of the apple.” Fine. At the end of what, what fight against the cliché, what search where Cézanne was never satisfied?[5]

On the other hand, he says: “oh, things are going less well with landscapes, no matter how beautiful they are.” He says the problem with Cézanne was that if he understood so well the appleyness of the apple, he hadn’t really understood, for instance, the feminineness (*le caractère féminesque*) of women. And no, that... His women... And in this wonderful passage Lawrence says: “Oh well, these women, he paints them like apples and that’s how he manages.” [Laughter] Mrs. Cézanne is a kind of apple, but they are still brilliant paintings, it’s not about... but... and Lawrence says: “it’s excessive, eh, if at the end of his life, a painter will say, like Cézanne: “I understood the apple and one or two pots,” it’s already tremendous.

What did Michelangelo understand? We can transpose, look for... namely, what “fact” they brought? I’d say, well, Michelangelo, among others, didn’t understand much, you know, it’s like everything else, a writer doesn’t understand much, a philosopher doesn’t understand much, we mustn’t exaggerate... they are not people who understand like that... a painter doesn’t just paint anything. Fine, what did Michelangelo understand? He understood, for instance, and it’s quite an accomplishment, he understood “a large male back.” Not a woman’s; a large back of a woman or a small back of a woman would be a completely different thing, that would be other painters. A large back of a man. An entire life for “a large back of a man,” okay, a lifetime for “a large back of a man.” Well, that’s worth Cézanne’s apple. As Lawrence says, these are not Platonic ideas.

Fine, Michelangelo also understood other things, but still, it’s always rather limited, what a painter can understand, namely the pictorial facts that he brings to light. Well, then, what are these since I’m talking about the facts. I cannot say everything I say... it seems to me that it’s sometimes connected to such and such a painter, but there are also things that are valid or not for painting in general.

I mean, it's always been like that, the painter's task, to bring forth the pictorial fact, to fight against the givens; yes, I resume my three moments, which are a bit academic, but let's hope we'll get something out of it: the fight against the ghost or against the givens, the establishment of the diagram or of the chaos catastrophe and, what comes out of it, namely, the pictorial fact.

So, I would almost say, it's not contradictory, it's always existed in painting but I'm saying to myself, well, it has always existed but in a more or less latent way. I was talking about Michelangelo earlier. I would almost say that his importance in painting, for me, is that he is, maybe, maybe, eh, I should nuance all this, one must always nuance a lot, he is the first painter who brought to light in its most raw form what a pictorial fact was. I think that if we had to date this notion, it would date back to Michelangelo.

So, if we try a little... now I take a completely different painter with respect to the periods and the style of those I had considered the last time, I'm saying that "the pictorial fact" is born in its reality, that is, it establishes itself on the canvas with Michelangelo. That would be Michelangelo's unfathomable contribution.

So, if my impression is correct, I'm thinking now is the time to try to specify what we could call the pictorial fact as opposed to the pre-pictorial givens. Again, the pre-pictorial givens are the world of clichés, in the broadest sense of the word, namely, that against which or the world of ghosts, that against which or the world of fantasy or the imaginary world, anything you want, all that, I'm including it... that is the world of the givens, it's with all of that the painter has to break. If he stays there, he's lost. If he stays there, he'll be a pretty little painter and that's all. But then, the pictorial fact... it seems to me that it's Michelangelo who, in a way, invents the pictorial fact, which doesn't contradict the idea that I also have that... it's always existed but it is he who brings it to light, who makes us see it. I'm sticking to anecdotes because it'll help us make headway.

It's first with Michelangelo that the status of the painter really changes. I mean, the painter clearly had to have the right personality, he also had to have the right epoch, the era is good for that, but the painter stops being a guy who executes orders. I mean, the others, it didn't stop them from being great and from doing whatever they wanted, but they weren't arguing, eh, if a Pope... was ordering a commission, they weren't arguing. What's new with Michelangelo, which is very important in terms of pure anecdote?

The first anecdote I remember about Michelangelo is that Julius II told him to do this commission. And Julius II has very specific ideas about what he wants and nothing else. Nothing else. Michelangelo does something completely different. In addition, he talks with the Pope, he convinces the Pope, and finally the Pope is fed up and he gives him, as they say, carte blanche. Well, that's something new. Okay, you'll tell me, what does this mean pictorially, this anecdote that would otherwise be of little interest?

Well, what does that mean? I'll tell you a second anecdote. Michelangelo is one of those who exhibit – maybe this existed before, maybe it was less visible – exhibit a splendid indifference to the subject. So, obviously all the painters... we'll see that, is it true? But maybe the subject is part of the cliché. The subject or the object represented may have always been, for all the painters, the equivalent of the cliché and it's certainly that which always had to be blurred for the pictorial fact to emerge. In other words, the cliché has always been the object. Fine. So, the cliché was blurred, the object was blurred, in order to bring out what? Well, the answer is simple: the pictorial fact that was already light and color. Okay.

But it turns out that with Michelangelo this indifference to the object or the subject takes on a kind of insolence, such as knowing which Biblical scene Michelangelo represents, knowing what the characters in the background are doing, and we are almost ashamed to ask these questions. We're ashamed to ask these questions, and especially with Michelangelo, we are ashamed to ask these questions; we feel really stupid when we say: "but what are these four men in the background?" For instance, four men in the background of the Holy Family, all naked, with an attitude that... from the point of view of figuration we can only call a pronounced homosexual attitude. What are these four men doing? We feel embarrassed to ask a question like that because it is so stupid. Fine. It's... Fine. In the scene, they are doing nothing. What is this scene? It's called the Holy Family. Okay. Fine. Splendid indifference to the subject there.

That's where I want to go anecdotally. He is commissioned to paint a battle, a famous battle. Very well. He says: "okay." And what does he do? He won't do the painting, he won't be able to do it. He does a preparatory drawing (*carton*). What does the preparatory drawing represent? A group of naked young people, in the water, coming out of the water, and in the background, soldiers. People say: "Phew, there are soldiers, that's already something, huh." [*Laughter*]. And a group... what is it doing there? It's a masterpiece by Michelangelo; these young people naked in the water, splendid, splendid, the soldiers on the horizon. Scholars are looking for answers. Nevertheless, people are wondering why he calls it "The Battle of Cascina." Scholars are searching. And there is a commentator at the time who says that in this battle, a small group of Florentine soldiers took a bath... and that their commander reminded them of decency – they weren't surprised at all. Not at all. Fine. Michelangelo is not really interested in the subject. Regarding the battle, he says: "okay, I'm going to paint naked young people in the water." He says: "they want a battle, I couldn't care less..." so he invents; these naked young people who would have been surprised by the enemy bathing in the water is a purely invented episode, that's a bit like a battle. [*Laughter*]

What does this mean? How is this more than just an anecdote? I'm coming back – I seem to be jumping but I'm not. All of this remains quite identical – I come back to this contemporary painter I was talking about: Bacon. In his interviews Bacon keeps saying: "there are only two dangers in painting" – and that's not an original idea because it seems to me that it's always been the idea of all painters – "there are only two dangers in painting, illustration, and even worse, narration." A great art critic, Baudelaire, was already talking about these dangers: illustration and narration. And what we generally call figuration is the common concept that groups these two things: illustration and narration. So, what happens in front of certain paintings? And yes, what is he doing? Oh yes, someone cuts off someone else's head, etc. It's a battle, fine. There is a whole figurative aspect, a whole narrative aspect. Fine.

So, you understand, by dint of making circles and always coming back to my starting point, I'd say that the fight against the cliché is the fight against any narrative and figurative reference. A painting has nothing to show and nothing to tell. That is the basis. If you want to tell something, you have to choose other disciplines, you have to choose narrative disciplines. A painting has nothing to do with a story, it's not a story. That's good, but at the same time, you understand, narrations and figurations do exist; they are the givens even before the painter starts to paint, they are the givens. And they are there on the canvas, the figurations and narrations.

There are a certain number of paintings that could be very beautiful and that we already know are not great paintings, precisely because you can't help saying: "what happened?" Non only: "what does this represent," that would be... but: "what happened?" For instance, Greuze is a narrative painter in what sense? It's that you feel the need to... There is a very beautiful painting by a Dutch painter whose name I can't recall, which shows a father scolding his daughter. And the daughter is seen from behind, an arching back. We can't see this painting without saying: "but what is the daughter's expression?" That's not good, that's not good. I mean, it can be very pretty, it can be amazing, it's not great painting, it's really a painting that's inseparable from a narrative, right? You understand, that's not okay. What bothers me ... I'm saying this... but you... it's not at all... what bothers me terribly in a contemporary painter who is actually very good, like Balthus, is that... we constantly have the feeling that the image is taken from something that is happening. There is a story in there. I understand that those who like Balthus may find revolting what I'm saying, so I eliminate, I cross out this unfortunate example.

Fine, fine, fine, removing narration and illustration, that would be the role of the diagram and of the chaos catastrophe. So, getting rid of all the figurative givens because figurations and narrations are given. They are given. Thus, making the figurative and narrative givens pass through the chaos catastrophe, through the catastrophe germ, so that something completely different emerges, namely, the fact.

The fact is what? Bacon defines it quite well and it really applies to all painting. The pictorial fact is when you have several – we see it better when there are several – when you have several Figures in the painting, without telling a story. And Bacon gives an example that could touch us: Cézanne's "The Bathers" (*Les Baigneuses*). He says: "it's amazing, he managed to put twelve or fourteen figures," take all the versions of The Bathers, and he managed to put several figures, to make them coexist on the canvas – it is implied, otherwise it made no sense, "necessarily," "necessarily." Fine. I add "necessarily": making coexist several figures, without telling any story. If this coexistence is necessary, you then sense what the pictorial fact is. This necessity peculiar to painting.

I'll give a particularly famous example. A well-known 19th-century painting shows a female nude in a wood. A naked woman and clothed men. A painting that stirred up a scandal, from a figurative point of view, this naked woman and these dressed men. You grasp it pictorially when you eliminate every story. If there was a story, this story could only be disgusting. What's going on with this naked woman sitting in the grass with these dressed men? It would be a story of little perverts, right? How to remove all narrative givens, all figurative givens in order to bring out the pictorial fact of this naked body in relation to the dressed bodies, the scale of colors or the scale of light, etc.?

So, I come back to Michelangelo, to this famous painting by Michelangelo, The Holy Family. It seems that in this painting he is more scrupulous, he represents indeed the Holy Family and at the same time, the indifference to the subject bursts forth. You understand, it is only from the indifference to the subject that the "pictorial fact" can emerge, namely the painting generates its own "fact." And what is the "fact?" It's that there are three bodies. Baby Jesus is on the shoulders of Virgin Mary. The three figures are caught up – there, it's very well... you'll see, you have it in mind, you see immediately – in a kind of serpentine movement. This treatment of the figures came from Da Vinci, but Michelangelo carried it to a point... A serpentine movement as if the three figures were literally cast in a continuous flow. [It is] not surprising, after all, that it was a sculptor who brought to light what was to be the sculptural and pictorial fact; perhaps it was easier for sculpture to bring forth a sculptural fact. But as a painter-sculptor, Michelangelo imposes the necessary fact. He imposes the "necessarily" pictorial "fact." This serpentine movement will, indeed, be prodigious because it gives the infant Jesus an absolutely dominant position which will then completely determine the expression of the figure. The figure of the infant Jesus has this expression figuratively only by virtue of its position in the serpentine. And the three bodies are thus cast in one and the same figure; the same figure for three bodies, that's it, there is no story. No story, no narration and the figuration itself collapses. At that moment the serpentine will distribute a whole scale of colors. The serpentine plays exactly the role of the diagram, which breaks with the figurative and narrative givens to bring out the "pictorial fact." The "pictorial fact" is three bodies in one figure.

Fine, "three bodies in one figure," okay, okay. The "necessity" – I can't tell you, I can't find my words, but that's not a problem – it's not about saying it, it's about doing it. There is a "pictorial necessity" of the same figure for three bodies, not a "figurative necessity," not a "narrative necessity," a "pictorial necessity," namely, that can only come from light and color. Thus, I would say that painters are fierce atheists. And at the same time, they are atheists who truly haunt, or at least, the painters... who haunt Christianity... the manner in which they tear away Christianity from all figuration and narration so as to bring out a "pictorial fact." That's what we will have learned from this theme, why Christianity seems to them so... or why they experience it as eminently favoring the emergence of the pictorial fact. This goes back a longtime, if you will, to Byzantium. With Byzantium, it's already in its pure state – when I said that Michelangelo represents the birth of the pictorial fact, it was idiotic, at the risk of correcting myself. Mosaic painting in Byzantium is fundamentally this foundation of the pictorial fact. Fine.

It was mostly in mosaic; as for oil painting, I think that maybe we have to wait, after all. What was the name of the movement that coincides with Michelangelo and to which Michelangelo actually belonged? So, I'm going to say something about this point because it interests me a lot. There is a term for it. The movement to which Michelangelo belongs as founder, at least as co-founder, and which will last long after his death, is called Mannerism. Why was it called Mannerism? It's because the bodies have very contorted attitudes, at the extreme, they are very artificial. For instance, in the Holy Family, the four characters in the background. [They are] very artificial, very... with sometimes homosexual stances, sometimes contorted stances. Mannerism is very interesting as... [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence*] In a painter like Bacon, if you see paintings by Bacon, you singularly find – I find Michelangelo's influence on Bacon obvious. If you want to see what it is like to discover a large back of a man... he obviously had to make a triptych, he needed three. There is a triptych by Bacon which represents, seen from behind, a man, a figure that is shaving. I'm showing it to you, you won't see anything, but it's just so you have an idea. I'm turning it slowly – and I'm reluctant to show you images, this really should be a course without images – did you see it? [*Laughter*]

Fine, you see the three male backs. It's interesting because there is a scale... the color of the reproduction is awful, I think, because it's a difficult color. Actually it's... there is a dominant ocher-red, a dominant blue on the central panel and to the right, the co-existence of blue and red. What I'm interested in is... Let's consider a problem because we'll have to come back to it. The question of painting, in accordance with what we've just said, but which you already knew, is not to paint visible things, is obviously to paint invisible things. Now, the painter only reproduces the visible precisely to capture the invisible. What does it mean to paint a large male back? What is it? Well, it's not painting a back, it's painting forces that are exerted on a back or forces that a back exerts. It's painting forces, not painting forms. The act of painting, the "pictorial fact," is when the form is related to a force. Yet, the forces are not visible. To paint forces is, indeed, the "fact."

Everyone knows what Klee says about painting: "it's not about rendering the visible, it's about making visible," which implies: making visible the invisible. To make visible something invisible. Fine, showing the visible is figuration. That would be the "pictorial given," which needs to be destroyed. It is destroyed by the catastrophe. What is the catastrophe? We can therefore make some progress; the catastrophe is the place of forces. Obviously, it's not just any force. "The catastrophe is the place of forces."[6]

The "pictorial fact" is the "distorted" form. What is a "distorted form?" Distortion is a Cézannian concept. It's not a matter of transforming, painters don't transform, they deform. Deformation as a pictorial concept is not just the deformation of the form, it's the form as a force is exerted upon it. The force has no form. It is therefore the deformation of the form that must make visible the force, which doesn't have a form. If there is no force in a painting, there is no painting. I'm saying this because we often confuse it with another problem, which is more visible but much less important. We confuse this with a completely different problem, which is that of the decomposition and recomposition of an effect. Let's take for example, "Renaissance painting: decomposition-recomposition of depth"; after some centuries, "Impressionism: decomposition-recomposition of color"; take next, "Cubism or in another way, Futurism: decomposition-recomposition of movement."

Fine. This is very interesting, but it only concerns the effects. That's not the act of painting, not at all. It's not decomposing, recomposing an effect. What is it then? I say it is to capture a force. And I think that's what Klee means when he says that it's not about rendering the visible but rendering visible.

So, the form will have to be sufficiently deformed for a force to be captured. It's not a story, it's not a figuration, it's not a narrative. And the role of the diagram will be to establish a place of forces such that the form will come out of it as a "pictorial fact," namely, as a deformed form, in relation to a force; it is therefore the deformation of the pictorial form that makes the non-visible force visible.

I'll give a very simple example because there too Bacon has strangely succeeded, it's one of his domains, still in the series of questions for each painter. What did he understand pictorially? What did Bacon understand pictorially? Well, again, no painter understands much, eh. [It's] too tiring to understand something. It is not incorrect to say that Cézanne had it "for life with his apples." Fine, Bacon understood, indeed, "a large back of a man," in a frame, in a triptych. But it's not inaccurate to say that this may not be the best Bacon because Michelangelo had understood the same thing in the same way.

But a large male back, that means including the relationship with forces. What kinds of forces? All sorts of forces. In Michelangelo's case, and this would respond to these very variations of stylistic devices, sometimes it's inner forces… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:21:57]

Part 3

... the most natural poses according to the invisible force exerted on the body. Bacon is capable of making the most contorted figures in the world. But you have the feeling that they are like tortured bodies. Yet, it's a first impression, which is figurative and narrative, because if you take another look, how can I put it, a pictorial look, you notice that if you come to understand vaguely the force that is being exerted on the body, the body has the most natural position according to this force. Let's give quotidian examples, almost restoring a kind of figuration, but the secret figuration of a painting. Let's take someone who has a backache, a mild one, nothing serious, huh, who has a slightly dislocated vertebra and who has to sit, for some reason, has to remain seated for a very long time. If you look at him outwardly, you'll see that he takes the posture that may seem the most tortured, the most contorted in the world, but which, in fact, and depending on the forces exerted on it, is the most natural, and precisely the one that will allow him to last the longest.

If painting, if the pictorial fact... what I mean is this: the pictorial fact is fundamentally and essentially "mannerist." Why? Because mannerism is exactly the effect that a figure has on us, that a form has on us, a visible form, when we don't see the invisible force exerted on it. If through your pictorial eye, that is, your third eye, if through your third eye you seize the force exerted on the body – because this is the object of painting: capturing the force – at that moment this body ceases to be mannered; it remains mannerist, since we'll have to define mannerism as the rapport of the visible body with the invisible force, and that's what gives it this mannerist attitude. Hence, I believe that mannerism is in fact a fundamental dimension, a consubstantial dimension of painting.

Fine, but capturing a force is not easy, you know. So, you are a painter, and you want to draw a sleeping man. It's nothing, what would a painter do if you, if we... when you're not a genius you can draw surprisingly well a sleeping man! It's illustrative in what case, and it stops being illustrative and even narrative, well then… Narration, fine: this man falls asleep, he was tired. So, the context is narrative: it can be night, it can be day, it's not the same story if I fall asleep during the day, at night, all that. Okay, the lines you draw are figurative: a character on a bed, fine. I'm saying that all that is the world of the pre-pictorial givens. So, it matters very little, after all, that some painters pass through those givens. What does it matter if other painters don't draw them on canvas? It matters very little. Anyway, even those you draw them, they do so in order to scramble them, to make them pass through the diagram. And what is the pictorial fact that emerges from the diagram? What is it? It would be too easy to say: ah well, it's the body as it relates to the sleep force. "Sleep force" doesn't mean anything, it only reiterates that he sleeps. You understand, a great painter can capture this very well. The sleep force is multiple. Bacon draws a lot... he paints a lot of sleeping characters. These are, in my opinion, some of his great achievements. Bacon's sleepers are extraordinary.

What strikes us? Well, I think there is one thing that strikes us, if you see reproductions or if you have them in mind, it's what he grasped – and I really only see him doing this, there may be others who pulled this off – he has completely captured what must be called the flattening force of sleep. You know, a truly fatigued body, lying down, and we can even grasp it visually! But how can you show that? That's being a great painter. The body that seems to empty itself completely, to flatten out on the mattress. As a result, it's literally not a body without thickness; if I paint a body without thickness, it's worthless, it's a failure. If I paint a body losing its thickness, it's an accomplishment. Fine. The form in relation with a force of deformation, namely, the force that flattens it. However, Bacon's sleepers take... So, then we understand why he flanks them with standing attendant figures. Attendant figures...

And that also allows us to answer questions such as: what is important, what is secondary in a complex painting? You see, for instance, Bacon's sleepers... again this seems to me one of his great achievements. So, sleepers lying on a bed. This can be in a triptych, the other two panels, left panel and right panel, show bulky and very contorted characters. There are Bacon triptychs where the essential element is on an outside panel, right or left, not in the middle. The sleepers can very well be placed on an exterior panel. So, we ask ourselves: where is the force, what force is it? And what is the force that touches you in the painting?

Well, for Bacon this is very curious, it's his way of experiencing sleep, but you understand, it's no longer a cliché. I could have otherwise drawn a sleeping man, a wonderful drawing, a wonder of features, a wonder of colors. I could have drawn the bed, a marvelous bed. Okay, fine, we're moving on to the next painting. No interest whatsoever. When something strikes you, it's the pictorial fact that strikes you. These paintings I mentioned earlier don't have a fact. There is no pictorial fact. There is a fact that concerns sleep, there is a narrative fact, an illustrative fact, there is everything you want, but no pictorial fact. No advent of a pictorial fact.

So, what do you have to do? What do you have to do to be a great painter? Well, you look... I see two forces; in fact, it's always complicated because... Bacon, it's his business, I'm sure he's a man who has a special relationship with sleep. Because that's where we find the rapport between lived experience and painting, we must... I imagine Bacon sleeping a lot, a lot, a lot. He's definitely not an insomniac. An insomniac wouldn't have to paint this. So, under what agent does he sleep? I dare not think about it... but he certainly sleeps a lot. Well, if he was insomniac, it would be a catastrophe, but it doesn't matter. Fine. So, it's very curious for him. Here too, there is something purely illustrative. There are a lot of sleepers in Bacon, since he has made entire series of male or female sleepers, a lot of sleepers who sleep with one or even both arms raised. You see, they are lying down... their thigh raised.

Fine, what I'm saying is figurative. That's what I call the given (*le donné*). I can say to a painter: indeed, this is given, this is pre-pictorial. Perhaps Bacon himself sleeps like that. It's pre-pictorial. Maybe Bacon likes this position, huh, a raised leg, a raised arm, and sleeping like that. There is every possible combination: the pillow can be high, the arm like this and the body like that, the arm leaning on the pillow, but... fine. You see, if I say, well, I can always say to a painter: I'd like you to paint a sleeper with an outstretched arm. Fine. What's the difference with a Bacon sleeper? I was saying earlier: look at Bacon's sleepers and see if you have the same feeling as me, namely, that the form is in fact deformed, even if only slightly, by a flattening force. Henceforth, sleep wouldn't be simply defined tautologically as a sleeping force. Sleep for Bacon, as it is experienced by Bacon, is a force that flattens the body. Flattening induced by fatigue, by sleep.

There is something else that seems to me very curious. I'd say that Bacon also did, you know – we'll see how a painter's different themes can short-circuit – Bacon painted numerous pieces of meat. He even calls them by a particularly sophisticated name: "crucifixions." Pieces of meat that he calls "crucifixions." The piece of meat has always existed, few painters have resisted it. [It's] extraordinary for a painter, a piece of meat, because it's such a matrix of colors. Certain painters are particularly well known for their pieces of meat. There is at least a large piece of meat in Rembrandt, which is marvelous, a truly marvelous carcass. And then there are the endless, yet so beautiful, series of Soutine. Now, when you see the pieces of... Figuratively we can say, well, at least three great painters – Rembrandt, Soutine, and Bacon – have depicted pieces of meat and whole carcasses. Fine, figuratively, narratively, no interest so far.[7]

If I ask myself: why is Bacon interested in the piece of meat? [It's] not necessarily the same thing that interests Soutine, or that interests Rembrandt. Well, it seems to me that there is something very interesting in the pieces of meat. They experience the piece of meat, the carcass, as a movement; of course, this is not new! But a movement through which the flesh comes off the bones. The flesh comes off the bones as if instead of an organization – in a living body there is a kind of flesh-bone organization; in Bacon, what distinguishes precisely the carcass from the living body is the flesh; the flesh doesn't become soft at all, it's firm, it's a firm flesh, and at the same time a flesh that comes off the bones. Literally, I cannot think of a better term, it's flesh that descends from the bones. It descends from the bones. Now, if you look – I suppose you look at a Bacon and you agree with me – what interests him in a piece of meat is that the flesh descends from the bones. It must be done, eh! How can you paint a flesh that descends from the bones? [There is] no recipe, it's a force. There is a force of weight proper to meat – that's what interests Bacon in meat – the force through which the flesh descends from the bones. Here! Descent – crucifixion! The operation through which the flesh descends from the bones, that is the crucifixion, or the way in which Bacon experiences the crucifixion.

As a result, he will call these kinds of pieces of meat that look like they are dripping, that descend from the bones, he will call them crucifixions. Fine, this opens new perspectives for us, what is... In other words, the crucifixions that interest him are descents. But the theme of the crucifixion in relation to the descent traverses all painting. Hence the question takes on a new development: and the old painters that we admire, how did they represent the descent from the cross? What were they doing? What interested them in the descent from the cross? Certainly not the same thing that interested Bacon. I'm not saying at all that it was the flesh descending from the bones, that’s not it, but it had to be something else, it had to... wasn’t it also a story of strength?

Anyway, you know what I mean. When Bacon paints his sleepers, with an arm raised or a thigh raised, but if you look at the painting, and this is really a question of looking, not reasoning, understand me, it’s terrific indeed: it’s an entire movement that allows the arm to count as a bone, the raised thigh to count as a bone, and therefore the entire body of the sleeper descends from this quasi-bone, descends from this bone. This is the descent process: all these sleepers are “crucifixions,” this is the movement of the flesh that descends from the bones. And he needs... Even if his preference, which is a figurative given, is to sleep like that, the pictorial function of the raised arm is completely different: it is to assign a sleep force, the sleep force. For Bacon, one of the sleep forces is the movement through which the flesh descends from the bones. [It’s] a bit like when you put your head upside down, lower, and your cheeks go up. They go up, that is, they tend to go out of orbit. This movement of the flesh that descends from the bones, the head upside down, etc., the body flowing from the raised arm, the body falling from the raised thigh. Indeed, you cannot see Bacon’s paintings, these sleepers, without constituting the body as descending from this thigh, as descending from this arm, and that’s what I call the pictorial fact.

As a result, I would say that in Bacon’s sleepers there is a deformation of the form; the pictorial fact is exactly this: a deformation of the form according to two forces – I only see two, but someone else will see others! I don’t think these are the only forces, or maybe Bacon experiences sleep as the place where these two forces operate primarily, a flattening force – flattening of the body – and a descending force. The body descends from the bones. A sleeping body is a piece of flesh because it’s a body that descends from the bones. And it’s a flattened body. It has no story. When you have reached that, it seems to me that you have reached, I don’t know, but you have reached what the painter is showing you, namely, what he makes visible. In this painting he made visible two invisible forces. And if he needs standing and contorted attendant bodies, these bodies, in turn, have forces, they make visible forces, but in my opinion – it’s up to everyone to perceive the painting as they wish – in my opinion, it’s secondary. The successful rendering of sleep was more important. As a result, the voluminous and contorted bodies are only like witnesses of sleep and only have a secondary value, but we could say something else...

Fine, you see, I always come back to my three moments; you always have figurative and narrative givens. You always have them. It’s pre-pictorial, they are already there. It’s the photos, the clichés, anything you want. Ideas. It’s... why are they already there? This is the intention of the painter. The intention can only be figurative and narrative, even for the most abstract painter, that’s why we cannot make any distinction. We’ll see when we can differentiate between such and such trend. At this point, there is no reason to make even the slightest difference. When Mondrian paints a square, well, all the ready-made squares are already there. He’s exactly in the same situation as the others. When Pollock draws a line that crosses the entire painting, his canvas is already full of all the lines that fail, of all the clichéd lines, of all the ready-made lines. Fine.

So, there is no reason to make even the slightest distinction at this level. So, you have this world of givens, of clichés, and I’m saying that it’s the intention of the painter. In what sense? The clichés, the ready-made, are inseparable from the intention of the painter as the painter wants to paint something. Once again, when you are a painter, you want to paint something. I would say that what makes the cliché unavoidable is that the cliché is fundamentally intentional. Every intention is a cliché intention. Every intention is aimed at a cliché.

And there is no painting without intention. What do I call intention? Well, if I try to give an abstract but at the same time simple definition, I would call intention the difference between an apple and a woman. I mean, Cézanne doesn't have the same intention depending on whether he plans to paint an apple and to paint a woman. And you'll say to me: "and when you intend to paint nothing?" There is no "painting nothing" ... Mondrian doesn't have the same intention when he wants to paint a big square or a little square. Fine. However, it's the intention that already promotes the cliché. Therefore, it is forced that the cliché is on the canvas before the painter has begun. I'd say that the intentional form is always figurative and narrative in painting. It cannot be otherwise.

As a result, the task of the painter and the act of painting begin with the fight against the intentional form. I cannot achieve the intentional form – if there was a dialectic of painting, it would be this – I cannot achieve the intentional form, namely, the form that I intend to produce, I can only achieve it precisely by fighting against the cliché that necessarily accompanies it, that is, by blurring it, by making it pass through a catastrophe. I call this catastrophe and this chaos-germ the place of forces or the diagram. And if this succeeds, if the diagram doesn't fall into one of the multiple dangers that we've seen – now that we've said that the dangers are multiple, we'll come back to this – if the diagram is really operative, as a logician would say, if the diagram is really operative, what emerges from it? The diagram was the possibility of fact, the fact emerges from it. The fact is the form in relation to a force. What will the painter have made visible? He will have made visible the invisible force.

I'd like to give an example that fascinates me, but it's rather so that you can find your own examples. There is a painter from the 19th-20th century who belongs to the great expressionist tradition: [František] Kupka. It seems to me that we could ask: what did Kupka understand if it's true that Cézanne understood one or two apples and then Bacon understood a male back and three sleepers? What did Kupka understand? He understood something that seems much more important, and yet he's not a greater painter than Cézanne or Bacon. He makes a lot of planets that rotate, with colors that are very, very... it's beautiful expressionism, eh. But I don't find... for Bacon, I can comment a little, if you wish, I have the feeling that what I said earlier defined well the forces that Bacon was able to capture with respect to sleep. Regarding Kupka, I feel infinitely more modest, he's an absolute mystery to me: how can we explain that with some small balls – with indications of rotation, etc., of course – Kupka managed to capture a force that can only be called a force of rotation and gravitation. So, a kind of astronomical force. I mean, in the end, I'd like that someone who understands Kupka better than me, or who loves him, uh... I admire this tremendously because I see a very big achievement... in other words, it's a great deal to capture a force of this nature! And it's true that in a Kupka painting, even in a quick one, even almost a sketch, it's, it's... a fantastic thing. In the beautiful Kupka, of course! There too you can feel how much he can fail. What is needed, for the invisible to be captured or not captured, that is to say, made visible?

I'm taking up one of Bacon's expressions, that way I'll flesh this out: at one point he did many series of screaming people. People who were screaming, Popes in particular. There is a marvelous series of screaming popes. It's in Bacon's "popes" series. Fine, fine, a screaming pope, all that. What does it mean? He uses a very beautiful formula, he says in his interviews: you know, one must really look at all of this because what I'd like – he's being modest – what I'd like is to paint the scream more than the horror. Painting the scream more than the horror, that sounds to me like a painter's saying. Yet, he's one of the painters who painted the most horrors. He knows it well. He didn't spare us, it's awful. But painting the horror is still figurative, it's still narrative. Horror is easy. That's the lesson of sobriety. More and more sober. What does this mean: more and more sober? However, it isn't easy, it's so difficult to achieve it that you must go through these kinds of excesses and childishness. Painting the horror. Painting the horror, painting an abominable scene, okay. Maybe he had to go through it... But even when he was already painting the horror, it was certainly so that he could extract something else from it, namely, the scream. Painting the scream is something else. Why paint the scream? The scream, well, what it is? If I compare the scream and sleep, what's the difference between them? Or rather, what is the resemblance? There is at least one resemblance between the scream and sleep, which is the pictorial resemblance, namely, that in every case there are bodily figures – I'm using figures precisely, a bizarre expression apparently, bodily figures – there are bodily figures, to be specific, that only exist to the extent that the body is in relation to forces, either inner forces or external forces.[8]

There's only that which is interesting: when the body is connected with forces. So, the painter may first tend to put the body in relation to unbearable, insurmountable forces, even Michelangelo did it! What does that mean, more and more sobriety? Learning that the secret of painting or that the most beautiful pictorial facts occur when the forces are very simple, very rudimentary. There will no longer be forces that will torture a body, there will no longer be horrible forces, there will be the flattening force of sleep. We start by creating abominable accident scenes, for instance someone who is run over by a bus, and then we realize that the real flattening of the body is not at all the bus that crushes you but the daily fact that you fall asleep. And that in the fact of falling asleep there is a pictorial fact, which may be worth all the sufferings in the world, all the accidents. At that moment you will be able to recover everything, the torture and the horrors of the world, just by painting a man asleep. It's forced. That's what I mean. This sort of search for sobriety, for an even greater simplicity. [It's] what [Samuel] Beckett has achieved in literature, making something more and more sober, which is in a sense all the more striking, all the more overwhelming. But in Beckett's early works there is still too much profusion, there is still a kind of narrative and figurative abundance. Later he'll reach this kind of state, of pictorial fact, which, in his case will become the literary fact, a sort of literary fact in its pure state. Fine. You understand, that is what capturing forces means.

So, the scream more than the horror. The scream, fine. What is it? It's the body in relation to a force that makes it scream. Fine, what is this force? You understand, if I answer as I didn't want to answer earlier, that "the force that makes you sleep is the need for sleep," we wouldn't have learned anything. I would be back in the figurative and narrative realm. If I say, "the force that makes you scream, well, it's the spectacle of the world," I find myself fully in the figurative, then I have to paint a scene which will reflect that the figure I'm painting at the same time in the scene, screams. I will be entirely in the figurative. That is not what I call a force. A force is the invisible force. That’s why I was saying that the only struggle is with the shadow. There are only the relations between the body and the invisible forces, or the insensible forces. There is only the struggle with the forces. And what is the role, what is the relationship between the visible and the invisible? Between the visible and the force that’s not visible? The relation between the body and the force seems to me very simple in the end: because the body is visible and will sustain a creative deformation on behalf of the force, then the visibility of the body will allow me to make visible the invisible force.

It is to the extent that the body embraces the invisible force exerted on it – hence the theme of the struggle with the shadow – it’s to the extent that the body embraces the invisible force exerted on it that the invisible force becomes visible. How? Everything becomes blurry. Does the body make it [the invisible force] visible as an enemy or does it make visible as a friend? If the painter manages to compel a dying body to make visible the force of death, perhaps at that moment death becomes for us, and for the represented body, a true friend. This means that everything that was facile, figurative, awful, horrible, becomes very secondary relative to a kind of immense vital consolation. In any case, capturing a force is cheerful.

So, the screaming mouth is necessarily related to what? Not to a visible spectacle. I’m thinking of Kafka’s very beautiful words in a letter where he says: well, what counts in the end is not the visible, but what? It’s capturing, detecting – no, he doesn’t say capturing, it comes down to the same thing – detecting, detecting the diabolical powers of the future that are already knocking at the door. In other words, they are already there in some way. But they are not visible. I mean, take for instance, fascism, tortures, all that... there is something visible, but there is also something that exceeds all visibility. You never see what is terrible, it’s... it’s still something that is, that is what? Underneath? Not visible? The diabolical powers of the future that are already knocking at the door. So, there you go, first stage: I paint a horrible spectacle and a screaming mouth before this spectacle. As beautiful as this may be, it is still figurative and narrative.

Second stage: I erase the spectacle. I only paint the screaming mouth. I had to pass through the diagram, through the catastrophe that triggered all figuration. And painting only the screaming mouth means, in fact I don’t just paint the mouth, at that very moment I captured the powers. The powers that make one scream. In such a way that the screaming mouth becomes both the friend and the enemy of these powers. These powers are transformed. All this is very curious.

Thus, we can clearly see that in Bacon’s case, I gave this example, well, we’ll have to see, everything I say about painting in general, sleepers, people, seems to me so constant... But Bacon has his vanity, painters always have their affectations. He actually deals with horror, or even sometimes the abject. But he follows this path less and less, he exhausted this avenue, he is very hard on himself for having taken this path. But he paints a great deal of hiccups, vomiting. He has a very beautiful painting: “Character at a washbasin.” There is a guy who throws up in a washbasin, we don’t see the vomiting but the entire attitude of the body, his back. A vomiting back, there! A back subjected to the force of vomiting. You understand that this is not easy to paint, after all. So, he is holding the washbasin as if... Fine. What is there in common between vomiting and a scream? [It’s] not difficult. There are two efforts – there too we may find one of Bacon’s obsessions. There are two movements through which the body tends to escape from itself. This is curious. To escape, to escape. My body escapes from me. It’s a very strong sense of panic, it's panic. This is the catastrophe. The body has to, well, if the body is to be painted, in Bacon's case, it'll have to pass through this catastrophe of the escaping body: this is Bacon's diagram. It can escape in very different ways: it can escape through vomiting and through the scream. It's really not the same mouth, the mouth that vomits and the mouth that screams. It's not the same thing. To escape, a body that is escaping, that's curious. My body escapes from me.

I don't know if you've ever had surgery but those who underwent surgery have this experience which I think helps people understand things. Well, those who've had a serious operation. It's funny. First of all, the operation, um... if I were a painter, that's what I'd try to... Someone who underwent a serious operation, something formidable. So, figuration would be representing an operation. This is obviously not interesting, not interesting at all. Fine. But in an operation, you know, there is something very odd, which is that even when the operation wasn't life-threatening, the patient who comes out of it – it's enough to look at him afterwards – is exactly as if he had seen – but seen without tragedy, I'm not saying it's tragic – as if he had seen death. I mean, the eyes are amazing, the eyes of a freshly operated patient [*Laughter*], if you haven't been around one, go to a hospital, do whatever it takes, but you have to see this, I think, not even out of curiosity, I'm not saying things out of some deplorable perversion but almost out of tenderness. If you really want to feel something for humankind, go see people who have had surgery. Their eyes are completely washed, as if they had seen something – that wasn't horrible, it's not at all... – as if they had seen something that can only be death, a kind of limit of life, eh. They come out of it with this very, very pathetic gaze, very... Fine.

Rendering that gaze. Rendering that gaze would only be possible if the painter manages to capture the force. But with what deformation of the gaze? It's not as if he had a thesis about the eye. It's something else, something quite different, it's... Fine. [It's] impossible to say. I was able to express it a little in Bacon's case with regard to sleep. I can't, I wasn't able to say anything about Kupka's astronomical forces. That's what defines a great painter, you know? So, in the post-surgical experience there is something quite amazing, it's that your body has a tendency to run away, to escape everywhere at once. To the point that... it escapes from all ends. And it's not at all worrisome, it's even what we call a fine convalescence. You feel that you lost control over your body, that it escapes everywhere. So, that is a funny experience. And when I mention this gaze of people who have seen something, it's a shame they forget so much, otherwise people would be wonderful, they wouldn't forget an operation, they would come out of this fine. One has the impression, after an operation, that they have understood something. But it's not them! It's their flesh that has understood something. The body is intelligent all the same. Their body has understood something that they will then forget so quickly, so quickly. Fine, it's a pity, right? A sort of kindness, a sort of generosity emanates from them, because this death which they saw, and which becomes visible in their eyes – it is very curious – insofar as it becomes visible, it ceases to be the enemy, it is in a way their friend. In other words, it becomes at the same time something other than death. That's what a great painter shows.

Fine. So, in Bacon: the body escapes, vomiting. Vomiting, fine. I'll be reading so I'll grab my glasses. That's it! I'll read you a passage from a great novelist. It's curious, from before Bacon, eh. Here's the story, the narrative. There is a moment in the novel – this is really a novelist whose narrative is excessive. I tell you right away, it's Conrad, Joseph Conrad, in a very beautiful novel titled *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*. Here's what happens: the ship is sinking.

And there is a sailor who writes in a bulkhead – in a... not in a bulkhead, in a cabin! Everything has collapsed, everything is blocked, he can't be saved. And his friends want to save him because he's... he's a fetish, because on the one hand he's black, he's the only black man on the ship, and on the other hand he's sick all the time.

So, among Bacon's obscurities, we want to save him all the more because he is condemned. And the entire crew gets down to business, like crazy, without really knowing why they must save him. They must save him, and they finally get to the cabin after all kinds of efforts and with a device, I don't remember exactly what, with a piece of metal, they smash a bulkhead. They smash a bulkhead. Here's the text: "We watched the crowbar stubbornly smash the joint of two planks. A cracking sound, then suddenly the crowbar half disappeared in a splintered oblong hole" – you see, the crowbar sinks into the wood and the bulkhead suddenly gives way – Archie, the sailor who was holding the crowbar, "withdrew it quickly," and – this is where the amazing passage starts, eh, so, the nigger of the Narcissus is locked in a cabin – and "that infamous nigger," why infamous? You'll understand in a moment, so "that infamous nigger rushed at the hole, put his lips to it, and whispered 'Help' in an almost extinct voice..." You see, there is a tiny hole, a very small hole in the bulkhead, and the guy who is locked up and panics, presses his lips against it, at the risk of getting hurt, and whispers "'Help' in an almost extinct voice; he pressed his head against the wood, trying madly to get out through that opening one inch wide and three inches long."[9]

Why is this effort infamous? So, I'm trying to define physically – we're not doing philosophy, eh – abjection. Abjection. What would abjection be? I wonder if abjection isn't the constant effort – we are all abject in that case – the constant effort (or from time to time) that traverses the body and through which the body tends to escape through an orifice, either an orifice that belongs to it, namely, that is part of its organism, or an external orifice. That would be it. Why would that be abjection? I have no idea! Someone tells me all of a sudden: "oh, I'd like to pass through the eye of a needle [*passer par ce trou de souris*]." Abject, why? I don't know. There is something abject about it. In fact, why does someone want to pass through the eye of a needle? Because they are ashamed. "Ashamed, I would like to become smaller and smaller." But forget the saying, the ready-made formula: passing through the eye of a needle is abject. How can a person be reduced to passing, wanting to pass through a needle? It's grotesque, right? He who vomits is abject twice, because on the one hand his body is reduced to this... [*Interruption of the recording*] [2:08:43]

... serious, it's not serious. Okay, fine. So, that's what throwing up is about: my whole body, because it's not just what I ate, it's my whole body that's trying to escape through one of my orifices. And the scream? It's the same with the scream. Thus, I call abjection, but with no pejorative meaning, the effort of the body... So, escaping like this. But it [the effort] is ramped up by the fact that... so, I tend to escape through one of my orifices, in fact the effort is always ramped up: I also try to escape through an external orifice, like the guy of the Narcissus, namely, Bacon's spasmodic throwing up, clinging to the washbasin, manifestly trying to escape through the drain. His whole body attempts to escape through the drain. Does painting give an account of that, if it gives an account of that? Bacon could have called this painting "Abjection." Because this would have been a highly figurative title, and he's very conservative with his titles, he calls it: “Figure at a Washbasin.” “Figure at a Washbasin,” okay. This belongs to a series, and we see the relationship with the scream. There too it’s in terms of the rapport “body/force.”[10]

So, you see, all figuration – even if it continues to be present, it can continue to be present – will be neutralized, nullified. It continues to be present in Michelangelo, and it continues to be present in Bacon. In a so-called informal painter, it will no longer be present. In a so-called abstract painter, it will no longer be present. But, present, currently present or not, even when it’s no longer present, it is virtually present. Obviously! Once again, it makes one with the intentional form. Any intentional form is figurative and narrative. But in painting the intentional form is the first moment of the act of painting. The second moment, as we’ve seen, is to introduce chaos, the chaos germ, or the diagram, which will define the possibility of the pictorial fact. And the third moment is the pictorial fact itself.

So, you understand, I’d like to give an example in order to conclude, that way I will have finished what I had to say, for instance, about Bacon. There is this very beautiful text by Bacon. Here it is. But alas, I still have to show you a little bit of painting. But you won’t see anything, so it’s worthless [*Laughter*]. You see, there is an umbrella. I’m telling you there is an umbrella, for those who cannot see. There is a man under the umbrella, but be fair, I hope you are not going to contradict me; anyway, since you cannot see anything, I can say whatever I want. [*Laughter*] We can only see the lower half of the face of the man under the umbrella, with a rather disturbing mouth, a jagged mouth, and this mouth and this entire lower half rise up. In my opinion, they rise up. [It’s] impossible to draw him descending from the umbrella. It’s as if he were grabbed by the umbrella. He rises up into the umbrella as if to escape through a point. Fine. And then, at the top, [there is] a large piece of meat. Additionally, [there are] the colors of Bacon’s fields, which we constantly find in his work. Fine.[11]

You’ve gotten this. Referring to the painting titled “Painting” from 1946, in his interviews, Bacon says: it’s very simple, I wanted to paint, I had the intention – there we’ll find our three states, so we’ll be done with... – I intended to paint a bird alighting on a field. A bird alighting on a field. You follow what I’m saying, um, a bird alighting on a field is a good subject, it can arise in the mind of a painter. And he says: I started and little by little something became apparent. Something else stood out. And I painted this man underneath the umbrella, this figure underneath the umbrella. The first reaction – fortunately there is the guy who interviews him, who plays exactly the role of the first reaction, that helps us a lot – the first reaction would be to say: oh yes, I understand, instead of the bird, instead of the bird form he painted the umbrella form. [It’s] very significant. And in fact, if you see the umbrella, it’s kind of like a big bat. Fine, there is a bird theme.

But not at all! Because, to his interviewer who says: “yes, you mean that the bird has become an umbrella,” what interests me is that Bacon replies: “not at all, not at all.” In other words: you didn’t understand anything, right? Not at all, he says, I don’t mean that. What must be related to the bird that I wanted to paint, he says, is the whole that came to me all of a sudden – I quote almost exactly, I summarize a little to go faster – is the whole that came to me suddenly or the series that I made progressively. Wow, that really interests me, understanding how a painter works. And the text is already very bizarre, Bacon’s answer is extremely confusing because he says: you mustn’t connect my intention to paint a bird with the umbrella. You have to connect my intention to paint a bird with the whole all at once, that is to say, the gradual series. It's one or the other, at first glance. A gradual series and a whole in one go seem entirely contradictory. So, if Bacon means something, and we have every reason to believe that he does, he embraces a point of view that erases the difference between "a gradual series" and "a whole given all at once." In any case, he means the entirety of the painting, considered spatially or temporally. From a temporal point of view, it's the gradual series, from a spatial point of view, it's the painting as it appears to us: the whole all at once. Okay.

So, he says: what you have to connect with the intentional bird form is the entire series or the undivided whole. Fine. What is the entire series or the undivided whole? If we understand what he says, I can define the series from top to bottom. Meat, piece of meat at the top; umbrella, man with the face eaten by the umbrella and open mouth. There you go, that's my series. What Bacon refuses is the analogy between bird-form and umbrella-form. And he says: that's not how I work. In fact, it would simply be a transformation: how a bird turns into an umbrella. It wouldn't be that interesting. At the extreme, it would be like a kind of vague surrealism. Fine. That's not it, he says.

And yet, there is an analogy between the bird-form and the whole painting. In other words, this is the first time that we come across the following idea, even if we'll confirm it only later: wouldn't there be two very different forms of analogy? You see, I can speak about a first form of analogy, if there is an analogy between the bird-form and the umbrella-form. What would I say at that point? I'd say: there is a transport of relations, that is, the same relations exist between the elements of the bird in form 1 and the sections of the umbrella, the elements of the umbrella in section 2, in form 2. There is a transport of identical relations. There is an identity of relations. Fine.

Given relations move from one form to the other. Perhaps there is an esthetic analogy that has nothing to do with that, and that is completely different. What would the esthetic analogy be? Well, let's go back to the painting, in our vague memory: there is the meat that has like two arms from which it hangs from butcher's hooks. There is a kind of, this time it's not a meat that desc... actually, yes, there is the theme of the arms, the meat will descend from the two arms I mentioned. In other words, what has become of the specific relation to the bird "with spreading wings"? It has become the equivalent, it has become, it is... I can't find my words, but it's on purpose. It has changed, it's the relation itself that has changed into a completely different relation. The relation bone/meat, the meat descends from the bones, there are the tiny arms of the meat, which are like bones from which the meat falls, descends. What brings to mind the bird very vaguely is this movement of the arms from which the meat will fall, which evokes very, very vaguely a kind of spreading of wings. Consequently, the meat that falls from these tiny arms falls literally, something like a flow of meat. It falls from the bones.[12]

Hence, you understand, I'm speaking in terms of the pictorial fact, the meat descends form the bones, it's the first connotation with the bird. The bird that spreads its wings. Second connotation: the meat falls, it falls on the umbrella, it trickles onto the umbrella. Second connotation with the bird, this time the umbrella is like the wings that are closing. Third connotation: only the bottom of the figure, of the face of the figure, is visible. A strange, drooping, and jagged mouth, this mouth like a jagged beak. In other words, the bird is completely dispersed across the whole or the series. It is completely dispersed to the extent that it no longer exists figuratively at all. We could say at most that the painting contains – how can we call this? – traits of birdness [*oisellité*]. First trait of birdness: the small, raised arms of the meat. Second trait of birdness: the sections of the umbrella. Third trait of birdness: the jagged beak of the figure. Completely scattered all over the painting. The constituent relations of the painting are: the relation of the falling meat with the umbrella over which it falls, and of the figure that is grabbed by the umbrella. These are the constitutive relations of the painting. In other words, the pictorial fact is produced by quite different relations. Wouldn't there be two types of analogy, if you will? One that proceeds by resemblances that are transported, I think we won't be able to see that until later, and another that proceeds quite differently, that proceeds instead by rupture of resemblances. Well, let's assume that.

All I did today was, if you will, confirm – using mostly Bacon as an example – confirm the presence of these three... If I sum up everything, I have at once: this world of pre-pictorial givens made of narration and illustration. The establishment, the truly fundamental establishment of the chaos germ, that is, the drawing of the diagram. There is a diagram in this painting, eh, you can't see here but if you could see a reproduction, you'll see that a little to the left, at the level of the body of the smiling man with the jagged beak who is grabbed by the umbrella, there is a zone that we can properly call "diagrammatical," which is precisely made of gray, of a kind of very tormented gray. And the whole ascending series – man, umbrella that grabs him, and meat above – sort of comes out of this kind of gray diagram. And then [there is] the pictorial fact that comes out of it. Fine.

So, what I'd like to take away first and foremost is the impression of... how shall I put it, of an applied formula. This is not an applied formula. Think about that fact that everything I say strictly loses all meaning if you standardize this notion of diagram. You have to see, for instance, that diagrams of painters of light have absolutely nothing to do with diagrams of colorists. That is, if there are diagrams in all painters, I'm not even sure that there are, but again, a Cézanne diagram has absolutely nothing to do with a Van Gogh diagram. The diagram is not at all a general idea, it's something operative in every painting. It's an operational category. What I'd like to achieve – yes, that's what we'll do after Easter, and that way we'll get a little closer to problems of pure logic or philosophy – I'd like to arrive at a conception of the diagram that clearly shows the difference between modern terms like "diagram" and the difference between a diagram and a code, in what specific way it's completely different from a code. If it were a code, it's a catastrophe, there would be no grounds to connect it to painting. But it has nothing to do with a code.

And once again, there is at every instant the possibility that the diagram might fail. At that point the painting becomes a mess. But if you don't see in a painting how close it came to a mess, how it almost failed, you cannot have enough admiration for the painter. Courbet is... he is..., but anyone really, I cite as they come to mind, but in front of Courbet's paintings people say: it's a miracle. It really comes out as a miracle. It was so close to failure. And then, no. He makes up for it. Prodigious! Prodigious. All the great painters give this impression. It takes next to nothing for a work by Michelangelo to become a pack of muscles, a pack of muscles that really doesn't... It's the difference between a disciple and a... But regarding Cézanne, it's not even the question of the true and the false, it's the question of the disciples and creators. After Cézanne, yes, after

Cézanne, what has become of Cézanne's fight against the cliché in his imitators? Well, it's inevitably become a cliché. Thus, painting must every time pull away from its state of cliché.

One thing that has always struck me, is... uh... Rauschenberg. At one point in his provocative periods, Rauschenberg, who, in my opinion, is a very great painter, took a sketch of a painting by a painter before him, who was also a very big painter, simply erased it and called it "Painting Erased by Rauschenberg". [*Laughter*] It's silly, it's silly, but it's the very illustration of this erased or cleaned zone. It's not that the other's painting was mediocre, on the contrary, it was remarkable. It was a very beautiful drawing, eh. But it's true that when the painter has excelled, the painting becomes a cliché extremely fast. So, the reaction of the painter who sometimes... and it comes down to the same thing, when a great painter, you know, does sketches (*études*), that is, copies the painting of another great painter – famous examples – or when he simply erases it, it comes down to the same thing. It comes down to the same thing, there is a kind of will to pass through the diagram so that a new pictorial fact may emerge.

So, what interests me now is how the diagram is quite different from a code of painting. Well, have a great break! Thank you. [*End of the session*] [2:29:09]

Gilles Deleuze

Painting and the Question of Concepts

Session 3, 28 April 1981

Transcriptions: Parts 1 & 2, Guillaume Damry (duration 1:13:09); Parts 3 & 4, Ali Ibrahim (duration 1:12:53)

Translated by Billy Dean Goehring

Part 1

Ultimately, what we're doing by going through these… I'm focusing on this because I'd like for us to pull off two things at once. First, obviously, we're talking about painting. Personally, I find it very difficult to talk about painting. I don't know why, but it's difficult. Then it's not… you know I'm not talking about painting in general. It's not certain whether anything holds for painting in general. Based on what I have to say, anyway, we'll have to see to what extent it's generally applicable, applying it a little at a time to such-and-such painter for this-or-that period.

But along the way and at the same time, I'm equally interested in building—it's a technicality, but anyway—building a sort of concept which would be proper to philosophy. And you know what concept I'm looking for, because it's the very one I've discussed with regard to painting, namely, a concept of the diagram. Which in the end might be uniquely tied to painting—but anyway, it would be coherent as a concept.

As a result, our inquiry into painting is just as much an investigation of the diagram and the possibility of fleshing out a philosophical understanding of the diagram, or a logical understanding of the diagram—and what logic might this view of diagrams belong to? It's why I start by summarizing and tracking the diagram's primary characteristics in the context of painting, since everything I've said thus far boils down to something extremely simple: in a painting—well, one question: what do I mean by "a painting"? Do I mean any painting in general, or a certain type of painting? A particular period, or are there examples in every period? We can't answer all of these questions up front. But let's assume that, in a painting, there is—I have to put reservations aside—whether actually [*actuellement*] or virtually—virtually things are really vague, whether it's an over-simplified context… Virtually—we can always say that it's virtual, okay, but that doesn't help, we aren't certain… we aren't at all certain—whether actually or virtually, there's a diagram on the canvas. Okay, but we don't know what a diagram *is;* that doesn't get us anywhere.

Nevertheless, before arriving at a philosophical understanding, what I'll try to define are the pictorial characteristics of what I'm calling a diagram. Are there diagrams in music? I don't know—that would be a different question… What sort of connection is there between a diagram and a language? These are the sorts of things that open up as objects of inquiry. For the moment, all I'd like to do is just number some of the pictorial diagram's characteristics. I can see five, based on what we looked at before the holiday…

First characteristic: When it comes to the pictorial diagram, there appear to be two fundamentally related ideas, necessarily interrelated. The diagram would be the necessary relationship between these two ideas… These ideas being that of chaos and seed.

As a result, the diagram would be a chaos-seed. Right. You might ask, why call this a diagram? I'll ask for your patience—bear with me. We'll see if, uh… Unless maybe one of you thinks there's another word that would work better; I'm sure there is one. Obviously, I'd be much more offended if someone thinks *no, painting isn't like that, there's no chaos on the canvas*. Right. That would be a fundamental objection. On the other hand, I'd be much more interested in a formal objection, where somebody says, "Sure, there's something like a chaos-seed on the canvas, but 'diagram' isn't the best word for it." That's possible too. Our inquiry is still—it isn't predetermined. So, for the moment I'll call it a diagram. The first characteristic is [that it is] a chaos-seed, or the relationship—the establishment of a necessary relationship between the two. What exactly do we mean by chaos-seed? The only evidence I have, remember, is what I've gathered from both writings and examples—no examples yet; we'll look at the examples later—by Cézanne and by Klee, where these two painters seem to have really elaborated on this notion of a chaos-seed. But that's a rather narrow time period, from Cézanne to Klee, so I won't make any broad claims—it should be able to stand on its own.

What does "chaos-seed" mean? It's chaos, but the sort of chaos where something ought to come from it. This chaos should be present on the canvas in such a way that something comes out on the canvas. That's the first characteristic.

The second characteristic seems to me… how do I put this, uh… there's a Michaux exhibition, Michaux's paintings in '67—yes, in '67 there was an exhibition of paintings by Michaux, and then Jean Grenier wrote a piece about Michaux's painting. The text, the title of Jean Grenier's text—which is rather short, it's not long; it doesn't say anything major—is "An Orderly Abyss." An orderly abyss [*abîme ordonné*]! It's only the expression that interests me. In a way, painting that doesn't include its own abyss, that doesn't include an abyss, that doesn't involve an abyss, that doesn't establish an abyss onto the canvas—it isn't painting.

But then, in a way, it's very easy to create an abyss; it's very easy to create chaos. Well, I don't know, I don't really know—is it so easy? But suppose that it is, that a bit of schizophrenia is enough to create chaos. So, we have this expression: an orderly abyss. That doesn't mean that there's an order that defies the abyss and replaces it; it means that there's an order to the abyss such that something emerges from the abyss, something which isn't ordinary. "Orderly abyss"—I could use Jean Grenier's term in place of my chaos-seed, right? It's the same.

The second characteristic—I think that when it comes to painting, if that's what the diagram is, how do we describe this chaos-seed? I claim that the second characteristic is that in essence the diagram—now this, this is crucial—is fundamentally manual. And once again, I don't know where this will take us, but I feel it will definitely lead somewhere. It's about the hand, and only an unfettered hand can trace it.

What do I mean by an unfettered hand? Let's break it down. What constraints does the hand have? When it comes to painting, the hand is tied down to the eye, of course. You might say that the hand is in shackles inasmuch as it follows the eye. But the chaos-seed, the diagram there on the canvas, is fundamentally manual. Ultimately, see, we have to push on and see how this approach, resonates with classical problems, bearing in mind the little we're relatively certain about. Wouldn't this be another way of getting us back to the classical problem: how are the eye and hand related in painting? I mean, is painting a visual art or a manual art? And if we say it's both—well, that's no help: what relationship is there between the eye and the hand in painting? And again, the same reservations I bring up every time: is this something that concerns painting in general, or does it vary painting to painting, or is there at least a broad tendency that we can distinguish? Is a painter "abstract" based on these hand and eye relationships in painting? Instead of basing these categories—abstract, expressionist, figurative, etc.—on juvenile details like whether or not it represents something, isn't there a case to be made for retooling these major categories if they're well-founded, by referring them to totally different criteria? For example: are the hand-eye relationships the same with a so-called abstract painter and a painter we would characterize as figurative? Are they doing the same thing?

How widely can the eye-hand relationship vary? But our sort of biased way of approaching the classical issue of how the eye and hand are related in painting—not that it's right…it's a small bias for engaging with this problem, even if this bias perhaps changes the nature of the problem—it always comes down to the diagram *per* the second characteristic I'm trying to flesh out, namely, that this chaos—if it exists—this chaos laid out onto the canvas, which is like the foundational act of painting, is fundamentally manual. And even if it isn't true of every aspect of the painting, when it comes to the diagram itself, the diagram is manual; it reflects a hand freed from its submission to the eye. A bit like if I sort of scribbled stuff down; I can do it with my eyes closed. As if the hand were no longer guided by visual input—that's what makes it chaotic?

In what sense is it chaotic? It's because it involves this diagram—I'm not saying the whole painting, since, again, the diagram is there so that something can emerge -- so, for now, I'm not talking about what will come out of the diagram; for now, I'm talking about the diagram itself. I'm saying that it's a manual act, and one carried out by a hand liberated from the eye. That's the power [*puissance*] of the painter's hand. So, it's a hand liberated from the eye, but does that mean that it's random or that it just scribbles around? Of course not! Maybe there are rules the painter's hand must follow; maybe it has a manual sense of direction, manual vectors—at any rate, what makes the diagram chaotic? It's because it implies the breakdown of all visual coordinates. You know, Cézanne's bloodshot eyes, "I can't see anything." I can't see anything, but that doesn't mean I can't *do* anything. Doing without seeing. The hand's liberation. All right.

The diagram is manual. We'll see why that is. Actually, at this point, when it comes to the diagram—as diagram—a painting is not visual; it's strictly manual.

It's the revolt of the hand—the hand's had it; it's sick of taking orders from the eye. It gets its shot at independence, I guess. Only, it's odd, because it's not just that it's independent; it turns the tables. Instead of the hand following the eye, the hand slaps the eye in the face. It commits violence against the eye; the eye will have a hard time following the diagram. To me, not being able to find the diagram would only prove my point, because the eye cannot find it. It's difficult—instead of the hand following the eye, here we have the liberated hand imposing itself onto the eye. Is the eye capable of seeing what's done by a hand freed from the eye? It's complicated; it really twists the relationship around! The relationship between two organs.

And in paintings, there's indeed a point where you get the feeling that the eye can no longer keep up, as if the hand were animated by a foreign will.[13] Hold on, what do you mean, "As if the hand were animated by a foreign will"? It speaks to what we've been talking about—his development of the idea is great, even better than my paraphrase of it. The hand animated by a foreign will, which terrorizes the eye. But where does that leave us? It's an expression from [Wilhelm] Worringer. Referring to what he calls the "Gothic line". We'll see later what he means exactly by gothic—it's the northern or gothic line which Worringer will analyze in the context of architecture, painting, sculpture. We'll see what it is later on, but for the time being: it's literally an unfettered line, a manual line and no longer a visual line—a manual line that's visible, of course, but which acts as if the hand drawing it were animated by a foreign will. Anyway.

I claim, in fact, that there are two ways of defining painting. They may sound similar, but they are far from it. You could call painting a system of lines and colors [*ligne-couleur*]. Or you could call painting a system of strokes and blots [*trait-tache*].[14]

I think both formulas have different connotations. When you call painting a system of lines and colors [*ligne-couleur*], that sounds visual. You've already defined it as a visual art. And it probably is. Of course it is! When you call it a system of strokes and blots [*trait-tache*], that has a rather different connotation.[15] It's not for nothing that there is a school or movement that goes by the name, "tachism." Strokes and blots—it's not the same. Strokes and blots. It has a manual connotation.

Take one problem I have—this is still me working through the diagram's second characteristic. There's a major problem: if I want to describe painting as really an *agencement,*[16] what would that amount to? What does this "*agencement*" involve?

We'll say that the *agencement* involves or has involved or can involve the following: a canvas, an easel, paints, brushes. Canvas on an easel, paintbrushes. The canvas on an easel, okay. That's totally visual. Why? The edges of the painting, and you know at this point, the painting's edges, its borders, is a big deal… Anyway, because this problem has troubled painting throughout its history, the canvas on the easel acts like a window. The motif of the window. The window is a funny thing. There's a really great article—a rather stunning text—that just came out in *Cahiers du Cinéma*. By [Paul] Virilio, "On the Audiovisual".[17] There are five or six pages in particular that I enjoy; it's Virilio at his best.

He says that there were two events, two basic developments associated with the house. The first is the door-window, and everything started with the door-window, one of the house's fundamental components: I go in and out, and light goes in and out. But he has us appreciate the window's abstraction, since even if you physically *can*—it isn't easy—you're not supposed to go in or out of the window. The window is an orifice for air and light to come in and go out. So, it's a wild sort of abstraction, its abstraction—the idea of making windows that aren't door-windows involves a high degree of abstraction. According to Virilio, the first major abstraction is what you might call anthropocosmic, i.e., the isolation of light.

Well, anyway, notice that putting the canvas on an easel carries out this sort of visual abstraction. Door-windows, on the contrary, are both manual and visual; the window is visual. But I think that the canvas on the easel is painting's visual determination, its optics. And the brush in your hand is the hand subordinated to the eye. Hence the ridiculous classic image—which no one ever took seriously—of the painter closing one eye and stepping back, their hand tracing what they're given, the visual givens, and so on. But we can all tell that the relations between the eye and the hand aren't so simple in painting. There's a text by Focillon—incidentally, a really great art critic—by Henri Focillon, called "In Praise of Hands."[18] It's a text that's been very influential. I really try to find the good in texts. I can't get behind this one at all. Because it's—it's sort of, uh… it's a little over done — "In Praise of Hands" basically explains why the hand is necessary for painting, and then at the same time the only thing for it to do is to realize the eye's pictorial ideas—he praises the hand for being fundamentally subservient. That doesn't sit right with me! If a painting doesn't involve a kind of rebellion of the hand against the eye, it isn't a good painting. Right?

Now, nothing has been as essential to painting as the easel-and-brush—again, for me, the easel stands for what's to be painted, like a window, and the brush stands for the subordination of the eye—oh, excuse me—the hand to visual requirements. To the point where the question isn't even "Which painters do without easels?" There are many who've given up on easels today, who no longer paint on easels; there are some who've kept the easel—you can always keep the easel and use it in such a secondary way that it no longer fully functions as intended. So it's not a *de facto* question—does a painter still have a use for an easel?—It's a question *de jure*.[19]

To take a well-known example: Mondrian, for example, I think used an easel, but you certainly wouldn't call his work "easel painting." That is, the canvas isn't treated like a window, to emphasize the visual reality of the easel: when you paint on an easel, it's like you approach the canvas as if you were looking through a window, or as if it itself were the window. And the theme of windows in painting was fundamental throughout classical painting. But notice that already with impressionism, they carry around their easel—to the studio, to the subject, out into nature. Van Gogh, Cézanne—they go on walks, they… [*Interruption of the recording*] [26:19]

… throughout Van Gogh's writings there are many comments like, "cannot go out today," because it's windy, and his easel will blow away. Why not put down some stones on the canvas to hold it down? No that won't work either. Maybe because in the outdoors the easel no longer functions as an easel. Again, Gauguin, Van Gogh paint on their knees in order to get a low horizon line. So, what happens to the easel? They have to shorten its legs. Anyway, right, we see that the question… as I was saying!

All painters, even those who painted with brush-on-easel, everyone knows that they're always taking the canvas off the easel, just as the brush can always act as something other than a brush. What instruments does the painter have besides the brush? You know, it could be anything, as we've seen throughout history. I mean, modern painters weren't the first to, uh… Maybe modern painters have honed it down to its purest form.

We would have to figure out why, throughout history—with Rembrandt, it's obvious that he didn't paint with a brush, or I mean, not only with a brush. Historically speaking, what have painters painted with? They paint with scrub-brushes—actual brushes—they paint with sponges, brushes, rags. What else? Pollock famously painted with basting syringes. Now that's something—basting syringes. Right—scrub-brushes, sponges, basting syringes; you can use sticks… sticks have always been important in painting. Rembrandt used sticks—so what, why am I bringing this up? I'm still working out the diagram's second characteristic, which comes down to the fact that there's a problem, there's a sort of tension, a pictorial tension, between the eye and the hand. Don't mistake it for a question of harmony, where the hand both obeys the eye and renders something ultimately visual—that's not it. Whatever it is, if you aren't getting or sensing a certain tension, a certain antagonism in painting between the eye and the hand, it's because we haven't looked at it concretely enough.

But if the easel-paintbrush together represent painting as a visual art, what about when we move away from the easel? Beyond the easel—I'll determine it negatively because there are so many things it could be! It could mean painting on walls, but it could just as easily mean painting on the ground; are those the same thing? So, in Mondrian's case, for example, it's very clear: he uses an easel but it's no longer significant, since his painting is fundamentally wall-painting opposed to easel-painting.

And I think—I'm not sure—but it would be difficult, there are certainly writings by Mondrian where, or if he said anything about the easel, he would say… [because] the time has not yet come for the true wall painting such as he conceptualizes it. And it's true that his idea of wall-painting implies an architecture that perhaps existed at the time, but it was in its infancy, just like Mondrian thought he was the beginning of something. Wall painting. That is, the canvas is no more—see how that's opposed to easel-painting; the canvas no longer functions as a window.

And Pollock? He doesn't paint on an easel. He puts an unstretched canvas on the ground. An unstretched canvas on the ground is a bit of a departure: it's a totally different solution, it's not like Mondrian who still used an easel. Pollock—at least some of Pollocks paintings eliminate, that completely do away with the easel. So much to say there's a wide variety: beyond the easel, the two tendencies are toward Mondrian's wall-painting and Pollock's expressionist painting on the floor. Outside of using easels, then, there's brooms, brushes, basting syringes, sponges, rags—painting as a manual process. So, I'm not saying that they're opposed; I'm saying that they're very different things, like how I was saying that it's perfectly acceptable to define painting as a system of lines and colors. By no means am I saying it would be illegitimate; it's a perfectly legitimate definition, but it's a *visual* definition. If you define painting as strokes and blots, that's a manual definition.

Why? You have to feel it! Similarly, if you give a material definition, if you define painting with easel and brush, that's a possible material definition. Of course, you already know that it doesn't account for every painting, but it gives you an idea. It's a nominal, material definition.

But there's the other material definition, besides the easel: stick, scrub-brush, basting syringe. And that will also give you a definition of the material elements of painting, only this time they're manual elements. So, we can work with that, both aspects could be reconciled. You know how you say "painting" in German: it's *Mal*; "painter" is *Maler*. That alone is noteworthy for those how have a knack for languages because the German word—this will come up later, by the way—is absolutely unrelated to the French; there's no connection.

What is *Mal*? It's a word whose etymology is from Latin, from *macula*.[20] What does *macula* mean? *Macula*—which is the name of a great journal on painting, unfortunately out of print, I believe—*macula* is a blot [*la tache*]. So, for Germans, it's almost like the language itself implies that a painter is tachist. Okay, so why do I think this is important? The German word veers painting toward being strokes-and-blots, that is, towards the manual reality of painting, whereas the French word, *pingere*, draws painting toward its visual reality. Whatever agreement between the eye and the hand that is possible in painting, we can't assume that there isn't a fundamental problem with their tension and their virtual opposition. Even virtual—I'm bringing back the vague word, virtual, that's why I found Focillon's piece so interesting but so unsatisfying. Because what I found interesting was precisely the history and all the possible variation. When it comes to the antagonistic struggle, there's always a point—I'm not saying that painting doesn't resolve the eye-hand tension. I'm saying that there's always a point in painting or an aspect of a painting where the hand and the eye lock horns like enemies.

It might be among the more interesting moments in painting. So, as for the second characteristic—the first characteristic of the diagram was simply, well, that it's a chaos-seed. The second characteristic I'd attribute to the diagram is that it is made up of strokes and blots [*un ensemble trait-tache*] and not lines and colors [*ligne-couleur*]. It's a set of strokes and blots, and it's manual.

Note that this second characteristic is an extension of the first because—I'll explain why: there is chaos. If the diagram is fundamentally manual and reflects a hand freed from its subordination to the eye, if only provisionally, again, this doesn't apply to what "comes out" of the diagram, what "comes out" of the chaos. But if that *is* what's going on with the diagram, it's easy to see why it's chaotic since, again, it entails the breakdown of visual coordinates, courtesy of the hand's liberation. In other words, it's a set of traits/strokes [*traits*], ones that do not constitute a visual form—thus, we ought to call these traits/strokes literally "non signifying" or meaningless. And what about blots [*la tache*]? The blot or stain might be a color, but it's like an undifferentiated color. A set of meaningless strokes and undifferentiated colors. That's chaos, the collapse. Right. Onto the third characteristic.

The third characteristic—we've covered it, so I can be brief—is that, if the diagram is the manual stroke/blot that emerges onto the canvas and defies optical coordinates, visual coordinates, that causes them to break down, how do we define this stroke/blot? Well, now we can consider it from the other end and define it based on what's supposed to come from it… because something comes out of the diagram. What results from the diagram are pictorial colors and pictorial lines. That is, the color's pictorial state, the line's pictorial state. I've already given away the answer: it's gray. The blot is gray, and that's what the diagram is: it's gray.

How is that the diagram? Because there two grays, because it's a double gray. Because gray is simultaneously the gray of black-white—and this gray is where all the visual coordinates fall apart—and also the gray of green-red, from which the whole spectrum of colors emerges; you could also say that the whole light spectrum comes out of the black-white gray. What comes out of the diagram is the two-fold pictorial spectrum: Light – Color.

Listen to what Klee said in some of his writing, which I think is wonderful—on gray, in particular. "The gray point leaps over itself… it's double, the two sides of gray: the gray of black-and-white and gray as the matrix of color."[21] But it's not yet a color, so something needs to come out of it.

The same goes for the other aspect of the diagram. The blot [*la tache*] is thus gray in this—now you can tell that the tension is no longer between the eye and the hand; the tension is within the blot itself. In the blot's gray, in the grayness of the blot, there are two aspects, insofar as this gray is black-white and insofar as it is green-red, the color matrix.

Then the same goes for the stroke: strokes aren't pictorial lines, but pictorial lines result from them. And in that regard, what are they? I claim that strokes are not yet lines; lines are made up of strokes. Or strokes are the constitutive elements of the visual line. The visual line is composed neither of points nor is it made up of segments; visual lines are composed of manual strokes. The component and the composite are heterogeneous, since strokes are strictly manual while lines produced by strokes are visual. So, the stroke ought to be defined, precisely in order convey its originality, as a line that at no point bears a constant direction. Thus, this line has no visual reality. A line that almost constantly changes direction—that's what a stroke is, let's say.

Notice that I'm distinguishing the diagram from two things irrevocably bound up with it: it's before and after. It's related to a before because it leads the latter into catastrophe: the visual world. It's related to an after since something will come out of the diagram, the painting itself. As a manual, pictorial unit, the stroke-blot causes a visual catastrophe—what emerges as a result? Something new? What do we call it? For convenience's sake, what about "the third eye"? The eyes had to be annihilated to bring out the third eye, but where does the third eye come from? It comes from the hand, from the diagram. It comes from the manual diagram. All right.

Fourthly, the fourth characteristic—let's make it a little more concrete. I'll just sum up what we saw at the beginning. What is the function or purpose of the diagram? Looking back, looking at what was there before it, it's simply to get rid of any resemblance. Clearly everyone knows there's never been such a thing as figurative painting—if by figuration we mean the act of "making a likeness"—it's obvious there's never been any figurative painting. Getting rid of resemblance has always been something that happened not only in the painter's head but in the painting as such. Even if some resemblance remains, it's so secondary that even the painters who feel they need it, need it as something that regulates rather than defines the painting; in this sense, there's never been such a thing as figurative painting, right.

So, unmaking resemblance has always been inherent to the act of painting, but it's the diagram that unmakes resemblance. Why? It came up last time: for the sake of—as some painters put it, like Cézanne, for example—for the sake of a deeper resemblance.[22] What does that mean? It's to make the image emerge. Let's take that seriously and look at it one piece at a time: getting rid of resemblance so that the image can emerge. What? If only to change up our vocabulary for, uh… let's take a look at this idea, which might help us along. I could also put it this way: getting rid of representation so that presence can emerge. Representation – Presence. Representation is what comes before—before painting anything. Presence is what comes from the diagram. Which is another way of saying: getting rid of resemblance to bring out the image. What emerges, what comes out of the diagram, is the image. The image without resemblance.

Very early on, Christian theology fleshed out a wonderful concept that should prefigure all the fraught relationships between art and religion. The idea of an image without resemblance. If you went through catechism growing up, you'll remember—you cover it in catechism—you get it straight from the church fathers; catechism had these great expressions. "God created man in His own image and likeness, and through sin, man preserved His image but lost His likeness." Sin is the act whereby man is constituted as an image without resemblance. Man kept his image—not even God could take that away from him—but he's lost any resemblance. What? How is that possible? How can an image be an image if it doesn't resemble anything?

An image with no resemblance—that's where painting comes in. It gives us an image with no resemblance, if we were looking for a word for an image without resemblance—always looking for cleaner vocabulary, trying to see where that leads us—isn't that what we call an "icon"? An image with no resemblance. Indeed, an icon isn't representation, it is presence, and yet it's an image. An icon, the iconic, is an image *qua* presence, the presence of the image, the weight of the image's presence. Fine.

Anyway. See, I'm saying that the diagram is the instance whereby I get rid of resemblance in order to produce the presence-image. That's why I'm bringing up diagrams: breaking down resemblance and producing the image. There's the aspect before and the aspect afterward, with the diagram in between—I'll try to distinguish them terminologically: given features [*les données*], the possibility of fact, and the fact.

But why is it that the given, the visual given [*données*], falls apart in the diagram? It's so that the pictorial fact can emerge. The pictorial fact, specifically. And what is the diagram? According to the painter, Francis Bacon, it's the possibility of fact. The possibility of fact. The image with no resemblance. Well, as I see it, personally at least: Who is the painter—always trying to squeeze in an example wherever I can—who is the painter who really pushed, established the raw presence of the pictorial fact? One of the first—no one was first because really, it's always been the case—but to us, from our modern or pseudo-modern perspective, is synonymous with the affirmation, the imposition of the pictorial fact, is Michelangelo. Look at a painting by Michelangelo, and there's no denying that he's a sculptor. A sculptor-painter, you might say. You're confronted with a pictorial fact where there's nothing left to justify, where painting has achieved its own justification. But what form does that take? I really do think that our artistic categories, the main artistic categories, are well-founded. A lot of people say, "Romanticism, Classicism, Baroque: they're just words!" Abstract, expressionism—I don't think they're just words. I think they're well-founded terms; I just think we need to find better definitions than, say, "abstract is the opposite of figurative," because that won't cut it. They're perfectly fine categories, and besides—categories are philosophy's bread and butter, so all the better.

However, I claim that the coexistence, the contemporaneity, of Michelangelo and mannerism is crucial. I think the category of mannerism neatly sets us up to understand what the "pictorial fact" is. In the most general sense of the term: something is "mannered" in the painting's figure, in the figure as such. Where does it come from? It comes out onto the painting; it comes out of the diagram. It comes from the diagram with a sort of mannerism that we can still interpret anecdotally.

Take Michelangelo's figures, Tintoretto's figures, Velázquez's figures. It's a mix of… anecdotally, your first impression is that it's an extraordinary mix of effeminacy, of mannerism in the attitude, the pose, almost a muscular exuberance, as if the body were both too strong and singularly effeminate. Michelangelo's characters are unbelievable! The school known as mannerism, with some extreme masterpieces—but the way they depict the figure of Christ is not believable, given what you could call the artificial character of attitudes and postures. Which is what our eye sees at first blush; it's sort of obvious that it's the most beautiful sort of painting, the affirmation of the pictorial fact. It's necessary that, compared to what you see, the pictorial fact presents the figure in forms that our eye finds extraordinarily stylized, extraordinarily artificial. And there's something, uh, hm… trivial about it—it's not the most profound sort of painting—but there's a little provocation from the painter. The manner just says, "it's not what you think."

As a result, when people point to anecdotal accounts of the painters' homosexuality, that's not what it is, right? That's not it. It's insofar as they are painters that they work in mannerism. Yeah, obviously. Well, that's all pretty trivial. Anyway. Using the diagram to get rid of visual givens, which establishes a possibility of fact, but the fact itself is not given. The fact is something to be produced, and what is produced is the pictorial fact, i.e., basically, the arrangement of lines and colors, the new eye. The diagram's manual catastrophe was required in order to produce the pictorial fact, that is, to produce the third eye.

Anyway, the last characteristic of the diagram, the fifth characteristic, if you're following me so far, you see that the diagram should be there; I no longer think that it can only be virtual… Or it can be covered back up, but it's there; a painting has to have it there, it can't just be in the painter's head before they start painting. The painting must reflect this brush with chaos, the so-called orderly abyss, as someone said [Jean Grenier]. It's not about an abyss, and it's not about making a well-ordered painting. What the painter is concerned with is the order proper to chaos, establishing an order proper to the abyss…

But see, then there are huge risks, even in terms of technique. And I'm backing up because it's… that's how I'll eventually rearrange, reclassify everything we did before, because it's really—I'd like to convey it to you as concretely as possible, because it's a bit funny how this whole business with… -- Again, what I'm trying to do is chart the painting's journey through time. I don't think of a painting as a spatial reality; I really look at it temporally via the synthesis of time proper to painting: the before, the diagram, and the after. All right, what are the risks?

We've already seen them, so I'll recap. The first danger is that the diagram takes over, that the diagram scrambles everything, that it scrambles the whole thing, that... Maybe now that makes more sense because this would be… [*Deleuze does not complete the phrase*] Maybe there are paintings like this, or paintings that come close! Because the paths get narrow at this point. And maybe that will allow us to renovate our main categories. What does it mean to be abstract? What does it mean to be expressionist? Because at what point can I say about a painting, *wow!* Well, you can tell that, even though it's a matter of taste, after a while there's nothing to say, all you can do is wait for reactions, for everyone to have their own reactions, which isn't easy.

To understand what looking at a painting makes me feel when there's so much has already been done, that itself is difficult… but at what point can I say *oh!* The paintings that seem to have missed the mark. They fail because…. They sort of had to; they could have been great, were it not for a bit of grayness or a stray brushstroke, stray and ultimately arbitrary brushstrokes—I ask myself why not…you can do that, but…? He could have just as well done something else, there's nothing stopping him. You know, the enemy of any form of expression is gratuitousness: when they say there's no wrong answer, that you can't make a mistake—but why are you expressing what you're expressing? Is it worth the trouble of expressing it? Likewise, is a painting worth the trouble of making it? Even for those who made it, plenty of painters make paintings and there's no need for them to do so, but who decides that? I don't know, it's complicated, but anyway, it feels like something could come out of it; once the diagram takes over, however, nothing can come out of it.

So, when the diagram takes over, I might call it pure chaos; the seed is dead. Klee's turn of phrase is great: if the gray point takes over, overwhelms everything visible, the egg dies.[23] So it's up to you. What does it mean when a painter judges other painters? He's not actually judging them because, again, out of all artists painters might be the proudest but also seem to be the most modest. They don't pass judgment; they express preferences. It's always interesting to hear why a painter says they aren't drawn to this or that form of painting. When Bacon is looking at a Pollock and says, "This is sloppy—just sloppy," no offense to Pollock, right? It takes nothing away from him.

Why does it matter? Not because it tells us anything about Pollock; we learn more from what Bacon says about a painter he likes and admires. When he just says—what exactly does it mean for Pollock to be sloppy?—he goes so far as to say that he "hates" expressionism, in an almost racist way. "I hate that kind of sloppy sort of Central European painting,"[24] that sloppy Central European—you can tell what he means; he's Irish, he's Anglo-Irish, a sloppy sort of Central European painting, right. How is that relevant? It's relevant because when Bacon sees a Pollock, he ought to flip it around, he ought to say, "This is chaotic," and indeed, when you see one of Pollock's paintings it can genuinely come across as a chaos-painting. All right. Well, Pollock aside, some paintings have this effect: the diagram leans so far into its first aspect of chaos, where it's descended into chaos, so that nothing can come out of the diagram; everything is blurred, greyed out, or else there's too much color so everything's gray, a ruined canvas. So, that's the first danger.

What's the second risk we run? It's that the diagram… as the diagram brings about the breakdown of visual givens… the risk has been very clearly articulated—without using the word, diagram—very clearly articulated by Cézanne. There are letters where, with some apprehension, Cézanne writes: instead of assuring their junction, the blank spaces—note that it isn't a question of perspective because painting has nothing to do with perspective, it's a meaningless concept…there is a concept of it, but perspective is only one possible response to the pictorial problem, which you can only pose pictorially in the form: do paintings allow us to—in paintings where there is a reason for distinguishing different levels [*plans*], for in some paintings there is no need to differentiate levels [*plans*]—well, how does it work, how does the painter bring different levels [*plans*] together?[25] But perspective is nothing if not a case of conjoined levels [*jonction des plans*]—the real pictorial problem is that, if there *are* different levels [*plans*], by what method will they be connected?

Cézanne says, well… when it comes to the abyss of chaos, instead of coming together, the different levels [*plans*] fall on top of each other, they fall on top of each other. Instead of falling into a sequence, the colors mix together. And this mixture is nothing but gray. The object—the painted object—has lost its resemblance, has lost it in the chaos, is fundamentally off-kilter. Right. Levels [*plans*] collapsed onto each other, colors mixed into gray, the object all wrong and off balance—this extreme case has the painting so bound up with the diagram that there's nothing but chaos. But the failures aren't what's interesting; I'd say that what matters are the ones that take this risk. Which ones come dangerously close but actually manage to avoid falling into this danger, and do so masterfully? Then it gets interesting: what is it that's able to run the first of the diagram's risks—but is it because the painter is especially talented, or do all great painters manage to avoid it?

That might let us establish our first artistic category: I think it's specifically what was known as abstract expressionism. Abstract expressionists—that is, the whole American movement that dominated American painting—the generation that's now some sixty years old. I think the way they flirt with chaos, where the diagram takes over; they get really close to chaos, but the diagram still manages to produce something fantastic. I think that's what Pollock is about. It's Morris Louis. It's [Kenneth] Noland. All the ones many of you are familiar with. In particular, I'd refer to Pollock in terms of lines and to Morris Louis when it comes to color-stains [*tache-couleur*]. But later we'll see that this is the trend with abstract expressionism, reaching a maximum level of chaos with the diagram. But of course, contrary to what Bacon says, I think it's obvious that they don't descend into chaos, that their paintings are neither muddy nor sloppy.

Well, look at the diagram's other tendency. So, the first tendency is for the diagram to take over and it all just looks like chaos. Which, if you like, we could call abstract expressionism. What about the other tendency? See, now I'm defining artistic categories by privileging what's happening with the diagram, and without any regard for what's going on with figuration, which is not relevant.

Coming at it from the other side, what would the diagram's second tendency be? It's to be minimized, to be minimized. Okay, how do you minimize a shallow stream? By making a *very* shallow stream. By retaining nothing but the bare minimum. This time, just like I was saying earlier that when you maximize the diagram's power it tends to turn into chaos, its first aspect. When you minimize it, it tends to fully lapse into a pictorial order. That is, you end to effectively reduce the diagram, even replacing it. With what? Let's tentatively say—and this is the first time we've run into this idea, a term which might do a lot of heavy lifting for us—you tend to replace [the diagram] with something rather remarkable: a sort of code.

And if this term opens things up for me, it's insofar as, well: doesn't this offer us a new diagram/code dynamic, such that the difference between diagram and code will help us make a lot of progress on what a diagram is? In terms of the philosophical concept that we're after. What does it mean? What gives me that impression? Obviously, a code can mean something grotesque—I'm thinking of botched paintings, but you get what I'm trying to… the attempt to reduce the diagram to a maximum—No, minimum! And to replace it with a code…which is what, exactly? It's an obvious way to define so-called abstract painting. With the great abstract painters, we'll see it's correct, we'll see if it's true. But when it goes wrong—and God, abstract painting has some awful painters. Just as many as other kinds of painting, but with abstract painting it's catastrophic. The guys who make squares or whatever—it's horrible. Well, I mean, it's so pretentious; a square can be pretentious, a square can be crap. You shouldn't think that just making squares is enough to make…. A square can be hideous. There are some hideous squares in bad abstract art. Well, anyway, all these types of abstract painting, at the most basic level, tend toward a sort of geometrism. You get the feeling that yes, that what they tend to do is replace the diagram with code.

When that doesn't work is when the painting merely applies an external code. So, if I'm using painting to apply an outside code… what's the difference—to put the question another way—what the difference between one of Kandinsky's triangles and a triangle from geometrist? What makes Kandinsky's triangle an artistic triangle? What makes … [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:13:09]

Part 2

… Bringing up non-Euclidean geometry and the possibility of painting using non-Euclidean codes doesn't change anything. It's obvious that when a great abstract painter—when a great abstract painter actually moves toward replacing the diagram with a code, it's not about that, because at that point, abstract painting would just be another sort of catastrophe for painting. If the abstract painters are great, what makes them great? If they are great painters, it's because they have an understanding—doesn't matter whether it's ascetic or spiritualistic—of the spiritual life! At bottom, they have a religious soul, don't they?

What do they make? Only the code they want to inaugurate—what they think will be possible in the future—if you look at all the abstract painters' major declarations, they're always addressed to a future world, which they create, a future world heralded by new codes—it goes without saying that it's a pictorial code—but it's funny, if we look at it that way—along with it come all sorts of paradoxes. Establishing a pictorial code! In other words, a code unique to painting. A code that would be proper to painting, i.e., sorting out codifiable elements, elements of codification that are at the same time completely pictorial.

Again, there's a fine line—just like I was saying earlier. It's true, Pollock's painting verged on becoming too sloppy and letting chaos reign, but then he gets out of it. Abstract painters verge on a sort of painting-code where painting would be obliterated, but then the great abstracts knew how to pull it off and forged the elements of a code that'd be uniquely pictorial; they turn code into pictorial reality instead of applying a code onto painting; they're Kantians. With Kandinsky, it's obvious that he's a disciple of Kant to some extent—they create an analytic of elements. Kandinsky offers us a stupendous analytic of elements. So, then, you couldn't leave anything out. I would at least try to define abstract painting by saying, see, this is the other side of the diagram: they reduce the diagram to a minimum; they ultimately replace the diagram with a code, but it's a properly pictorial code, inherent to painting. One painter who best makes my case here isn't Kandinsky, nor even Mondrian, although they all basically share an understanding of code—both Kandinsky and Mondrian converge on one point, which I find fascinating, namely, that ideally, genuine code is binary.

What exactly is binarity? Painting's specific form of binarity has nothing to do with a binary calculation that would churn out paintings; you can always do that with a computer—there are generated paintings, a computer can be programmed to make paintings. You know what I mean: at that point, code is external to painting, you've merely encoded your input in such a way that the computer can render a portrait. There's a famous image [*dessin*], a portrait of Einstein[26] made with binary signals—it's not hard to program a computer that way. But that's obviously not what Kandinsky or Mondrian are doing.

What's with this binarity? What sort of binarity do abstract painters use? The main binary relationship is, as everyone knows, between horizontal and vertical. Mondrian's well-known formula: the horizontal and the vertical are the two elements—that's the analytic of elements, there's the horizontal and the vertical, and that's it. Because you can make anything with this binary code. You can do anything, not like where you apply a code from outside. In every direction, you can develop the code within painting. All right, so that gives us the second route whereby painting also brushes with danger.

And the abstract painter who I think went the furthest, probably further than any other abstract painter, in forming a pictorial code is—he's on my mind because not long ago he had an exhibit in Paris—it's [Auguste] Herbin. For those who know this painter, I think he's one of the only abstract painters who at heart are truly colorist. If you ask me, he's the greatest or one of the greatest colorists (*H-E-R-B-I-N*). I'll show an example, for your viewing pleasure—you should be able to see it from there. Herbin had a showing in a small gallery, but it's over now… [*A student asks for the gallery name*] Yeah, I'm looking. A small gallery on the Rive Gauche. I have the street, but I don't have the name. But I'll get it for you, since I have the catalog—this catalog is different, it's older, and in Paris museums there are pieces by Herbin, but in my opinion there aren't any that are very good, it must have been bought. There might just be some Herbin at… maybe at Beaubourg there are some Herbin. [*A student proposes a name*] What? Yes, yes, Rue de Seine, it was Rue de Seine, I'll look at the catalog and let you know next time because I'll take a look at the catalog. Fine.

Then there's a third way. Somewhat vaguely, rather vaguely, I currently have something like two categories: abstract painting and expressionism. Where do these terms come from, and why, so on and so forth… What makes them modern? I think that speaks to a problem that's actually rather modern, which motivates a lot of painters. Why painting today? Why painting especially…while people are dying, but basically… There are many who think, "Yeah, you know how it goes: writing is outdated, maybe painting is outdated," and so on. There are painters who get hit by these things pretty hard. But the ones I'm talking about have experienced it, the ones who are really modern—it's obvious for abstract painters. They claim they're getting at the heart of painting because today's painting—we'll elaborate on this further—it can lead to a renunciation of painting. A renunciation of painting for the sake of new forms of art, or quasi-new forms of art.

Okay, but otherwise, when it comes to how today's major painters have answered the question, "Why painting? What's the point of painting these days?" notice how concrete their answers have become—for example, it's significant that, with a Mondrian sort of response, one basically does murals and breaks away from easel painting. Which entails a whole new—ostensibly, at least—a whole new understanding of what a painting is. Namely, it no longer even pretends to represent anything. Why? Because it serves a different purpose. The painting's task has become to divide up its own surface. Hence the squares: see how it's a pictorial code but not merely the application of a geometrical code. The task of the wall painting, the task of the painting that's fallen off its easel, that's come off the easel. The painting ceases to be a window. Why does the painting have to split up its own surface? At the same time, I'd almost say there's an isomorphism with architectural division. Dividing with walls on the one hand and the divisions within each wall, on each wall, on the other. Then the painting is no longer attached to the easel as a mobile entity; it's bound to the wall. That was Mondrian's approach. He viewed his own paintings as abstract—the wrong sort of abstract—insofar as they lacked their corresponding walls.

In fact, by dividing up its own surface, the canvas ought to resonate with divisions on the surface of the walls, whereby painting becomes mural. Hence, the need for a code… well, anyway! What's the answer? Why paint today? Well, see, it's… it can… ultimately, it can only emerge from what we called the diagram. If the diagram is the chaos-seed… I think every painter, whether they say it or not, thinks painting is still worth the trouble precisely because it has a certain relationship to chaos that they claim—sometimes philosophically, sometimes poetically—that everyone recognizes in modern humanity. Our world has descended into chaos. Our world is tumult and chaos. Kandinsky is always talking about it. The modern world has descended into tumult and chaos. Okay… so why painting? You can read anything stereotypical examples of modernity into this: the atomic bomb, city life, pollution, and so on… tumult and chaos.

Why paint today? Because painting would probably be justified based on the extent to which it does or does not ward off chaos. No, but it comes face to face with chaos in order to draw out a—let's tentatively call it a possible modern order. Only, how is this possible modern order supposed to emerge from chaos without dispelling it?

Here there are various answers. Abstract painters might say, "by keeping chaos to a minimum," and chaos "is life outside." A constant theme in Kandinsky's work is that modern humanity needs a new spiritual life and that painting becomes the principal agent of humanity's spiritual life. He's always talking about it: "inner life," "spiritual life," "Heaven is empty." Kandinsky comes back to it time and time again. So, why exactly is it painting's mission to form a spiritual life, to draw something out of chaos? That might sound like a figure of speech, but it ceases to be so. Abstract painters *are* spiritualists. They are the heroes of the spiritual life to come; that's they're charge. But why? Well, if I know anything about painting's spiritualist ambition—the title of Kandinsky's famous book, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, etc.[27] —if their claim to spirituality is indeed justified it's precisely because painting cannot get around its confrontation with chaos. And thus, because the conditions of modern life give rise to chaos. If that's true—that might not be enough on its own—but if that's true, it's specifically because painting offers the most close-up confrontation, there on the canvas, and has to pass through chaos in order to draw out something which the painter thinks is a response to it. Why paint today? To form modern humanity's third eye. In other words, to form our inner eye. Going so far as a sort of mysticism—Herbin is fascinating; with Herbin, you get a sort of mystic materialism.

Right. From the other side, what would an expressionist say? See, but the answer we got from the abstract painters is bizarre. It amounts to saying, "you'll extract the seed of chaos by keeping chaos to a minimum," that is—formally, as Kandinsky puts it—"by turning your back on the tumult," and inventing future code. I think that abstract expressionism, expressionism has a very similar response to the question, why paint today? Again, because painting offers a close encounter with chaos. However, for an abstract expressionist, for an American, for Pollock and his following, you obviously won't manage to get out of chaos by establishing a pictorial code. It's almost the opposite; it's by fully confronting it. Because for them, it's another way of experiencing rhythm, because for them, for the expressionists, rhythm is as close as one gets to chaos. The closer you get to chaos, the closer to get to material tumult, to the tumult of matter, to molecular tumult, the more likely it is that you'll get the seed, the rhythm. In a way, the formula behind abstract painting would be: "limiting chaos as much as possible so that a modern order can emerge, which would be a code for life." Expressionism's formula would be: "let's keep adding to the chaos, adding on to the chaos, just a smidge beyond its limits, until something comes out of it."

See, these two approaches might very well misunderstand each other—or not be interested in each other—but both approaches are unusual and each of them flirts with catastrophe. Expressionism's catastrophe is falling into chaos, pure and simple. The catastrophe risked by abstract painting is the external application of a code.

Which is what happens with bad expressionists—it's just sloppy! Or what you get with bad abstract painters—too much order, orderly enough to be fascist! Well. Anyway, what about the third approach?

We might be tempted to call the third approach moderate, if that wouldn't be an insult for the painters who adopt this approach. Because we'll see that this moderate, temperate approach isn't really temperate; it's only temperate by virtue of the fact that it's not one of the others. So, what is the third tendency?

It's the bizarre act of measuring chaos. Using the diagram but preventing it from contracting or expanding too much. Putting limits on chaos or maintaining chaos to a limited extent. That's hard to do. So, we might call it temperate or moderate, but at the same time, it tries to localize chaos, tries to hold it off. It's a terrible undertaking. Your eyes get tired, your hand starts shaking. Your hand shakes because it no longer follows the diagram's visual cues; your eyes get tired because visual cues come undone in the diagram.

Well, then, it's difficult to say what I would call that. Let's call it the figurative. The approach I described does come down to establishing chaos, but something comes out of the chaos: the figure. It's not a reproduction; it's an image without resemblance. With whatever trend you like—starting with Cézanne, this line would have Van Gogh, there's Gauguin… the so-called "figural," rather than figurative, painters. Anyway. And you can see in all these cases that this third position is a very awkward one: the diagram for itself—neither extending so far that it descends into chaos, nor limiting it in order to replace it with a code. The diagram is nothing but a diagram. But it lends the diagram some dramatic weight, so it would be wrong to call it a temperate approach, and yet it fits because it's what drives Van Gogh mad: preventing the diagram from giving into chaos, but chaos still remains.

In other words, to put it in somewhat abstract terms, consider two contemporary painters: Van Gogh and Gauguin. They both belong to this line, what I'm describing as a temperate third line, but it's obvious that Van Gogh verges on sort of an expressionist adventure. The encroachment of chaos is fully present, so this third approach doesn't avoid any danger.

I think Gauguin is the opposite. If we can call Van Gogh a major precursor to expressionism, you can equally call Gauguin a major precursor to abstract painting. He leans toward the other aspect. So, that's how we could start to arrange our categories. And so, for the moment I'd like to start off with three categories: Abstract painting, Figural painting, Expressionist painting.

And my concern is specifically with regard to what we've defined and how we've defined them strictly according to three scenarios regarding the diagram. By no means did we define them in terms of figuration, which we did away with outright. These three scenarios—ultimately the three positions the diagram can find itself in: The first scenario: the diagram verges on chaos. The second scenario: the diagram leans toward code and is even replaced by a code. The third diagrammatic scenario: the diagram acts like a diagram, but that brings us back—I'll try to elaborate. Let's bring back the eye-hand dynamic and apply our three categories. When you look at a painting—for example, take a Pollock for example. What's going on? It's a strange problem.

Maybe you all are tired; do you want a break? What time is it?

Claire Parnet: Noon.

Deleuze: Noon? Yes, right, let's take a break. Let's rest up. [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:38:08]

… So, yeah, see, we're making some progress, because now the idea of a diagram isn't enough on its own; we've introduced the concept of positions, different diagrammatic positions. The diagram can take different positions—now, we've identified three such positions, and I'd like to follow up on these in concrete terms. How do they work—it's not only about their effect on us—it's how do they happen? How can such effects come about? And it's really a matter of a slow and—for the painters—a very dangerous, a very dangerous confrontation with chaos itself, not an abstract chaos but the chaos on the canvas, based on these diagrammatic positions anyone can experience for themselves.

So, let's try to pin down what we mean by—what could we mean by "expressionist"? Since if I understand—first of all, if I interpret the major pictorial categories based on the diagram's position, on diagrammatic positions, we'll have to see what follows as a result, that is, what new definitions result from these categories. Thus, what expressionism is *qua* the diagram's relative position, its diagrammatic situation. What is the most striking about a so-called expressionist painting? Ultimately, I think even if we describe them as tendencies, even if it doesn't always work this way, what are they tending towards? I think the answer has already been spelled out, particularly by certain American critics. In the end, if you take a painting from a period of Pollock's career—it depends, not any period, but truthfully many periods of Pollock's work—you can immediately tell that it's a total rejection of the canvas's organic existence on the easel.

What do I mean by the canvas's organic existence on the easel? It's an organic existence because nothing is the same on the canvas, before you even touch the canvas, everything changes: there's the problem of the center, centers, focal points, and edges. And any issue with the edges is made all the more pressing with the addition of the frame or bounds of the painting. What do you do with the frame? If you think of a painter who isn't expressionist, someone like Seurat, how he looked for a way to keep the frame from being a fixed boundary, turning to a wide range of scientific and artistic techniques to make the frame a part of the painting—it's one problem that arises—why is it that, when we're looking at a Pollock, we immediately know that this wasn't a problem for him? It's a particular American expression—which I'm going to butcher—they're so-called "All-over" paintings; American abstract expressionism is all-over. It means that lines do not start at the edge but begin virtually, they start long beforehand. The painting captures as much as it can of a line with no end or beginning. Really, the way it treats the painting's space is such that what we call the "edge" could just as easily be the "center." Anyway, it's interesting to think about this "all-over" line running from one end to the other, doubling back on itself, etc., almost covering the entire painting. See, I've begun with an example of a "line"; let's call it "the Pollock line" for now.

It was spelled out really well—there's an American critic who published a long article titled "Three American Painters" in the *Revue d'esthétique,* it was translated in the *Revue d'esthétique,* which was reprinted in a 10/18 titled "*Painting,*" a guy named Michael Fried, *F-R-I-E-D*, a great American critic.[28] No, he's gone downhill; allegedly his work has gone downhill because… well, that happens! It happens. But anyway, it's an in-depth look into today's American painters—actually, it's a bit older—and it's quite good. Because he does a good job explaining why, if you look at one of Pollock's lines, there's no mistaking that it's Pollock. Why? Because strictly speaking, it's a line with no shape [*sans contour*].[29] It's a line that doesn't outline anything. If you look at a closed shape [*figure*], there's an outline.

So, you can say, "This is a triangle, this is a flat circle, this is a circle, this is a half-circle," etc. You can see how it's different with a shapeless line: it loops from one end of the painting to the other; it circles back on itself without ever closing. It's an odd sort of line that doesn't outline anything and so has neither inside nor outside. It doesn't mark an inside or outside. It's a moving line that never stops moving. You aren't able to pick out this as the inside or that as the outside. Just like the line started before the painting and… before the left side and continues far beyond the right side; it has no beginning or end. No inside or outside, no beginning or end. It's obvious if you're able to imagine a Pollock painting. A line that is still a line and yet comes close to acting like a surface. A line that builds up and thus almost acts like surface—in other words, one that brings its one-dimensionality closer to being two-dimensional. Surfaces are two-dimensional, lines are one-dimensional—and Pollock's line verges on turning into a surface. It's the line's attempt to overcome its being one-dimensional while remaining a line, thus, a perfect adequation between what is on the painting and the painting itself. The line taking up the painting is equal to the painting. The line as a surface. It will act like a surface. It's a shapeless line. So, the line achieves a dimensionality that's, properly speaking, infinite. In a way, chaos would be averted by itself.

How can that be? Actually, that might not make much sense for those of us who can't picture a Pollock painting; it might seem too abstract. I should have brought one with me—oh well—it's clear when you look at his paintings: the line is all over the place. It really takes up the whole surface. I'll just point out, because we talked about it in another course, and someone here knew a lot about this author—there's a mathematical logician who wrote a really interesting text on what he calls "fractal" objects. His name is—this is by memory; I'm just bringing him up to give to encourage you to make run-ins like this—his name is [Benoit] Mandelbrot, Mandelbrot, *M-A-N-D-E-L-B-R-O-T,* and his book, *Fractal Objects,* was published by Flammarion. What are these fractal objects? They're specifically these objects that turn out to have a fractional number of dimensions. What—a fractional number of dimensions? Fractional dimensional objects are bizarre. It's fascinating. So, he proposes a form of mathematics and logic for fractal objects. What does he have in mind? Well, it would be a line that's more than one-dimensional and less than two-dimensional.[30] A surface is something that has two dimensions. A volume, three. Suppose there's a line with a fractional number of dimensions; it's a line that remains a line but tends towards becoming a surface. Mandelbrot's example is straightforward and compelling: take a straight line—bear with me—see, take a straight line. Split it into thirds. Swap out the middle part for an equilateral triangle. You end up with this shape. Take all the remaining segments—you'll have one, two, three, four—take all four-line segments and split them into thirds. And then put an equilateral triangle onto each of those middle sections. Ad infinitum. You're still working with lines in two dimensions—and yet your line is enough to cover the surface.

We'll call that a fractal object. See, it's in the process of becoming; it has a number—a fractional number of dimensions. There are all kinds of other examples, it's really interesting. What's my point? My point is very simple: a line that appears to change direction at any given moment has a dimension greater than one—make it change direction at every turn, and you wind up with a line that acts as a surface. For example, a similar example from Mandelbrot is Brownian motion. Brownian motion is such that its direction is never the same from one point to the other. A line that changes direction at every point, no matter how close the points are to each other. Looking for a mathematical formula to describe this is one thing, but it's also interesting to express it artistically—we're at a point where there's no question of reducing one to the other, where they act as two different expressions: a potential mathematical expression and an independent artistic expression, exactly what Pollock's line is. Of course, it doesn't just use equilateral triangle, which would amount to a mathematical formula: forming equilateral triangles in the middle of each line segment *ad infinitum* is a mathematical construction.[31]

Pollock clearly takes an artistic route, with a line taking up the entire canvas without outlining anything, without concluding in a contour. So, you can see how expressionists can claim to be much more abstract than abstract painters. They can look at abstract painters—Pollock, for one, could say (just as Bacon says about him)—he could say: personally, I'm not interested in Mondrian, or I'm not interested in Kandinsky. I don't know what he would say, exactly, since Pollock said so little—he didn't say much about what didn't interest him or why it didn't interest him. Because he doesn't much care whether a shape is abstract or concrete; it makes no difference. Moreover, he'll say that "abstract painting is purely figurative." It's not about the difference between abstract and concrete, since, again, you can form abstract shapes, which are still figurative. You can say that Kandinsky—we'll see how an abstract painter might respond to this—but Kandinsky paints triangles, right: he paints triangles, or he paints tubes, or he paints circles instead of painting men and women, but what makes that abstract? Whenever you have an outline, you have a shape [*figure*].

So, that isn't very interesting for Pollock. If Pollock doesn't belong in the category of abstract painting and if I think these categories are well-founded, it's for this reason. For Pollock, real abstraction begins with a shapeless line and not with the abstract characteristics of what's depicted by an outline—as a result, as soon as a line outlines something, it isn't abstract. It's only the Pollock line, i.e., the shapeless line. Thus, expressionism is the one capable of pulling off real abstraction, and expressionism can rightly lay claim to genuine pictorial abstraction—the others are abstract in a way that has nothing to do with painting; pictorially, they remain figurative. They aren't abstract because their work is representational. They say their work doesn't depict anything, but that isn't true; it's still representational. It's represented abstractly, but it's an extra-pictorial abstraction, outside of painting—in terms of painting, they are perfectly figurative since they outline shapes; they use lines but couldn't distinguish between lines and outlines.

Well, let's assume that this line—you can probably already imagine expressionism from the perspective of abstract painters, in a bit we'll follow up on the real problem of abstraction—but the problem of expressionism is how to draw shapeless lines.

And the same goes for color; the colors don't form shapes. It's difficult to prevent color from suggesting an outline, since in the end there are two ways of forming outlines: through lines, but also through color. Colors form shapes no less than a line does, a closed line. And just as I turned to Pollock for shapeless lines—whose work I really do consider to be an incredible, fantastic breakthrough in painting—I would want to look to Morris Louis for shapeless color, to what's thought of as one side of expressionism, so-called tachism.

But how do you keep a stain [*tache*] from suggesting an outline? In terms of technique, the required methods are very simple. Morris Louis turns to soaking, to picking up pigment with a roller—we can add the roller, right, to our list tools other than paintbrushes. Pollock did a lot more with his syringe, his pastry syringe and Morris Louis's roller—it's interesting because with letting pigment seep onto the canvas you get these amazing halo effects, such there are two way you can look at one of Morris Louis's paintings, one of his tachist paintings—or despite everything, you have one way of looking at it, restoring the color's shape [*contour*], which itself is interesting because it takes effort—you get the impression that its giving off a perception doesn't count as it having shape if it takes effort to pin down the color stain's outline. With Morris Louis, there's something on the canvas counteracting any suggested outline.
Anyway, it gives off a halo effect that's incredibly beautiful and relatively easy to obtain on canvas; bad painters can do it—but not like Morris Louis can. So, what I'm saying is that this definition of expressionism via "shapeless lines" or "shapeless colors" also applies to what we might call the line of chaos. There's a chaos-line and chaos-color; they brushed with chaos, they planted chaos onto the canvas thinking that the more they managed to capture chaos on canvas, the better the result. See, by drawing infinitely near to chaos this one-dimensional line suddenly becomes two-dimensional, or becomes greater-than-one-dimensional, a fractional dimension—this is where they'll focus their energy.

So, if that's how it's defined, the word expressionism is interesting because—not to overdo it—it's all well and good to define expressionism as a diagrammatic position and not by what it depicts, but how does it work? I mean, what exactly is expressionism? It's noteworthy when critics manage to propose a category—at their own risk and peril, again—if we accept well-founded categories, if we believe in the philosophy of art. I think people are fully justified for rejecting the philosophy of art and opting to talk about painting as little as possible—the less we talk about it, the better. And actually, I wonder if it wouldn't be better, but even so, in the absence of such a lofty stance on the matter—if we're going to use categories, they need to be well-founded.

Anyway, the term expressionism was actually coined by Worringer, which is interesting because he coined it in a context where there were a lot of complaints about German museums buying too many French paintings; they bought Cézanne… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:59:53]

… Gothic, took part and called the painters in this movement expressionist—what did he mean by that? If you want to understand the word's origin, we have to consider what Worringer had himself written on Gothic art, in particular. Because he tried to define this northern, so-called Gothic line—given what we've been talking about, the way he defined it ought to interest us. He defined it this way: the Gothic line, or northern line, is an abstract line. He says—yeah, it's strange—it's an abstract, that is, an inorganic line. That alone is intriguing. Why? Because Worringer was no fool: he didn't see abstract as the opposite of figurative. He doesn't even bring that up, it doesn't interest him. For him, the abstract was the opposite of the organic, and indeed, according to Worringer's classification, the so-called classical world is not defined by figurative painting but by organic painting.

The line is an organic line, which doesn't refer back to a portrayed object; it speaks to the faculties of the subject, the subject looking at the painting, i.e., looking at lines used in classical painting, the subject detects the harmony of their faculties within themselves, the organic harmony of their faculties. What do I mean by that? Well, it's a line subject to the principles of regularity, symmetry, enclosure—in other words, the organic line is one that outlines something, the line that traces an outline, and whose harmony resides in the outline it traces. See, that is not a figurative definition, but he thinks concrete lines are organic lines—consequently, they are figurative; the lines represent something primarily because they are themselves organic. For example, they represent the higher organism: the human body.

All right, good. Notice what he's trying to say. Meanwhile, that's not how it is with the Gothic line. It's an abstract line. It's an inorganic line. He goes so far as to say that it's a mechanical line that substitutes the power of repetition for organic symmetry; it substitutes the power of repetition for organic symmetry. Why? Symmetry is rather a repetition which is limited; it's a repetition that's capped off, forming an outline. For example, when boiled down to two terms, it's a repetition where the repeated element counters itself, right and left, such that it closes up and prevents repetition from carrying on.

With the Gothic line, on the other hand, repetition breaks loose—what does it mean for repetition to break loose? He puts it beautifully: it's a mechanical line, but notice that it's a line that makes us aware of the mechanical forces. Once more, he brings up Kant—the Germans owe a lot to Kant—he brings up Kant, raising mechanical relationships to intuition, in order to avoid our misunderstanding what he just said. If you hear "mechanical line," then you'll imagine it's a line that could be drawn by a machine. Not at all. It's a line where the mechanical becomes an object of intuition, right, instead of the organic. Thus, it's an inorganic line, which allows for all the possible forms this line might take: either, says Worringer, it gets endlessly lost in a chaotic upheaval, or it circles back and ends up that way, in upheaval, or it keeps pitting itself against an obstacle and receives force and liberation from this obstacle, i.e., it confronts an obstacle that it only overcomes by changing direction, and it constantly changes direction.

In other words, Worringer, in the "gothic", in my opinion, if you revisit it, there are two books by Worringer translated into French: one through Klincksieck editions, called *Abstraction and Empathy,* and another at Gallimard titled *Gothic Art*.[32] There's a lot that he repeats in both books. But you'll notice that what he calls the Gothic line comes close to defining or reaching the idea of the shapeless line—not in those words, but it's there in his definition of the Gothic line.

Okay, so if that's what abstraction really is, why does that fall under expressionism? Because look, that's abstract painting: it's inorganic, there's a line with no beginning or end, etc., with no shape—that's what abstract painting is. Well, it is abstract, but Worringer goes on to say that this abstract is brimming with life, that is, we aren't dealing with geometrical abstract art—there's nothing organic or concrete, but neither is it a geometrical abstract.

The Goths, or the barbarians—it's barbaric art, Gothic art. The northerners come up with something unusual: shapeless lines, non-geometrical abstraction.

It's abstract in a non-geometrical way, because see, the geometrical abstract would be… would refer to… there is classical art, which was organic; the quintessential example of geometrical abstraction would be Egyptian art. But the Goth, the barbarian, is different! Like the path they themselves lead, the shapeless line they invent has no end—it begins with Scythian art and what actually happens? It's abstract, but it isn't geometrically abstract, i.e., it's an abstract brimming with vitality, Worringer says. It's a beautiful idea—an abstract brimming with vitality, which is enough to set it apart from the geometrically abstract, but beware that "vitality" knocks it back over into the organic. Yet we saw that the shapeless line was opposed to the organic line forming an outline, so Worringer is quick to add—something that runs throughout his understanding—that there's a radical distinction between vital elements and organic elements. The life of the abstract Gothic line is a non-organic life. It's a life beyond the capacities of the organism and the organic; it's a non-organic life. And the violence of non-organic life is that it counters and punctures the classical world of representation, that is, the world of organic life. Organisms crumble under the rift caused by such powerful, inorganic life. So, the abstract Gothic line is a vital line. It's non-geometrical. It's a vital abstraction. See, it's a very particular sort of abstraction. It's life that's been abstracted from organisms rather than essence abstracted from appearances, as is the case with geometry.

So, it gets weird—at the heart of the why the term, "expressionist," was created is that this abstract line, this shapeless line, is fundamentally expressive because it is the vector for non-organic life. Is it a coincidence that it doesn't take much to see Worringer's understanding of the Gothic line in one of Pollock's paintings? Is it a coincidence—I'm not one to turn up my nose at superficial, still, we should use whatever we find—Is it a coincidence that more than one of Pollock's works is specifically titled *Gothic,* which specifically involve this kind of shapeless line, which ultimately produce a sort of stained-glass effect.

Anyway, Gothic… And naturally, American critics then used abstract expressionism to describe Pollock and his influence. The lineage that leads us to define expressionism as the use of shapeless colors or lines which are endowed with a non-organic life, and so we've caught up with the same movement that's sometimes called informalism. There has been a lot of discussion about informal art surrounding Pollock. You can see what makes it informal art—here, at least, I think our diagrammatic approach has the advantage of accounting for why [Pollock's work] might also be seen as informal art. It's because there isn't any form insofar as the line doesn't outline anything but being informal is a consequence rather than a pre-condition; it's informal because the line doesn't outline anything. So, there isn't any form, it's true that there is no form, the line does not delineate a form, it delineates no form. Okay, and yet it is pictorial materialism at its purest; it comes together as if it were molecular. I think he's one of the first painters to really pull it off, managing to bring pictorial matter to a sort of molecular state.

The act of painting doesn't consist in informing anything; it's about inventing painting's molecular matter, and this is what creates the line that's colorless[33] with the points, the points put down, the points of color that Pollock puts down; the line literally runs between things, between points. You can never pin down a point on the line. Rather, the points are distributed over the entire painting such that the shapeless line constantly moves between points and goes back between them again in another way. But the shapeless line is actually one that doesn't designate anything but instead perpetually passes between things. Accordingly, once an artistic expression comes to the fore and reaches self-awareness, you can always look back and say, yeah, of course, but it's always—so we're shaking up categories, but we're shaking them up in a good way—it's been there throughout the history of painting, even if it's more or less secondary: the attempt to have it so that lines no longer determine things but instead have them move between things.

It's well known what Élie Faure said of Velázquez—well known because Godard made such good use of it: Velázquez "no longer painted things, was no longer interested in outlines."[34] Élie Faure had no stomach for expressionist art, but anyway, he painted what happened "between" things, i.e., between one thing and another. For a lot of painters, everything that happens between things is crucial.

So, I'm bringing up Velasquez through this incredible text by Elie Faure but consider a painter like Turner—insofar as there are any lines at all; if there are no lines, there are blots of color—in Turner's work you'd be hard-pressed to find any, there is a sort of coordinated dissolution of things in order to move the lines and blots between things. All against the backdrop of the diagram's chaos, the use of the diagram: stretching chaos until there are no more things, etc., and it's from the chaos itself, by stretching the chaos over the whole canvas, that you extract the secret for a new order, the new order being the course of the shapeless line or the shapeless color-stain.

You might be wondering what makes this a new order. Well, it has a molecular movement; humanity is led to order itself molecularly via a sort of materialism. See, it's sort of tit-for-tat—it's not that they can't, it's that abstract spiritualism doesn't do anything for them. I mean, it *is* a human being doing the painting; an informalist or an expressionist is certainly capable of leading a deeply spiritual life. I mean, I'm not enough of an idiot to claim otherwise, but I do think that its pictorial tendency is a deeply materialist one. Not a materialism external to painting—that's how it can itself be extremely spiritualist—but a materialism surrounding the order born from drawing molecular pathways [*issue du tracé des traces moléculaires*]. It's like a pictorial micro-material, which, of course, justifies the connection drawn between modern physics and informal art—I don't see anything incompatible! It's fine. Based on idea that the abstraction here is a very particular sort of vital abstraction.

And circling back to a very simple point, Worringer said of Gothic art that—you see, it's abstract, but what…What sort of abstract is this that doesn't outline anything? There are coiling lines, snail shells, that either reset or runout in a sort of swirling hole—that's the Gothic line. From one perspective it could equally be understood as a ribbon and as an animal. But a non-organic animal, hence the penchant for monsters in barbaric art, hence the strangely contorted animals—I can't think of other ways to put it—this new mannerism, a uniquely barbarian mannerism, since all I'm trying to say is that it's sort of an attempt to sing the glory of mannerism in painting, these coiling beards that could just as well be abstract ribbons, or folds of cloth—in Gothic art, folds of cloth do an astonishing job of serving as shapeless lines. Only to eventually pulse with vitality, exploding onto the scene, causing us to wonder what it is? Again, is it a ribbon? Is it a spiral? Is it a beard? Really weird, overly convoluted animals? Well, this had already shown up in this kind of barbarian art, but my last question is just this: how are we to characterize expressionism?

Getting back to this business with the eye and the hand, I think you picked up on a problem… and well, it would help us along more quickly, but we'll be done very soon. I'd say yeah, that's exactly what the manual line is, it's exactly that: the hand freed from the eye. Insofar as the hand remains subject to the eye, it forms shapes. The lines are still organic or geometric depending on whether it's the mind's eye or the seeing eye. When the eyes fail, when they are beset with chaos, the hand's power is unleashed, but then the hand is animated by a foreign will that imposes itself on the eye instead of serving it. The eye is hit with a line it can no longer control; the eye can no longer grasp the rule or law whereby it constantly changes direction; the eye doesn't get a moment's rest. It doesn't get a moment's rest—the tragedy of the eye. The eyes might as well stay closed; they're terrorized by the hand and the hand's product, the manual line.

Given the manual character of the expressionist line, is it any wonder that it doesn't require an easel? Is it any wonder that Pollock laid his canvas out on the floor? In other words, that he needed a tactile contact with the floor? And it's not just an affectation. Is it any wonder that by all accounts and on video—since he was one of the first painters to be filmed while working—his work is a frenetic dance? A frenetic dance. The first American critic to have labeled Pollock and his school "Action Painting" was a really great guy—but we'll look at the issue—named Harold Rosenberg.

Rosenberg calls it "Action Painting," and according to him, in a way, the act of painting itself becomes—you can immediately see the stereotypes this can lead to—becomes the real subject of painting, the true object of painting. The expression, action painting, has the advantage of highlighting the manual nature of this form of painting: it no longer uses easels or brushes; it involves pastry syringes and the floor, putting the canvas on the floor, sticks, scrub-brushes, sponges—whatever you like—and so the painter whirls into a frenzy, a tactile frenzy, a manual frenzy above all. The eyes can't keep up, which is why the films of Pollock painting are significant: the eyes really can't follow what he's doing, and the paint thrown—Pollock's famous stream of paint—isn't directed by the eyes but by the hand. The hand has found its expression: lines which the eyes can no longer follow. Okay, in what sense should painting become a transgression against the eyes? It has to liberate modern humanity—you see what that means: we're trying to draw a metaphysics from all this. Modern humanity will fundamentally be a manual one, but we don't even know yet what the hand can do once its freed from the eye. There's a sort of dare I say revolutionary message here—we'll get into it later, so I'll just ask you to hold that thought because abstract painting will take a completely opposite stance.

But what bothers me, and this is where we'll pick up next time, is that American critics, who are very good, not just Fried, who I talked about earlier, but also a wonderful critic who was closely associated with Pollock and even kick-started his career, was crucial, as a critic, in getting Pollock off the ground, named [Clement] Greenberg. He put out a book— unfortunately yet to be translated, but fascinating—on art and culture where he talks a lot about this period of American painting. But Greenberg emphatically defines the abstract expressionism of Pollock, Morris Louis, and so on as the inauguration of a purely optical world.

So, it's annoying, given how important Greenberg is—there's no denying it with all the commentary he's written—for him, abstract expressionism is modern precisely because it manifests a world which is now purely optical. In other words, Pollock would be like the founder of a breakaway movement leading to so-called optical arts. Greenberg is unambiguous as to what he means by a purely optical world, that it's cut off from any tactile reference. Fried takes up the same idea in that excellent artic on three American painters; he makes the same claim, that Pollock and his influence establish and bring about a purely optical world in painting.

Why does it bother me that I have the exact opposite view? My sense is that it's absolutely not an optical world, that it's a manual world—the only thing I would agree with is that it's an innovative undertaking. But personally, I'd describe its innovation in exactly the opposite way, namely, that it's the first time that a manual line is absolutely free of any subordination to visual givens. So, something isn't right. That's where we'll begin next time. I believe that they've simply misunderstood—and that I'm right, obviously… Yes?

A student: [*Inaudible comment*]

Deleuze: You could say that, but I don't know if that would go far enough. Think about it between now and next week, and we'll start there…

Another student: [*Inaudible question*]

What? [*Inaudible question*] Come see me. We'll pick up from there… Come see me for a second… [*End of the session*] [2:26:07]

Gilles Deleuze

Painting and the Question of Concepts

Session 04, 05 May 1981

Transcriptions: Parts 1 & 2, Paula Moore (duration 1:07:16); Part 3, Guy Nicolas (duration 46:45); Part 4, Sandra Tomassi (duration 40 :32) ; time stamp and additional revisions, Charles J. Stivale

Translation by Billy Dean Goehring

Part 1

… We tried to categorize paintings base on the position of what we were calling a "diagram." And so, we said this diagram—*the* diagram—we were looking to flesh out our understanding of diagrams. We said that a diagram could assume several positions. And that perhaps some pictorial categories could be defined as positions of the diagram—to put it in a more complicated way, as diagrammatic positions. And that it was necessary to lay down these pictorial categories wasn't motivated by a concern over figuration, but was actually— maybe, rather, it might have been—based on the position of the diagram. So, we delineated three diagrammatic positions.

The diagram—these were tendencies for the different positions. They were position-tendencies. The diagram can tend to take up the entire painting, spreading over the whole painting. Broadly speaking, this seemed to be the tendency with so-called "expressionism."

Or, in the second diagrammatic position, the diagram is there, but it's kept to a minimum, and it tends to be replaced or "crowded over," dominated by a genuine code. Notice that this gets complicated, but we're playing it loose with our wording—because we haven't said anything yet on what a diagram is, or what a code is. We're just trying to lay out our terms, our categories. And in this second tendency, keeping the diagram to a minimum—the diagram is and continues to be the real seed of the painting—but keeping the diagram to a minimum and the substitution or application of a code: we figured that might be the tendency of "abstraction" in painting.

And then the third diagrammatic position: the diagram neither takes up the entire painting nor is it minimized. It's like a distance voice; you might call it "a subdued voice." It's there. It acts like a diagram, but it doesn't take up the whole painting simply because the diagram fully realizes its effect, namely, it summons something out of the diagram. And this "something" that emerges from the diagram isn't a resemblance or figuration, isn't anything figurative—no more so than with the other diagrams. We can call it a "figure," a non-figurative "figure," that is, one that doesn't resemble anything. A figure emerges from the diagram.

But what I examined last time—and we were nearly there, I almost finished—was the first tendency or the first position, the expressionist position. And I said, see—right away, we're introducing an idea we'll also have to try and develop—it's as if the diagram were developed amidst overwhelming interference. Interference. Why this sudden interest in the concept of interference? Because our three diagrammatic positions are: the diagram that stretches out until it becomes genuine interference; second, the diagram that's crowded over or determined by a code; third, the diagram that works as a diagram.

Well, but if we're going to get to a logic of diagrams, we still have a lot left to do. So, in order to wrap up the first position: do you remember what it consisted in? What is this diagram that eats up the whole painting? Take your pick: either lines, line strokes [*le trait ligne*], or blotches of color—the two main pictorial elements that don't trace contours. Either lines with no contour or blotches with no contour. Expressionism necessarily achieves a level of abstraction far beyond that of so-called "abstract" painting.

Because obviously all painting is abstract. But where things get interesting is when we look at how it's defined in any given movement, the definition of abstraction corresponding to each movement. It's obvious that, for an expressionist, abstract painters—again, I'm not about to say that one is better than the other; I'm just trying to figure out our categories. It's obvious that, for an expressionist, so-called "abstract" painting doesn't suffer from being too abstract. It suffers from not being abstract enough. How so? Because as abstract as they might be, their lines still trace a contour. Their lines are still outlines; in abstract painting you can easily make out circles, half-circles, triangles, etc. And in the most abstract Kandinsky, you can still make out triangles, i.e., a particular contour. Maybe not always, in Kandinsky's case. But perhaps he's not just an abstract painter. And in a Mondrian, you'll find his famous squares, etc. These are all contour lines.

So, in a way, expressionists could say, "We are the true abstract painters." How so? Because for them, their problem—and indeed, it's a problem in painting that… -- I believe they were the first to pose in a conscious and deliberate way. That's my way of protecting myself against the obvious objection that it had already existed in painting. Painting has actually always used and drawn lines with no contour. But we need to grasp what's significant about—what is a Pollock line? Well, all we can say about it is that it's a line that constantly changes direction and doesn't follow a contour. But what's important about… or Morris Louis's stain painting, these are all painters specifically known as "abstract expressionists". Well, they have no contours. These stains[35] or lines have no contours, that is, they delineate neither an interior nor an exterior, are neither concave nor convex. They don't go from one spot to the other, even virtually, but move between spots, the spots of paint Pollock throws down—it's a snaking, breaking, convulsing line that constantly changes direction at every turn.

I was saying, think about what's happening with how this line is laid out. It's an odd sort of line because, ultimately, it's a line that's more than one-dimensional. In other words, it's a line that's almost commensurate to a plane. Consequently, this leads the plane itself to stretch and become commensurate to volume. In other words, it's a line whose dimension could only be mathematically expressed as a fraction, between one and two. Whereas ordinary lines, which outline contours, are one-dimensional. Flat figures are two-dimensional. Volume is three-dimensional. Alright, it's clear that abstract expressionism addressed the problem of depth in a totally new way. If you end up with fractional measurements, you end up with characteristically intermediate measurements between one and two, that is, between line and surface, and consequently between surface and volume. Ultimately the line takes up the entire painting, hence abstract expressionism is famously known as "all over" painting, i.e., from one end to the other, from one edge of the canvas to the other. Well, in this regard there *is* something left out. It is sort of a probabilistic approach to painting that refuses to privilege any particular position. Every part of the painting is equally weighted, whereas with classical approaches to painting there was always the center, the edges, and so on.

Well, as I was saying, see, I think it's obvious that, when it comes to the problem that's plaguing us, uh… which we're still discussing: trying to figure out—since there are all kinds of things at stake in the concept of the diagram—trying to figure out the relationships between the eye and the hand in painting. I said, right, we have to assess the relationships between the eye and the hand in painting in keeping with our diagrammatic positions. At the very least, it's worthwhile because, as I said, writings on the eye and the hand don't seem to… what critics have written doesn't appear to have fully accounted for the problem, for the tension there is in painting, at any rate, between the eye and the hand—the fact that painting is a certain resolution of this tension and requires the tension between the eye and the hand. All right. And you'll recall that I really leaned into the fact that diagrams in painting are fundamentally manual. They're arrangements of manual strokes [*traits*][36] and blotches. So maybe… obviously it produces something visual, but that's not the point. When the diagram starts to take over, when it seizes and charges the entirety of the painting, the prevailing order is clearly a manual one.

And I think obviously so, when it comes to abstract expressionism. This more-than-one-dimensional line—a line that doesn't outline a contour, with neither inside nor outside, which is neither concave nor convex—this line is a manual line. It's a line the eye literally[37] has trouble following. It's a line that the hand can trace only to the extent that it bucks its subordination to the eye. It's a line expressing the hand's rebellion against the eye. And how does this kind of conversion from eye to hand figure into abstract expressionism? The triumph of manual lines and manual blotches. This is reflected in the fact that—not to say that this is always the case—in how abstract expressionists have abandoned the easel. There are many ways to abandon the easel. After all, the canvas is never reducible to its place on the easel.

You see why I keep focusing on position or placement. Even when a painter paints with an easel exclusively, it's obvious that the canvas is a lot better when it's off the easel. But concretely, for so-called "abstract" expressionism—for Pollock, for Morris Louis, and so on, for [Kenneth] Noland—for all these painters: what is it that's technically essential? Well, it's the necessity that drives them… Pollock especially… to abandon the easel in order to paint on the ground [*sol*], to paint on the ground with an un-stretched canvas. Now, I think that's really important. So, when American critics baptize this whole movement as "action painting," what exactly do they mean? Well, they're referring to what they consider to be a kind of frenetic action, where the painter flings paint, etc.…using sticks, basting syringes, etc.… while walking around the canvas at their feet.

What's the significance of having "the canvas, un-stretched, on the ground" instead of "the canvas on an easel"? It amounts to a fundamental conversion. It means converting the horizon into the ground [*sol*]. It means passing from an optical horizon to the ground… to the ground under one's feet. Well, feet… In this case, hands and feet are the same. The manual line actually does a good job of expressing this kind of… or it's expressed by this kind of conversion of the horizon into the ground [*sol*]. The horizon is fundamentally optical. The ground is fundamentally tactile. Anyway, I said—this is where we left off—sure, but nevertheless, there's one hiccup: American critics—especially those writing on Pollock and his followers… American critics are excellent, and I brought up two in particular: [Clement] Greenberg and [Michael] Fried. And they've written really, very beautiful pieces on this movement, on so-called "abstract expressionism." But how do they go about defining it? They say, "It's wonderful, and it's modern." And what makes it modern? It's modern because it involves developing a pure optical space.

I mean, what bothers me… it bothers me that, if I'm being honest, I have exactly the opposite impression. I mean, I agree that Pollock is great; he's really something else. Because for the first time, a purely manual line is freed from any visual subordination. For the first time, the hand is completely liberated from any visual directive. And here these critics are saying the exact opposite. So, it isn't possible. So that presents us with one last problem.

Georges Comtesse: Perhaps that's why American critics talk about a pure optical space when it comes to Pollock. Perhaps if you can't see that there's no contradiction between the manual line and pure space, it might be because of your concept of the pictorial diagram. Since you define the pictorial diagram as a hand detached from the eye, one the eye can't keep up with, a rebellious hand. Okay, but in painting, in painting's process of experimentation, the hand's diagrammatic detachment from the eye, freer than the hand of the painter… there might be something else… you aren't saying: the hand's detachment from the eye… it's specifically an optical machine of detachment that has nothing to do with the eye, the optical machine of the gaze, the painter's gaze, which is neither the eye of perception, the sensitive eye, nor is it any possible eye whatsoever. There's a gaze machine that… in the detachment, the painter… the painter's hand is certainly still framed by this machine that's irreducible to the eye, and which would certainly shift your concept of the pictorial diagram. The painter, meanwhile, … I don't that the painter turns into this gaze machine while painting. But there's like a sort of constant shifting when it comes to this gaze machine, which itself is primarily geared toward the task at hand.

Deleuze: All right! That's one response. That's our first possible response.

Anne Querrien: [*Some inaudible words*] … Everything that you are saying is perfectly correct from the painter's point of view, the action of [*indistinct words*] … the action of tracing, but there is a kind of [*indistinct word*]… which occurs from the point of view of the passive act of looking at painting which you don't mention at all. You talk about the act of painting. And throughout the entire Kantian era, and I would say, from everything we're taught in school tells us to look at painting by putting ourselves in the painter's shoes. Thus, we had to have a tactile approach in how we view painting, to see how the layers were put down, etc., and furthermore, we were taught to paint in order to appreciate aesthetically others' paintings, following Kant's model of universal humanity [*indistinct words*] … but now there is a gap separating the positions exactly like in mathematical spaces [*indistinct words*] …, where the painter and the viewer are no longer in the same position when it comes to… and what's more, canvases painted on the ground [*sol*], right, are flipped around; they aren't displayed on the ground. They're displayed in an optical space. They're viewed vertically… [*indistinct words*] … [*Interruption of the recording*] [20:29]

Deleuze: Excellent! Okay, then, that's perfect. That's a second one… That's good because I have a third response. But they don't cancel each other out—to the contrary, we have to account for… there are that many fewer problems. What I'm wondering is: why do Greenberg, Fried, etc. … call space—in Pollock, in Morris Louis—why do they call it a "purely optical space"? We have to follow them carefully. They did so for a very specific reason. The reason is the following: such space is opposed to so-called "classical" pictorial space. So-called "classical" pictorial space is classically defined as a tactile-optical space. In other words, space in classical paintings is—as we'll see later, we'll come back to this point—is a tactile-optical space. Which means what? That it's a tactile space with tactile referents on the canvas. What are these tactile referents? One example of a tactile referent: the contour. Why? Things have contours, but they have a tactile contour just as they have a visual contour. Yes and no. There is a tactile referent whenever the contour remains self-identical, no matter the degree of luminosity. You have so many remarkable paintings that develop a tactile space, and you can tell when there's a tactile referent when, for example, you see a contour that's still, say, intact… in*tact*—the reference is tactile—intact, for example… under a bright light or in shadow. Whether perspective doesn't also involve tactile referents—I think it's obvious that perspective does involve tactile referents. So, it's clear what we mean by visual space with tactile referents, and such a space would be "tactile-optical."

That being said, it's clear that the line without contour breaks with any tactile reference. There is no more form; there is no more tactile form. The tactile-optical form is thus decomposed into a line without contour. So, I think that when American critics define abstract expressionist space as an optical space, they mean that it's a space which has cast aside all of its tactile referents. Now, stay with me; let's take this literally. A space whose tactile referents have been cast aside. Okay. Does that settle the matter? Is this what a purely optical space is, then?

Despite both these analyses just now, you can see why I need—why I'm emphasizing this additional, uh… or I'm adding it…It's funny, because I almost feel like it's the other way around. There *is* a pictorial direction or movement that achieves a purely optical space, but it isn't expressionism. It's abstract painting. In abstract painting, you get something that could actually be called a pure optical space. But not at all in expressionism. Why not? It's true that all tactile referents are eliminated. But why is that? It's not because space has become optical but because, once again, because the hand has managed to become independent from the eye. Because now it's the hand that imposes itself on the eye. Right. It's the hand that imposes itself on the eye like a foreign power that, again, the eye struggles to follow.

Consequently, tactile referents, which express the hand's dependence on the eye, are effectively suppressed. Not because it's a pure optical space, but because the hand is no longer subordinate to the eye and breaks free. So, it's because it's a pure manual space that tactile referents—which express the hand's subordination to the eye—are driven out, cast out from the canvas. But again, it was enough for me that there weren't any contradictions.

Anne Querrien: [*Inaudible comment*]

Deleuze: Of course, of course… Yes, but then, uh… Okay… you say it's… suddenly it becomes purely optical, but that's a different question. It becomes purely optical from the viewer's perspective. Sure, but at that point… Personally, at any rate, that's an issue I can't get into yet, because… we'd have to figure out what optics, what sort of optics come from the hand, are produced by a purely manual gesture.

Anne Querrien: No… it's the idea that there's no longer any communication anywhere, really, that there are no commands to place oneself in the painter's position to look at painting, well, that seems really important! There's a liberation of the eye [*indistinct words*] … from the position of painting as well [*indistinct words*] … whereas in all the education we've received at school, we're told that you can only appreciate painting if you yourself create some like [*indistinct words*] a kind of accompaniment.

Deleuze: For the viewer themselves, that doesn't change the fact that this optical conquest is still a conquest. Because the violence done to the eye remains. Thus, there is kind of a need for the eye to learn to accept this violence done against it.

Anne Querrien: [*Inaudible comments*] … there's a kind of Hegelian dialectic… [*Inaudible comments*] … positive or negative, but with painting you have an active process of painting and a passive process of viewing… [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze [*laughing*]: This line is not a calm line.

Another student: I think we have to approach it in terms of contemporary physics. Because there's a transformation in optics that makes… [*Inaudible comments*] … it becomes manual or something. I don't know.

Deleuze: She's saying, for those who can't hear—she's saying we'd have to account for a type of physics with which, in fact, some so-called "informal" expressionists align themselves, and which accounts for—for example, the whole physics of signals—which accounts, oddly enough, for some novel relationships between the optical and the manual. Yeah, okay, then.

Comtesse: Perhaps we shouldn't forget that, in the major periods—Pollock's first major periods—when compared, for example, comparing Jackson Pollock with Robert Motherwell, that all their problems, it's not just the paintings or the new painting techniques. What was important was the pictorial line, pictorial creation, and this is exactly how they pose the question: as they related to the unconscious. It's a crucial problem for Pollock and in, for instance, in Motherwell's writings on Pollock. And the whole issue with Pollock over his botched interpretation of [Carl] Jung, and so on… painting was a way of revealing the unconscious. So that poses the problem of the relationship between the pictorial diagram and the unconscious, since they themselves keep posing it in their own artistic processes, the problem of this relationship, using just their lines.

Deleuze: Yes, Comtesse… that's not entirely uniquely… certainly, that's an apt description of diagrams, but it isn't unique to expressionism because some will say, "the diagram, or its equivalent, is an instance of randomness." Others will say, "it's an instance of the involuntary." Others will say, "it's an instance of the unconscious." Ultimately, all can agree that the diagram, the kind we first loosely defined as a chaos-seed, is sort of the unconscious of painting—yes, of the painter. See, that has so many ramifications, it's perfect.

Moving onto the second diagrammatic position. This time it isn't the extended diagram, what [Paul] Klee calls "the grey point that takes up the whole painting." That's not it. Instead, the diagram is only… it's totally constricted, as if—it's so complicated—the painter wanted to somehow suppress everything obscure about the diagram. Anything that's, say, unconscious, involuntary, etc., etc. What about this tendency to reduce the diagram? My hypothesis—this will certainly get us tangled up and get us off track. These painters, for us, the viewers… you get a strange feeling, the feeling that once again we've reached painting's boundary limit—but all painting is at the limit of painting—we've reached the boundary limit of painting because now we feel like we're dealing with a sort of code we don't know how to decipher. And what makes this form of painting verge on code? Once again, this is off the cuff. My initial thought: these painters are painters. They wouldn't be painters if they applied a code or painted based on a code. That's not what I mean. But it might be a fine line.

When a painting comes down to applying a code, what do you say? "Well, any computer could do that, obviously." Any computer can turn out paintings using code; that's easy. Anyway, that sort of nonsense is not what I have in mind with abstract painters. What I mean is that it's as though we're shown what was to serve as code in painting, as a uniquely pictorial code. So, we have to—I'm trying to get across how… To quote a 19th century painter who, incidentally, isn't an abstract painter, strictly speaking, but I don't think he's far off. I'll read the quote: "Synthesis consists of making all perceived shapes conform to the small number of shapes that we are capable of imagining. To the small number of shapes, we are capable of imagining: straight lines, a few angles, arcs of circles and ellipses."[38] Isn't that a sort of code—ultimately, a geometrical code? A geometrical code for which geometry is all that's required. Geometry has a code. So, again, it's not about applying geometric shapes.

Kandinsky clearly distinguishes between so-called abstract shapes and geometric shapes. He says—alright, this is what Kandinsky calls an abstract shape: "It's a shape representing nothing other than itself." All right. Then abstract shapes and geometric shapes appear to be the same thing. I mean, the triangles Kandinsky paints and triangles delineated geometrically both seem to qualify as "shapes that only represent themselves," as opposed to concrete shapes [*figures*].[39] And he goes on: but [the abstract shape] "is a shape that's internalized its own tension." Tension is the movement that characterizes it. It has internalized its own tension. That's what geometric shapes do not do. You see why an abstract painter—taking things one step at a time—why an abstract painter can say, "It's abstract even though the line forms a contour, even though it has a contour."

The problem is very different from that of expressionism: there is a contour, and yet the contour no longer determines a concrete figure; the contour only determines a tension. The contour no longer determines an object; the contour only determines a tension. For Kandinsky, that's the pictorial definition of abstraction. And the idea of tension will be crucial throughout everything Kandinsky says about painting. Okay. What do we take away from this? What do we make of this tension? In Kandinsky's writings, you constantly run into passages that allude to the invention of a code. What do I mean? In Kandinsky's best-known writings, for example, he says—after a long inquiry, after extensive commentary—this is just the conclusion, so it'll seem a little arbitrary—he says: "Vertical, white, active. Horizontal, black, passive or inert. Acute angle, yellow, building tension. Obtuse angle, blue, weakness."

That's an excerpt. There are long lists in Kandinsky's work. You get the sense that it's not just a table of categories. These are elements we're talking about. Synthesis consists of making all perceived shapes conform to a small number of set forms.[40] What small number of forms? I'll try to clarify this idea of a pictorial code.

You'll notice that in Kandinsky's case, it must be said that there isn't one code. Nearly every abstract painter invents a code. Just like in language [*langage*], where there are all sorts of possible spoken versions [*toutes sortes de langue*s], there are all sorts of codes in a virtual pictorial code, to the point that perhaps every abstract painter is the inventor of a code. So, how would we define this code? What would a code "immanent" to painting be? One that doesn't exist in advance, waiting to be invented by one painter or another? I'll use Kandinsky's terms. See, he always has three criteria: vertical lines, horizontal lines, obtuse angles, right angles, etc., etc. And then he'll use that to form squares, rectangles, circles, half-circles. So, there is *line* or *form*: the first category.

The second category: an *active, passive* dynamic. We could add to that. We could imagine a code with more than two values. There wouldn't just be active and passive. There could be active, passive, baseline. I know of some painters who describe three rhythms, three fundamental rhythms: Active rhythm, which tends to grow. Passive rhythm, which tends to diminish. Baseline, constant rhythm. And it works on canvas: you have elements on a baseline, you have elements on a falling level, you have elements on a rising level.

So, all I'll say is: the first category refers to lines or figures. A second category of dynamics, referring to the dynamic, referring to activity/passivity. And you have a third category with Kandinsky, which he never loses sight of, referring to a kind of affective disposition, sort of a category of affect. And then a category referring to color. For example: vertical, white, activity, joy.

What does that mean? Just what is a code? It seems like one of the criteria for a code is, for one thing, whether you can identify meaningful units that are discontinuous— discrete, as it were. A finite number of "discrete meaningful units," which can be very large—it could be large or small, but it's always a finite group of discrete meaningful units. I'm putting it in abstract terms for now. And the second condition is that these meaningful units ought to bear out—each one ought to bear out a number of binary relations. Actually, it isn't just for the sake of convenience that codes are binary. There's something crucial about binarity and code that binds them together. What do I mean by that?

I'll take a familiar example, that of language. How might there be a code in language [*langage*]? Or how might "language" involve a code? Linguists have been telling us for a long time—first of all, that language breaks down into so-called "meaningful" units known as, for instance, "morphemes." [*Pause*] But these meaningful units can be broken down into smaller elements. These "morphemes," these meaningful units, are broken down into smaller elements called "phonemes." And phonemes do not exist outside of binary relationships. Let's say the meaningful unit is "vent."[41] You mishear it. These are well-known, you know, these ubiquitous examples in phonology. Then I clarify: "I said *vent,* not 'dent.'" A relation between V/D. It's a binary relationship, a phonemic relationship. Not "bent"—a relation between V/B. Not "meant"—V/M. Etc., etc. These binary relationships are features [*traits*], what are called "distinctive features [*traits distinctifs*]" in linguistics. Such that phonemes strictly depend on the set of their binary relationships to other phonemes. Anyway! I said there's a linguistic code because there are meaningful units which have the possibility of being broken down into elements caught up in binary relationships.

What have I just described? And this might help us later on, so I'd like to keep our thumb on it as we move along. It's a detour I can't avoid. In a way, what I've just described is the concept of articulation. Let's back up. There is—as [André] Martinet tells us, there's even a double articulation. [*Pause*] Language is articulated. Meaning what? Language is articulated—that doesn't just mean that there are glottal movements that articulate language. It's not solely a question of articulatory physical movements. Language is actualized via articulatory physical movements because it is in itself articulated. And what does it mean to be articulated? It means being composed of discrete units [*Pause*] which themselves refer to elements tied up in binary relationships. That seems to me like the best way to define code. But how does that help me? What does that do for me?

I could elaborate later on, but for now I'll just give you my conclusion. That is, we tend to associate code with articulation. Are they interchangeable? Beats me—that's not what interests me. In any case, I can say that there is some overlap between the two concepts, code and articulation. There is no inarticulate code. One last example. The idea of code has two basic components: (1) discrete units—a finite number of discrete units—and (2) these discrete units are selected according to a series of binary choices.

Why bring up the idea of "choice"? In order to account for the relationship between units and elements, between meaningful units and elements caught up in binary relations. To take a common example from computer science: how do you select "six" out of eight given numbers?[42] You select six based on three binary choices. Three successive binary choices. You take your set: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight—ah, this is rough, it's annoying because today's when I have to get pretty abstract. So, there's: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. The first binary choice: you divide your set in half. You select the right half, greater than four. You take that set, or subset—four, five, six, seven, eight—and divide it in half. You select the part that includes six. That gives you a subset with two terms.

The third binary choice: you select six. You'll select the half that includes six. You'll get a sub-set with two terms. The third binary choice: you select six. So, it's always possible to reduce a code-based decision to a sequence of binary choices. I don't need any more, I won't go any farther. Code = articulation. Articulation = units determined by a series of binary choices. A unit determinable by a series of binary choices. So, what do I think is crucial about that? I'll bring it back to painting—more specifically, to my hypothesis that abstract painting is the elaboration of a code to which the diagram itself is subjected. In the case of abstract painting, that actually works like this: you have a certain number of discrete units. That doesn't mean that it's easy to paint or anything. But it's painting by code. It's the invention of a properly pictorial code that only exists in painting, and that only exists insofar as it is invented.

And then painting would mean inventing a code, right, inventing a uniquely optical code. The idea of an optical code seems to lie deep at the heart of abstract painting. And according to abstract painters, that would be the modern understanding of painting. You're presented with an internal, optical code. I briefly mentioned Kandinsky's writings—how does it show up there? Meaningful units are definitely there. "White, active, vertical," for example, is a meaningful unit. These meaningful units cannot be broken down into smaller units, but they can easily be broken down into elements subject to binary choices. What sort of binary choice? They're choices about figure, choices about color, choices about affective disposition—active/passive.

You have a binary choice. You might say, "That doesn't work for color." Yes, with color there is a series of binary choices. Exactly like my computing example. And the entire color wheel itself is a kind of binarization of color relationships. The complementary relationships between colors, etc., intermediate colors, etc.—everything about the color wheel and its opposing relationships gives you a system of binary choices between colors. And that's why I say that literally, for Kandinsky, there are two clear pictorial levels of articulation. On the one hand, meaningful units bundling a whole series of binary choices. Yet what do we call these binary choices that allow us to establish meaningful units? You know what they go by? They're called "digits."

And what's going on with this word, "digit"? Binary-digit. What a great word. What is the "digit," or finger? What role does the finger play here? It's reduced to… a finger pressing a keyboard. The finger as a runaway simplification of the hand. It's funny, the finger is what remains once humanity loses its hands. A finger pressing keys. What's this about? It's a handless humanity. The digit is the manual state of handless humanity.

What do I mean by that? I have in mind a passage from [André] Leroi-Gourhan. Leroi-Gourhan talks about future humans, and he says it's a form of humanity that lies prone. It doesn't need to move.[43] All right. It's kind of science fiction. Humanity is more and more infantilized, and then it loses its hands. But humans still have one finger left to type with. In our future evolution, we won't have hands anymore, right? We'd only have one hand, and we'd press stuff like this. [*Laughter*]

Which leads me to make one adjustment. With the "problems surrounding the eye/hand relationship" I brought up before, things get complicated because the hand alone can take so many forms… I could list out categories of hand. To begin—it's pure conjecture at this point, but we’ll see it bear out later on -- for starters, I’d make a distinction between the manual, the tactile, and the digital.

I’d say that tactile—allow me to offer a few suitable definitions; obviously, they’re standard, they’re standard definitions. That way, there won’t be any complaints. “Tactile” is what I’d call the hand subordinated to the eye. When the hand follows the eye’s commands, then the hand becomes tactile.

When the hand shakes off its subordination to the eye. When it imposes itself on the eye, when it does violence to the eye, when it strikes back against the eye—that’s what I’d call “properly manual.” And the digital, on the other hand, is the hand’s absolute subordination to the eye. It’s not even that the hand’s tactile qualities are enlisted in the eye’s service. The hand has dissolved; only a finger remains, for picking between visual binaries. The hand is reduced to a finger pressing on a keyboard. In other words, it’s the computerized hand. It’s the handless finger. In a way, isn’t that the “Ideal”? But in a very qualified sort of way: the ideal of abstract painting as a pure optical space. A pure optical space such that the hand is undetectable.

What does that mean, the hand is undetectable? Well, the hand is undetectable. It’s funny because you run into this expression everywhere in painting. Painters say to each other: “What a beautiful painting—you can’t detect their hand.” In other words, not being able to detect the hand seems to be a flaw. Is it possible for the hand to be undetectable? Isn’t abstract painting the painting of a handless humanity? What would that mean? Clearly not—it’s not that. What makes us certain that it isn’t?

When it comes to distinguishing a fake Mondrian from a real Mondrian, what do they do? There’s a famous passage from a critic on this.[44] What do they distinguish, what do you look for to tell if it’s fake or not? Critics say: It’s not very hard, ultimately, with a little practice, if you get the square up close: you’re told that this is a Mondrian, you look at where the square’s two sides overlap, and you see what’s going on with the painting’s layers, with the overlap. You’ll likely notice that it’s a little… there’s a good chance you’ll notice, especially if the square is colored, if the layers of color overlap. Then you might be able to tell whether or not it’s a forgery. Which means you can detect the hand. But it’s worse in Mondrian. But with Mondrian it’s worse—worse or, uh, better, depending how you look at it—than Kandinsky. Because Mondrian has a sort of fantasy—Mondrian has some theoretical writings—of boiling everything down to two binary units. Now, it’s a kind of code that exaggerates the horizontal and vertical. On multiple occasions Mondrian claims, with the utmost austerity, in all his spiritual asceticism, to reach the point where everything is depicted via horizontal or vertical lines. Nothing else is required.

What does he mean when he says nothing else is required? See, from the perspective of code, that’s code’s ideal. Because as I was saying, a code—normally, a code is a finite number of meaningful units, i.e., more than two, that are determined following a series of binary choices. The supreme ideal for code is for it to only have two meaningful units and therefore only one binary choice. Then you’d have a code of code. The code of code is when instead of a set number of meaningful units determinable by a series of binary choices, you only have one binary choice between two meaningful units.

Yet that's never what Kandinsky tried to do. But Mondrian goes a long way with the horizontal / vertical, with this high level of pictorial asceticism: "With a horizontal line and a vertical line, I can give you the world," "the world in its abstraction." It's all there. Just to give you a sense—you see it already—a sense that, ultimately, aesthetic categories are well-founded, but everything's mixing together. Because among the finest writings on Mondrian are those by Michel Butor.[45] There's something Butor wonderfully demonstrated: that Mondrian's squares, for example, very often do not have the same thickness in length or breadth. That's obvious, actually. He didn't need much to demonstrate that.

However, this difference in thickness has a very peculiar optical effect: it's that the now crucial and even increasingly crucial intersection—between the thinnest length and the thickest breadth, for example—now this intersection will determine a virtual line. There's something very odd—just as one talks of a virtual line in music, here we have a virtual line in painting. The fact that both sides of the square don't have the same thickness makes the eye, the eye of the viewer, follow a diagonal line that Mondrian doesn't need to draw himself.

This virtual line, this virtual diagonal—what can I say about it? I might call it an abstract version of a line with no contour since it isn't traced by the painter. Likewise, what makes Kandinsky so complicated is that he has some wonderful paintings where you get these elements, these meaningful units. But they are strangely traversed by lines that, in Kandinsky, have a very simple source, a really gothic source, by lines—nomadic lines, really—lines with no contour. By lines that pass between figures, that pass between points, that have neither beginning nor end, and that are characteristically "expressionist" lines, and that nevertheless do not manage to disrupt the painting's harmony or rhythm. That tells you that these categories, I think—it's not because things overlap that the categories aren't well formed.

All that I'm trying to say is that, when it comes to abstract painting, the one who went the furthest, I think, is the painter I told you about, who I think is a tremendously great abstract painter: [Auguste] Herbin. And Herbin goes a long way. He just invents a code. He doesn't borrow a code from nearby. What do I mean when I say, "he invents a code"? He does something he calls… he calls his painting a "plastic alphabet." A plastic alphabet—and it takes four forms, four basic forms. For him, there are four meaningful units: the triangle, the sphere, the hemisphere, the quadrangle (the rectangle and the square). He has four forms. He has four forms for units, and he puts them through binary relationships, a bit like Kandinsky: this time with regard to color, with regard to affective disposition, and then he adds—is this just embellishment, or is something more profound happening here?—He adds letters of the alphabet, such that he'll often base his paintings on them, or vice versa, he'll determine a painting's title according to the letters determined by his pictorial units. For example, he titles a painting *Nu*. And you have to break down *Nu* into *N – U*. Then see what plastic form corresponds to *N*, what plastic form corresponds to *U*, what color, etc., etc. You know, a bit like how Bach played with the word "Bach" in music. So, he takes the idea of a "plastic alphabet" pretty far.

What's the upshot of all this? In fact, it turns out masterpieces. He's a great colorist. Is that just tacked on? No. I have a hard time imagining how one could "look" at abstract painting without "looking" at it not as applying a preexisting code but as the invention of an optical code. Again, this optical code being based on double articulation. First, meaningful units articulated pictorially. Second, the articulated elementary binary choices that determine these units. So, we get a definition of a sort of "pure coded optical space," where the hand ultimately tends—but it's only a tension—where the hand tends to give way to the finger, to a digital space.

Anyway, as I was saying, there's a third option. How does it go? See, my two diagrammatic positions are opposed to each other, point-for-point… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:07:13]

Part 2

… [-dage] and code,[46] hence the response of these painters, who appear to take the third route, i.e., one that's sort of moderate, middle-of-the-road—but only ostensibly moderate and middle-of-the-road… only nominally.

Just who are these painters? To borrow a term… terms, for example, I'm borrowing terminology from [Jean-François] Lyotard that I think are very fitting and very… when Lyotard contrasts the "figurative" with what he calls the "figural," it's not figurative painting because in fact there is no figurative painting—again, it's a "figural" painting.[47] That is, I'm taking diagram in the full sense, with the exception that…that is, in particular, I don't intend for it to be a code, and at the same time, I'm preventing it from overwhelming the painting, from muddling the painting. In other words, I'm using the diagram in order to produce the pure "figural" or figure.

Anyway, see, I'm going to get completely new hand/eye relationships. It will no longer be the hand opposed to the eye or imposing itself on the eye as with expressionism, broadly speaking. It will no longer be the eye reducing the hand to the point that only a finger remains. What will it be? A hand/eye tension such that the manual diagram makes… what emerges? There's only one answer since it's not a figurative figure.

It's that it gives the eye a new function, that the hand forces the eye to take on a new function, i.e., a real third eye. The hand causes a third eye to emerge, right—which tells you that this isn't a moderate path. It's only moderate compared to the other two, meaning that it doesn't stretch the diagram over the entire painting, nor does it submit the diagram to a specifically pictorial code. Otherwise, it comes with many risks, including the double risk of verging into the abstract or into expressionism instead of forging its own path. But that would be a third path, the pure diagram's position, the purely diagrammatic position.

So, at the point we've reached, well, today we have to… even though it would take up a lot of our time today, a long detour, I'd like to get to the point where we can propose—everyone is entitled to one—a definition of painting. There are so many possible definitions, so everyone can give their own… we could play that game, sure, at this point, we have to kind of forget painting. I told you that my goal was twofold: my goal was to talk about painting, but I also wanted to sketch out a theory of the diagram. Well then, at the point we've encountered, it's fine, now we have to try to manage with: well, what is a diagram? And what is the difference between a diagram and a code? What's that about? The matter of diagram and code? And for me, that's what I'd like to manage to derive from this a sort of definition of painting.

If it's true that painting *is* diagram, what is the relationship between a diagram and a code? By no means am I trying to say… it's certainly a complicated relationship, since painting absolutely includes the endeavor to invent optical codes that seemed characteristic of abstract painting, right, as a diagram… so we're back to square one, very well, let's start over. As a diagram, we're back in a purely logical element now, it's this element of pure logic that will get us back into painting.[48]

I'm saying that the couple as a diagram, there is another couple after all, we have to use everything. We looked at the digital—digital, a code is digital in the sense I worked out before: what we call "digital" is the binary choice behind the unit. A code is digital; you'll grant me that much. And typically, in every theory of information and even linguistics, what is the opposite of digital? Analog. Analog and digital—synthesizers today, for example, are either analog synthesizers or digital synthesizers. The processes of retransmitting signals are either analog processes or digital processes. Well, it's still technological, but it isn't anything complicated. It's a distinction today regarding code/diagram—I've got my two pairs: code/diagram, digital/analog. What does this have to do with painting? Why do I sound like I'm talking about something else if I'm not talking about something else?

Is painting a language [*langage*], or is it not a language? Personally, I find this question interesting. What I'd also ask is: what is an analogical language? Not so easy to define an analogical language—is there an analogical language? Is painting an analogical language? Is painting *the* analogical language *par excellence*? What else could it be? Cinema? Is cinema an analogical language? We ought to consider the ideal setting: when film was silent. Or when film had sound but no talking—is that an analogical language? After all, everyone in silent film thought they had invented what they themselves constantly referred to as a "universal language."

Silent film as a "universal language"—hence their frustration when… When talkies came onto the scene, all of cinema's pretensions as a universal language were called into question. Okay, and is there a connection between painting and silent film? Maybe… maybe there is, but never where you think. We all know that film is at its worst when a director thinks they can make a scene or a shot as beautiful as a painting—it's a disaster—everyone cracks up, everyone falls asleep, or else it only works when it's funny, when it's [Luis] Buñuel. But with Italian cinema, for example, you get scenes that make you think, "Oh jeez, what a disaster!" right out of—you think that, but it's a straight up Raphael. It doesn't get any cheesier in cinema than that. So, if film and painting have anything to do with each other, it's not in that regard.

All right, analogical language—what is it? All I can say is that we already know a bit about what makes a code "digital." And what the expression, "digital code," means is that code is the basis for a digital language. Like Americans always say: language is digital. What does it mean that language is digital—it means, see, it doesn't mean that it's done with fingers like a sign language for the deaf; it means something very specific: "language is constituted by meaningful units determinable through a sequence of binary choices." That—that's what it means to say that language is digital. Well, are there analogical languages? And if so, how should we understand analog in that case? … What time is it? What's that?

Claire Parnet: It's 12.

Deleuze: Do the two ever mix? If there are analogical languages, how do we define them? Would painting be an example? Would painting be the analogical language *par excellence*? Why not pantomime? Why not all of the visual arts? How would painting stand out from the rest? On the other hand, will it suffice to draw a crude distinction between digital code and analog language—what would that be?

Well, there's no avoiding it, let's see our hypothesis through to the end. It's the diagram that would be analogical: the analog diagram and the digital code. But would this be a simple opposition, or would there be some code grafted onto analogical language, onto analog diagrams? Here we have a whole series of confusing problems surrounding the diagram's logic. So, I'll try to be brief because I want to get back to painting, but I'm starting with a initial approximation. Digital code would imply "convention"; analog diagrams or analogical language would be a language of "similarity." So, my two concepts would be distinguished in the following way: *similarity* for analogy, or for the diagram; *convention* for digital code.

See, that doesn't take us very far—why I say that is because the notion of the diagram and its extension and its eruption into logic, into philosophy, resulted from the general approximation laid out by an incredible author (whom I've already discussed with you in past years): [Charles Sanders] Peirce, P-E-I-R-C-E. An English-speaking logician who invented a discipline that went on to enjoy great success, semiology, which was based—I'll stick to what's relevant for our concerns here and now—which was based on a very simple distinction between what he called icons and symbols. He was saying that icons have to do with similarity, generally speaking. An icon – an icon? [*Deleuze asks about "un" or "une" for the noun gender; students respond with both*] – an icon is determined by its similarity to something. A symbol, on the other hand, he said, is inseparable from a conventional rule.[49]

You might say we don't need to refer to Peirce because this doesn't add all that much, but this is Peirce's starting point, and he takes it even further. And he takes it further only in order to put this validity into question. Then what can I say? I start from this simple problem, do I define analogical language by similarity and coded or digital language by convention? Recall the Saussurean point [that] language is conventional, etc. The linguistic symbol is conventional—immediately it's obvious that it's not. But what's interesting, what ought to interest us, are the reasons for which this first dualism is so, so inadequate. And I'll be brief, but here you need a sense for their order since we're tentatively dipping into an area of logic.

There are two reasons for saying that this similarity/convention duality isn't satisfactory. It's because on the one hand, there are instances of similarity in code, and on the other hand, similarity isn't sufficient for defining analogy. Those are my two points, the two points which I'd like to unpack.

The first point is that we can't simply oppose convention and similarity because a code necessarily includes—I'd almost say that it necessarily produces instances of similarity. I mean, it's clear in Peirce's work; here's what Peirce says on the matter. I'll paraphrase; it's a very complex thought—gorgeous, really, but I'll only paraphrase. Basically, Peirce says that there are two sorts of icon based on similarity: there's a similarity in quality, of similar quality—for example, you paint with blue because the sky is blue; that's a qualitative similarity, where you look for the blue that’s closest with the blue of the sky. And then there’s a similarity which is that of relation, so there are particular icons that are icons of relation.

Now what he calls diagrams are icons of relations; thus, you can see why it interests us *but, but, but* he maintains a definition of the diagram that depends on similarity. That’s why, for our purposes, we cannot follow him, and all of the Americans afterward who developed theories of the diagram have hung onto Peirce’s “iconic” principle, that is, the diagram as primarily defined by a similarity in relation. Which is what leads Peirce to think that the exemplary diagram or diagrammatic process is algebra. Algebra—he says that algebra isn’t actually a language because it is an icon, so it’s a matter of similarity in relation. The algebraic diagram extracts similarities in relation. Okay, and at the same time he adds that, on the other hand, algebra as such is not separable from certain conventional symbols that belong to the other pole. Which implies a code, that is, at which point Peirce is aware of mixtures of code/analogy or code/similarity. All right, I said why, then, we weren’t going to follow Peirce too closely.

Coming back to my question, the first one: there’s one main reason that the diagram cannot be defined by similarity, to wit, I cannot imagine a code that doesn’t involve or produce instances of similarity inseparable from it.

In fact, what can you do with a code? As I see it, there are two things done with code: you can tell stories; you can make illustrations. With a code, you can do three further things: you can make sub-systems; you can make codes; you can make sub-codes—but that doesn’t tell us very much. What could you do with code? So, we can make stories and we can make illustrations.

Right, keeping things simple, how do you make an illustration with a binary code? A distinctly digital exercise—so again, not a pictorial code—a computer can give you a portrait. All you have to do is encode the model’s data according to a purely binary code consisting of 0/+ or 1/0—the binary system. Your computer can be programmed to render the portrait.

Thus, code as such, the simplest binary code, can give you—for example, current computers—a huge range of illustrations. All you need is to encode the details, encode the data. But what does encoding data imply? Binarization: fundamentally it implies binarization; if you binarize a figure you can very easily render it by computer.

Now in this case, I’d say that there is a resemblance produced by way of a code and encoding. Code more commonly—especially when it comes to language—results in stories rather than illustrations. What do I mean? In my first example, the computer generating a portrait once it was programmed to, you have a direct connection between the encoded program and the end result.

In language, what differentiates the language of computation? It’s that with language you necessarily have a third term, as linguists say: you have the signifier, you have the state of affairs, but in an illustration, you have a signifier that produces a state of affairs—the encoded signifier.

It doesn't work that way with language. What characterizes language is precisely a third entity, the signified—the signified. The signified is not the same thing as the designated state of affairs. Yet what to make of the well-known principle: "linguistic symbols are conventional"? It's been said by all sorts of linguists; what does it mean, exactly? It means that there is no similarity between—what? Between the signifying word, the signifier, and the designated state of affairs. There is no similarity between the word, "cow," cows, and the cow's state—their relationship is purely one of convention, that is, it's by convention that this morpheme designates the thing with horns, etc.

On the other hand, the word "signifying unit" has a signified—what is the signified? It's the way in which the state of affairs appears in correspondence with the word. Consider languages where there are two words for cattle depending on whether they're dead [beef] or alive [cow]. Each of these words correspond to a different signified, dead-cattle/living-cattle—see what I mean? When it's said that language is a conventional system, that means that the relationship between a word and the state of affairs it designates, the external state of affairs that it designates, is arbitrary. By contrast, if it's true that the relationship between words and what they designate is always arbitrary in language, by contrast, the relationship between the signifying word and the signified is not arbitrary.

Why isn't it arbitrary? Because they're two sides of the same reality, the same phonological or sonorous reality. The signified and signifier are two sides of the same sonorous reality. In other words, there is necessarily a similarity between the signified and signifier. Simple as that. Inevitably this is what linguists call "isomorphism", whereby linguists are led to amend Saussure's principle, that linguistic symbols are conventional, and they amend it by adding that, yes, [it is conventional] insofar as you determine them, insofar as you hold them up to designated states of affairs.

However, there is a perfect isomorphism, i.e., a similarity of relation between the signified and the signifier. That is, the signified and signifier necessarily have similarly formed relations. Every linguist—isomorphism is the principle stressed by every linguist -- so, I'll stop there because that's all deadly boring -- all I'm after is something very straightforward… the two ways a digital code implies similarity: it implies illustrative similarity; it implies narrative similarity. In other words, it implies a similarity in quality, and it implies a similarity in relation.

Counterexample: can analogy be defined by similarity? Of course not. Why? It can't be, for one very simple reason: for starters, it wouldn't sufficiently distinguish it from code. Once again, if code necessarily implies and involves instances of similarity, there's no way to both directly oppose them and tie similarity back to analogy. But I also need a reason inherent to analogy—just like I asked earlier when it came to code, what can you do with it? Well, with analogy, with analogical language—we don't quite know what it is yet, since we're looking for its definition—with analogical language, as obscure as it is for the time being. What can you do with it? You can do two things, I think: you can reproduce, and you can produce. What do I mean by that? I'd claim that it's reproduction when what's conveyed is a resemblance or a similarity in relation. When you convey a similarity in relation, you produce a resemblance; analogy is thus the formative principle behind resemblance.

I'd call this type of figuration… that's the first form of analogy. I'd call this first form common analogy, *analogia communis,* because we have to squeeze in a little science. "*Analogia communis*" is the conveyance of resemblance. The conveyance of the relations of resemblance, because if anything's conveyed it's clearly the relations, the relations that are conveyable. When you've conveyed a rate of similarity, you're dealing with common analogy. In other words, you produce a resembling image; you make it "resembling." Whereas—coming back to painting—painting is never this way.

However, I wonder whether, its pretensions and ambitions notwithstanding, photography isn't necessarily and always this way. Because what is photography, ultimately? What makes it different from painting? Well, photography very generally—I'm putting this is in really rudimentary terms—is about capturing and conveying contrasts in lighting [*rapports de lumière*]. I understand that that opens up all kinds of possibilities. Namely, you want to set out enough room in your rendering to obtain the deepest and most extreme variations in the resemblance. Vast degrees of similarity—you could obtain a fainter and fainter resemblance. That doesn't change that fact that there is no photograph if it doesn't convey a contrast in light. So much so that I can't see how photography could overcome what we might call the figurative aspect. By figurative, I don't mean the extent to which it resembles something, but the extent to which the image is produced by conveying a similar relation, by a similarity in relation, however faint the similarity might be.

Anyway, it's like the photo "lives" under its condition of possibility in common analogy, the conveyance of similarity, but analogy isn't bound to that. We can do something else with analogy, this time producing rather than reproducing—we can produce resemblance. What does it mean for a resemblance to be produced rather than reproduced? Notice that code could also produce resemblance—it could make us a portrait, but that resemblance was produced by way of code and a binarization of its input.

Whereas I have something else in mind: an analogy that'd be capable of producing a resemblance without conveying anything, any similarity—now things are coming to a head, because if we manage to define this sort of analogy, one that produces resemblance without conveying any sort of similarity, we'll have a possible definition for painting. Indeed, painting does produce resemblance, or figures.

Here I am reintroducing the word, "resemblance". You're going to see why I'm bringing it back; there's nothing stopping me from saying, "Painting produces resemblance through non-resembling means." It produces resemblance through means that are completely different from conveying a similarity, conveying similar relations. You approach a painting—a Van Gogh, a Gauguin—you see a figure: you don't need to see the model to be convinced that… that you're looking at an icon. Only this icon is produced via non-resembling means. You reproduce resemblances through non-resembling means. That's what analogy means. What are these non-resembling means?

But you see, I'm already getting ahead of myself. Why? Because, in a qualified way, I've characterized code through articulation, or through the "common sphere"—I said there was a "common sphere" between digital code and articulation. Articulate, and you get a code. Which led us, to a lesser extent—as a result, I'm committed to define analogy and as a result, the diagram as the analogical principle. I have to… I can't avoid it, see, it's great when your hands are tied when it comes to concepts. My hands are tied; I have to either give up — it would be perfect if everything were perfect — whether we give up or whether we manage to define analogy and the diagram in analogy depends… on something as straightforward as articulation, and this "something" would be to the diagram what articulation is to code. I already know that it won't involve any resemblance, won't convey any similarity, and it won't involve any code.

So, what does the diagram do that's opposite of articulation, distinct from articulation, which can be defined neither by its conveying similarity, nor by code, nor by encoding? At least the conditions of our problem are well-defined. Then we have to press on, we have to press on, and so we saw—for now I'll just say that, as code doesn't rule out similarity but rather implies similarity, on the flipside, analogy cannot be defined by similarity. Only vulgar, common analogy is defined by similarity. Aesthetic analogy isn't defined by similarity since it only produces resemblance through wholly different means.

Well, then, if similarity isn't able to define analogy—as things stand—what *is* able to define it? Let's take a look. We'll move onto the second step. See, our first test was whether analogy can be defined by similarity. Our second hypothesis is that analogy, or analogical language, can be defined as a language of relations. That's [Gregory] Bateson's hypothesis, B-A-T-E-S-O-N, who is really such an interesting writer.

Analogical language would be one of relation—as opposed to what? As opposed to conventional language, that of codes—and what would that be? Bateson says, keeping things simple in order to demonstrate something very peculiar—well, it would be a language of states-of-affairs. Our coded language, our digital language, would be one suited for designating, determining, or translating states-of-affairs. While analogical language would express and would be used for relations.

What does Bateson mean? He elaborates on how we ought to understand relation. It's a fascinating development—I'm pulling this out and I'll need it because it'll lead us back to painting via some odd twists and turns. Bateson famously wrote on the language of dolphins.[50]

Actually, Bateson has led an extremely eventful life, has done all sorts of things—and he's still alive! He was Margaret Mead's husband—now, Margaret Mead is an ethnologist. So, he started in ethnology, but it turned out he was even better than Margaret Mead; his ethnological studies were so intriguing, so profound, so important. And then his career took off in American style, incredibly—he, hmmm, he said no, no. As if Bateson were a perfect example of an American hero, he doesn't stop, uh, moving on, moving on. Sort of a hippy, a philosophy hippy—so he divorced Margaret Mead, and then he divorced the tribes he studied. Then he stumbled upon schizophrenia, and he couldn't… he developed a whole theory of schizophrenia—one of the finest there is, well, a theory now known in France as the theory of the double-bind. Using logic—he's quite familiar with [Bertrand] Russell's logic—applying the theory of logical types onto schizophrenia. And even so, he lost interest, he… anyway.

So, he threw himself into dolphin language, which was even better—schizophrenia seemed too human for him, too monotone; dolphins are great, he thought, so he works with dolphins. Obviously, he gets a lot of funding from the US military, who are very interested in dolphins, but Bateson's results are hilarious, because they're totally useless for the Navy. So, it's wonderful, it's excellent work, and you'll definitely see why I'm going through his career.

He starts by going over, well, very basic things, because that's the American style, starting from—they aren't used to our western, European process—they start with extremely simple terms and deduce or build from there; they take simple bits and pieces and build a sort of hornet's nest and draw out a paradox. And they always come up with such great paradoxes, and then they use logic to unravel them, which is all completely different from our way of thinking.

I'm talking about when Americans do it well. So, that's why they invent so many concepts; they invent a lot more concepts than we do because for us the invention of concepts is a very deductive process. They make theirs by tying stuff together, drawing on a wide range of things; Bateson takes a schizophrenic, a savage [*un sauvage*], and a dolphin—then, see, he'll draw something out of it. I think it's some of the greatest philosophy, and it involves so much more rigor than ours, since it'll all come down to the logic of the paradox, which is what makes them logicians in the end; they open onto everything at once… it's outdoor logic, whereas ours is deduction in confinement—with us it's a bit like what I was just saying, we do philosophy on an easel. Ultimately, our easel is the history of philosophy. See, so it's not like that, uh, Americans don't do that, but then again, it's rare for them to be at Bateson's level.

Well anyway, then Bateson says conventional language is the left side of the brain, which controls the right side of the body—remember, analogical language is the left side. What do we usually put under analogical language, by comparison? Well, first off, back to one of our benchmarks: conventional or digital language is fundamentally articulated. It's articulated. Analogical language is thus the right hemisphere rather than the left hemisphere of the brain. It's not articulated, so what is it? It isn't articulated—see, we're getting around to the heart of it—if we found out what it is, since it isn't articulated, if we found out what it is, then we might get our definition of painting. Well, it isn't articulated; it's non-articulated—what *is* it, then? It's made of non-linguistic, even non-sonorous things; it's made of kinetic movement, so to speak; it's made of emotional expression; it's made of inarticulate sonorous input—murmurs, cries.

Obviously, if we were talking about music, we'd find a similar problem because what is singing? It's articulated or inarticulate, analogical or digital? We don't know, so we won't throw music on the pile. But then analogical language, see, is in a way an animal language, but we, we—and Bateson's just poking around—it's made out of very heterogenous sources, for example: hairs standing on end, a grimace, a yelp. All of that is analogical language. See, we're already making progress: a scream doesn't resemble anything; similarity isn't what defines analogical language—what does it resemble when your hairs stand on end? It's not a language of similarity; a scream doesn't resemble the horror that causes it—not in the least, so it's not that simple.

So, he says, what is it that defines analogical language? He says that it's a language of relations. What does he mean by "relations"? He doesn't mean just any relations, because if he said just any relation—there are some writings where he seems to mean just any old relation—then we wind up with similarity again, i.e., analogical language would be one whose function is to convey relations. For example, in a diagram, you have to represent one quantity that's big and one quantity that's relatively small, and you make two levels, one level smaller than the other… that's similarity, that is a language of relations, in fact. But that's not what it means, because we've ruled out the similarity hypothesis.

He means, it's a language that's supposed to express the relations between the transmitter and the receiver, between what emits it and its intended destination. In other words, he explains that this language, analogical language, is a language of relations, understood as the relations between transmitter and addressee; in other words, it primarily expresses dependency relations—in all their possible forms. So, right, analogical language would express relations—see, that's very different from similarity; it expresses dependency relations between a transmitter and a receiver. -- One second, I'll lose my train of thought if you stop me now… -- Okay, that's what he says about analogical language.

Right, and Bateson feels the need, whenever he makes any headway, he feels the need to joke around—but they're always good jokes. He calls it the *mu*-function. Why he calls it the *mu*-function is because *mu* is the Greek letter equivalent to our *M*, and whenever he needs an example for something it's always cats. Cats meow in the morning; the *mu*-function is the "meow" function—there's a side… the English and the Americans have never moved beyond Lewis Carroll. [*Laughter*] What is the *mu*-function, or Meow-function? Well, Bateson says that when cats meow in the morning, as you're getting up, they're saying—through meowing, which is analogical language—they aren't saying *milk, milk*; they're saying *Dependency! Dependency!, I depend on you,* with all kinds of variations: there are angry meows, where it's that *I depend on you and I'm sick of it*—it's a very rich language. But it always expresses the relation between transmitter and addressee, with all sorts of reversals. That's the *mu* function.[51]

And Bateson says it's a language requiring a lot of deduction, since if you look at the language's structure, it directly expresses *mu* functions, that is, functions of dependency, dependency relations, from which one deduces the state of affairs. In other words, I should ought to deduce: "Hey, my kitty wants some milk," and deduction is no less involved if it's one animal talking to another using analogical language. For example, he refers to the famous ritual among wolves or dogs, where an individual shows its inferiority by exposing its neck, demonstrating its dependency vis-à-vis the leader or the stronger animal. You have a dependency relation from which one deduces a state of affairs—in our language it might be "I won't do it again." States of affairs are fundamentally deduced from relations, from dependency relations. That's how Bateson defines analogical language.

See, that's actually going to be very interesting because, on the other hand, what is our coded language, our digital language? Bateson says it's a language that primarily concerns states-of-affairs; it's a language essentially intended to designate states of affairs, but that doesn't mean there aren't all sorts of analogy behind the scenes, and that takes us a great distance, and I'd like for you to hang onto it, to hang onto it for later. Anyway, I think codes are practically steeped in analogy, analogically glued together… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:53:59]

Part 3

… On the other hand, you don't get on a plane for no reason—there are all these analog motivations. What dependency relations are inscribed therein? What subverted dependency relations? But in the case of our language, our coded, conventional language, I would claim—or rather, Bateson would claim—that language designates states of affairs by convention, from which one induces analogical functions. Whereas in analogical language, it's almost reversed: language directly expresses analogical dependency relations, from which one deduces states of affairs.

And yet—and this is all I'm trying to say and why I brought up dolphins. Dolphins have a language, and no one can understand a lick of it. Bateson says that no one understands it because it's likely that there's not much in their language to understand. Consider the following convoluted process—one wonders who'd be capable of it. I have my two languages: an analogical language for relations, a coded language for states of affairs.

Let's say I get a bit of a wild idea: to encode analogical relations as such. To encode *mu*-functions. A language that remains analogical, but which is fed through a code. It's a very odd sort of language: a code grafted onto analogical flows. At first glance it's impossible; it's contradictory. However, it's sort of what we saw earlier with the computer. Computers have a binary code; they encode something to be reproduced, a design [*dessin*] to be reproduced, and it makes the design for you. Now suppose that dependency relations, *mu*-functions, etc., are likewise encoded. Encoded—we considered what "encoded" might mean. It can mean being caught up in a system of binary choices. Then again, why would an analogical language get encoded? Why would you ever need to encode an analogical language? That is, to graft code onto analogy? On only one occasion, Bateson says: in the case of large mammals who've abandoned the life on land and have fled to sea. Why? Because large mammals have a robust analogical language. No one on Earth has taken analogical language further than mammals. They're screwed once they take to the water. How so? Because, unlike fish, they aren't capable of their own analogical language, one particular to a marine environment, and they no longer have the means to use terrestrial analogical language.

In fact, terrestrial analogical language implies a clear distinction between the head and the body, implies hair, implies expressive movements—all things that water's parameters not only limit, but what's more, even if they had these, their message wouldn't be received, since the conditions of visibility underwater are such that terrestrial analogical language doesn't work. What's more, the whole body is submerged, preventing analogical expressions. So, he says: we think that dolphins have a mysterious language. Not at all. We think that dolphins have a conventional language, and he warns the American military that they're setting themselves up for serious disappointment. Is he right? I have no idea. He says no, it's not like that.

The paradox with dolphins is simply that the maritime conditions to which they've had to adapt make it so that they've had to encode the analogical as such. They haven't developed a digital language; they haven't developed a language of codes; they've had to encode analogical language. So, it's very bizarre. He says he's personally convinced that if we manage to decipher a bit of dolphin language, we won't find a linguistic language. What we'll find in this language is strictly analogical content that simply expresses dependency relations and that expresses nothing about states of affairs. That's his claim! But why am I going over Bateson's thesis on dolphin language? It's because, in light of this, see, there's something that really intrigues me: the possibility of grafting binary code onto purely analogical language.

Thus, it allows us to somewhat overcome the duality we started with. What I mean by that—you've already guessed what I'm getting at. What I'm getting at is: just think about the formula I would end up with; it no longer appears so simple. I sort of get the feeling that an abstract painter is no different from a dolphin—they're dolphins; they're dolphin painters. It's what makes them abstract; their real method is inventing a code for a specifically analogical matter and content. Then they graft code onto the pictorial material, and this code is entirely pictorial, whereby they manage to achieve something awesome. In other words, they aren't abstract painters; they're actually marine mammals. It's equivalent to—it's exactly the same problem as with the dolphins, it seems to me. But that's not important.

Let's just keep going: now we're kind of stuck because—okay, when it comes to everything he says, even relations, well… Analogical language is no longer defined by similarity but is defined by dependency relations. Does that work for us? Does that change anything? Maybe, but not on its own. I think it still needs tweaking. What needs to be changed? How are dependency relations expressed? What is it that expresses dependency relations? At this point I need a third determination for analogical language. One more. Because strictly speaking dependency relations are the content of such language. But if analogical language has its own specific form, what will this form be? Suppose it's painting. What then? It needs a form. How are dependency relations expressed? Then we'd be able to define analogical language. We've got it, it's in hand. Suspense… What were you going to say, Anne?

Anne Querrien: That reminds me of a passage from *Thousand Plateaus*, where you talked about bodies… [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: Fair enough—me too, but that's even more complicated. Since things are complicated enough as is, that won't make it any easier.

Anne Querrien: And then it reminded me of something else, the vocabulary of masons for cathedrals, etc., particularly, for example, there was a study done by a guy named [André] Scobeltzine, where he analyzes Roman and Gothic sculpture and demonstrates that they all have a code for capitals that directly express dependency relations by how they're positioned, in the way [*inaudible*][52]

Deleuze: Oh, that's interesting!

Anne Querrien: It's called *Feudal Art and Its Social Significance*, by Scobeltzine, an architect, in Gallimard's library of human sciences collection.[53] And so, he shows how sculpture is an expression of dependency relations and that you can interpret all gothic art in this way.

Deleuze: That's wonderful! Did you all hear what she said? Would you mind standing up and saying that again? Because they might be interested.

Anne Querrien: There's an architect named Scobeltzine who wrote a book titled *Feudal Art and Its Social Significance,* and he says that all cathedral sculpture and architecture is the expression of social dependency relations, using both an architectural code for the vaults—or I mean the way they appear—and sculptural code on capitals. He goes into detail about this whole gothic line, outlining the different forms of capitals.

Deleuze: I have to read this book. I need to read it.

Anne Querrien: Yeah, it's worth a look!

Deleuze: Write down a note with his name for me because I didn't jot it down earlier.

Anne Querrien: I ought to have my notes at home.

Deleuze: Send them my way—that way I don't have to read it myself. [*Laughter*] This is very important. See, there are tons of things I haven't considered. You could… Okay then, what is it?

I'd say even when it comes to the voice. Consider the example of audio: analogical language exceeds the voice, okay, is more than voice, but there is also analogical language in the voice. Now, in a way, linguists themselves—cutting to the chase—there's something curious that linguists don't even bother to conceal. They don't hide the fact that language, what they call conventional language, is made up of so-called distinctive features [*traits distinctifs*]—moreover, what these *internal* distinctive features are specifically amounts to the binary relationships between phonemes. A phonological relationship.[54]

See, a binary relationship between phonemes is an internal distinctive feature of language. But they've always claimed that there were other linguistic features. What are these linguistic features? They're tones, intonations, accents—or to put it more precisely: pitch, loudness, and length. Pitch, loudness, and length form three kinds of stress [*trois espèces d'accents*]. What about them? Can I now say what it is that's distinct from articulation… Just what are linguists doing? That's what bothers me. And actually, these non-internal features, you might even say non-distinctive features. They acknowledge them. [Roman] Jakobson, for example, takes this approach when defining what he calls poetics in relation to linguistics.

But what I think is strange is that, despite everything, they acknowledge the specificity of its domain, but still try to exhaustively encode it. They try to encode it in its entirety, i.e., they apply their binary rules to it. It's very apparent in Jakobson. Personally, however, I'm working—as we continue to ask "what is analogical language and what would its concept be"—I'm working instead under the assumption that we must *not* apply rules of code or binarize the realm of so-called "prosodic" or "poetic" features. Then what is it? The non-articulated voice—non-articulated voice has pitch, loudness, length, and it has stress. Stress and articulation present an even bigger problem when it comes to music. Fortunately, we're not concerning ourselves with music. Also, what role does code play in music? What is the role of the non-articulated? What is the opposite of musical code in music itself? That would be a problem. Everyone knows the opposite of code in music, ultimately. But anyway, we'll come back to all that later.

Okay, so what's on the table when it comes to the analogical? Well, there's a convenient term, but it won't fix anything because it'll be hard to develop a concept for it: modulation. In what way is it modulation? I'm not claiming that there's a simple opposition, although in some regards there is a simple opposition between articulation and modulation. I mean that modulation refers to the values of a non-articulated voice. I can start there. That being said, there are all—and this will help—modulation and articulation can combine in all sorts of ways. Modulation and articulation. But now that we have a hypothesis, you can see why it matters—I'm belaboring the point so you can see what's at stake in all this.

I'm saying, analogical language would be defined by modulation; where there's modulation, there's analogical language—and thus, there's a diagram. In other words, the diagram is a modulator. See, that does a good job of meeting my requirements: the diagram and analogical language are defined independently of any reference to similarity. Obviously, you have to check; there's no need to bring any similarity into modulation.

Analogical language is about modulation. Digital, or coded, language is about articulation. All sorts of combinations are possible, so you can articulate a modulation's flow. You can articulate the modulatory. Then you're grafting a code, which might be important: maybe code has to be involved to allow for analogy's full development. Things are getting complicated—how can this hypothesis help us with painting?

Let's just apply it, since painting *is* an analogical language, maybe the highest form of analogical language to date. How so? Because to paint is to modulate. To paint is to modulate—but what does it mean to modulate? Mind you, with modulating, you modulate something on the basis of something else. Let's specify what's going on with this concept of modulating. At its most basic, you modulate something using what's called a carrier or medium—a carrier wave or medium. On what basis do you modulate a medium? According to a signal. And now you're as much of an expert as I am—it's TV, or whatever, it's all around us. We're immersed in the work of modulation.

A carrier, or a medium, is modulated based on a signal. A signal to be conveyed. Modulation does not convey similarity. We still don't know what it is. We don't know yet. When it comes to painting, can I apply this very broad definition in a way that isn't merely an application, such that what we get is undeniably a definition of painting? What is the signal? The signal—let's stick to worn-out categories. The more worn-out, the better.

The signal is the model. In more complex terms, the signal would be what we called the motif, based on our discussion of Cézanne. Which isn't the same thing as the model. But anyway. It's either the model or, in a more particular way, the motif. Or else it's—these aren't mutually exclusive—it's the surface of the canvas; that's also the signal. The model is the signal, but so too is the surface of the canvas. It too is the signal. No doubt it all depends on my perspective; I can come at it from all sorts of angles.

What do I modulate on the canvas? To paint is to modulate. I can only see two alternatives for what would address modulation. Either I modulate the light, I modulate the color, or I modulate both. Indeed, light and color really are the carrier waves of painting. So that, again—I highlighted this last time—I'm not so sure we can define painting as just line and color. I'd claim that to paint is to modulate light or color, light and color, depending on the flat surface and—these aren't exclusive—depending on the motif or the model, which plays the role of signal.

But see, what result do we get from modulation? The figure on my canvas. Whether it's Pollock's line—with no figure, in fact—or Kandinsky's abstract figure, or Cézanne or Van Gogh's figural figure: that's what I get from modulation. What I might call Resemblance with a capital *R*—only I produced it via non-resembling means, hence the painter's motto: "I'd be capable of a resemblance deeper than that of a camera." "I'd be capable of a deeper resemblance than any other resemblance." That's because I produced it through wholly different means, and these different means are the modulation of light and of color. Thus, with all of the countless definitions for painting: "It's an arrangement of colors assembled on a flat surface, or carved out of the surface, or it's this or that," and so on—we can pat ourselves on the back for adding one more, which obviously isn't a big deal, but we run into at least one issue in particular.

How are light and color the objects of modulation? What exactly is the modulation on a flat surface of light and color? What's going on here? If I can manage to explain what modulating light is, what modulating color is. Here we go.

So now we can't get around defining a concept of modulation, one both clearly distinct from the concept of articulation, and at the same time one that makes no reference to similarity and the relation of similarity.

And I could say that the diagram is the matrix of modulation. The diagram is the modulator, just as code is the matrix of articulation. And strange as it is, it's not at all impossible that we'll end up—if it gets us closer to the diagram, if it gets us closer to analogical language, if it gets us closer to modulation—involving a period of code. It may very well be that modulation has a lot to gain from a code phase. In other words, it may very well be that abstract painting constitutes a step forward for painting—for all painting—fundamentally, a step forward. From the twofold perspective of the modulation of color, i.e., from the paradoxical perspective—not with regard to the invention of code but with regard to the development of an analogical language. Regarding the modulation of color and regarding the modulation of light. What would it mean to modulate color, to modulate light? … What time is it?

A student: Twenty to, quarter to.

Deleuze: You all must be tired!

Students: No.

Deleuze: Then, to wrap up, we'll go back to square one. Modulate, modulate, modulate! Modulate, not articulate; modulate, not articulate. But how are we going to make this into a concept—I'll try to draw from wherever I can. I'd refer us to two sorts of information: literary information and technological information.

When it comes to literary information: easy, there's a great text. An excellent text which has already been covered from every angle, but I'd like to discuss it in light of our analysis. It's Rousseau's *On the Origin of Languages*. Rousseau's *On the Origin of Languages* speaks to the issue at hand. How so? Because, in this extraordinary text, Rousseau's core premise is that language cannot have originated in articulation. Articulation can at most be the second stage of language. That's a bit of an overstatement—for Rousseau, all language is articulated.

But articulation can only be the second stage of the voice's development. Voice existed prior to articulated language—what sort of voice? The melodic voice, Rousseau says.[55] And how does Rousseau define the melodic voice? Rousseau defines it in a very precise way. It's the intonated, accented voice. Not just intonated or accented, because you might think that all language has intonation [*accents*], but in fact, for Rousseau, languages have lost all intonation.[56] They have more or less lost it; the key to understanding intonation lies in extinct languages.

The Greeks still had an accented language [*langue à accent*]. English might somewhat—it's weird, but it's not Rousseau who says it. But anyway. Why is he saying that our languages are no longer accented? They have accents, but they're no longer "accented," he says. When there are accents, intonation [*l'accent*] is gone.[57] He means that differences in accent, as he sees it, ought to correspond to tonal differences. However, in our case accents don't correspond to tonal differences. Differences in accent do not correspond to differences in tonality. So, well, our accents have deteriorated so much—look at what he's getting at. Why has intonation [*les accents*] declined so much in our languages? Why has our language ceased to be melodic? Whereas real language is melodic. Okay, well, they ceased to be melodic as soon as they became articulated languages.

And why did they turn into articulated languages? Rousseau's idea is wonderful but strange. He says languages became articulated once they left their birthplace, because in his view, language was born in the South. That's where you'll find the conditions for a language to emerge. Languages are originally southern. But that doesn't stop them from prevailing in the North. Tough northerners are the articulate ones. Why do tough northerners articulate? Because they are industrial. What's more, he explicitly says—I hope you check it out, *On the Origin of Languages* is a very short essay—several times he goes so far as to explicitly state: "Articulation is conventional." Articulation is a matter of convention. Granted, granted—but what that means in modern terms is that articulations are determined by choice. This puts it unquestionably in the realm of binary choices.

So, articulation is conventional. The Northern man, with his industrial needs, is forced to articulate because he no longer knows how to say "love me"; he no longer knows how to say "help me"—for Rousseau, the proof of one's love is helping. Helping with work. So, the language of work, the language of industry, is one that's thoroughly articulated. Right, it's a thoroughly articulated language. There are still inarticulate sounds among Northern men. They articulate—they articulate; it's very much an articulatory language. But they retain some inarticulate sounds, only they've turned into fearsome cries. What does he have in mind? See, they happen in tandem: when articulation begins to rule language, inarticulate sounds turn into paroxysm, a sort of paroxysm. They become fearsome noises. What does he have in mind? The sad setting of Rameau's opera. And in music, what's the equivalent of musical code, of articulation. Articulation is akin to what Rameau described as “the matrix of all music.” For Rameau, the matrix of all music was “harmony.”

It was harmony. With its vertical sections of melodic lines and how it establishes chords. Rousseau touches on this—his essay is so artfully written—touches on this very subject when he says that harmony is to music precisely what articulation is to language. It’s the conventional aspect. Only the melody is natural. Harmony is convention; you make music purely by convention. And then this conventional music broke so far away from melody that everything inarticulate, non-harmonic turns into—what? Awful shouting.

And at that point, for Rousseau, our whole relationship with the voice and music is fundamentally distorted. The voice reverts to crying while melody winds up depending on purely conventional harmonics. Such that he counters Rameau by rejecting a purely melodic music with very little harmony, with an inarticulate voice that doesn’t resort to shouting, and the pleasant voice of pure melody. So, the triple voice, point and counter point, etc., but without conceding to harmony’s demands. How ought we define melody, as opposed to harmony? The modulation of the voice that will provide a positive definition for the non-articulated voice. Whereas, from the point of view of harmony, the non-articulated voice can only be defined negatively, in the form of awful shouting.

So, what would a present-day Rousseau say, for example, about Italian opera, Wagnerian opera? Obviously, that’s unfair because it is obvious, but anyway, I’ll try to reproduce his schema. You see what he’s thinking: language has two basic stages. First, he says, language couldn’t have been born from interest—an interesting idea—language absolutely couldn’t have been born out of interest or need. This runs counter to the entire 18th century. Give me a second… sorry… Yes, what is it?

Anne Querrien: There’s another extraordinary text by [Jean-Pierre] Brisset… [*Inaudible words*] where he says humans descend from frogs and discover their sex, i.e., the fundamental organism … [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yeah, but that’s no good, as opposed to the example from earlier, it’s purely sonorous similarity. It’s just a matter of similarity.

Anne Querrien: Afterwards, if you will, he gradually builds everything back up … [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yeah, but unlike your earlier text, we have to force things in order to bring in Brisset. I feel like Brisset is a whole other problem. We’ll come back to interest because he says that with interest and need and even industry gesture would do. A pure gestural language would suffice. Really interesting. Why? Because gestural language is a language of similarity. It just mimes things. If I [*Deleuze pantomimes*], can you all tell I mean “pulling on a rope”? [*Laughter*] Or gestural language in the military: he draws his sword and then points it in a direction—even the most boneheaded cavalry knows to head *that way*. [*Laughter*] Yeah, a language of gestures is enough…

A student: There's a text by Marcel Mauss on this, where he actually traces language back to gesture, claiming that speech was created because humans were lazy and didn't want to use their whole bodies to express themselves…

Deleuze: A text by who?

The student: By Marcel Mauss. He's an anthropologist.

Deleuze: We don't need to refer to Marcel Mauss because it's a very 18th century idea. A completely standard idea, that language originated in labor and in the gestures of labor. Rousseau says as much.

The student: Still, he goes a little further than that…

Deleuze: What?

The student: He goes further than that.

Deleuze: I hope so.

The student: Because he analyzes the function of [*unclear words*], that is, the human capacity to reproduce outward interactions.

Deleuze: Yeah, of course, it might be interesting if there's an analog dimension to what he's calling interactions. But anyway, that's another topic.

The student: There's also…

Deleuze: Yeah.

The student: There's also an analysis of language and, in particular, rhythm-melody functions.

Deleuze: I'm sure there is, [*Laughter*] there's all kinds of things. [*Laughter*] So you understand why, in fact, Rousseau's idea is very straightforward. It's that language can have but one source: passion. It is passion. So, in fact, this sort of puts us in an almost aesthetic element. Because it's precisely what some art critics call the pathic moment, *pathos* as opposed to *logos*. You could say that *logos* is code, but there's an element which is the pathic element of passion. So clearly, it's due to passion that language has a southern origin. The young boys and young girls gather around the fountain, says Rousseau. Then they begin to dance, etc. That's the origin of modulation. You have an idea of Rousseau's schema: you exclude gestural language because that's a matter of common analogy; it works via similarity.

The second step is the modulation of the voice. Yes, that's the second analogy, the aesthetic analogy. It's no longer defined by similarity but by modulation. The melodic voice. Third, language heads north: the people of the North get their hands on it and, in response to industrial development, introduce laws of articulation and apply them to all melodic language, just as music will be subject to the laws of harmony. Not a bad idea. My takeaway is—and I'm just about done— modulation: Rousseau himself will call it "melody." All right, so what will become of this melodic voice? … Whew! Anyway, until next time.

A student: Yes. [*End of the session*] [2:34:28]

Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on Painting, 1981

Lecture 05, 12 May 1981

Transcriptions: Voix de Deleuze, Part 1, Cécile Lathullière (duration 52 :55); Part 2, Guillaume Damry (duration 47:08); Part 3, Jean-Arnaud Filtness (duration 33 :51) ; transcription revision and time stamp, Charles J. Stivale

Translated by Billy Dean Goehring

Part 1

… because our objective was to come up with a definition for analogical language. And again, the terms of our problem are clear since it's relatively easy for us to imagine the opposite of analogical language: digital language, the language of code.

In fact, we ended up describing the language of code, or digital language, with the concept of articulation. By "concept of articulation" Remember, at the end of our last session we said that it's a "concept" in the sense that it isn't reducible to its physical or physiological accompaniment. It isn't reducible to the movements—"articulations"—that accompany digital language or that rise to the level of speech acts. We tried to pin down the logical concept of articulation in the simplest terms possible, so we said that articulation consists in the position of meaningful units that are determinable insofar as these units can be determined in a series of binary choices. And a finite set of meaningful units determinable by successive binary choices: that seemed like it fit the description for "code."

But *analogical language*… analogical language, as opposed to digital language or code, how might we define that? Remember our first hypothesis: analogical language is the language of likeness and is defined by likeness. Alright, it's defined by likeness… Well, we shouldn't say that that's insufficient, right. But at least that would let us… likeness allows us to effectively define our first type of analogy. It's what we called common analogy, or photographic analogy. There, analogy *is* defined by conveying likeness. Whether a similarity in relation or a similarity in quality. Right. All we could say… moreover… what… We shouldn't be too hasty in giving up this approach because it'll be really important later on.

I'm saying, if I define the language of analogy, analogical language, as likeness, and in whatever meanings this might be, likeness… in that case, what is the model for analogical language? What will the model be for common analogy? I'd call it a *pole*: it's one of the poles of analogy. The model would be "the mold", casting a mold. Imposing a likeness. All right.

And does molding essentially belong to analogical language? Perhaps. But what led us to say that, even if that does constitute one dimension of analogical language, it doesn't cover everything about analogical language. Which… it seemed to be that, naturally, there's always a sort of likeness at work in analogical language. But that doesn't mean that—it doesn't prove that analogical language can be defined by likeness. When can analogical language be defined by likeness? Only when likeness is the producer, when it's what produces an image. And that's exactly what happens with molding.

But, on the other hand, there seemed to be many cases where analogy didn't make use of resemblance or productive likeness—rather, the likeness or resemblance was *produced*. The end product of analogy. Thus, whenever resemblance is (and this is precisely what happens in painting) whenever resemblance is the end product, the result of a process, the analogical process cannot be defined by what it produces. Hence the necessity, even if we keep likeness-as-molding as the first pole, the necessity of moving beyond—based on other forms of analogy—moving beyond what was once relativistic. Hence the necessity, even if we keep likeness/molding as the first pole, as the first pole of analogical language, the necessity of moving beyond—based on other forms of analogy—moving beyond likeness as a criterion.

From there, we briefly considered a second criterion. The possibility of defining analogy by and as, analogical language as a language of relations, a particular sort of relations, i.e., dependency relationships between "the speaker" or "the broadcaster", between a transmitter and a receiver, between a speaker and a recipient. Between speaker and recipient. We had then come to a different definition. What model did that refer to? We'll look at that later on. And there, too, even if there were a corresponding form of analogy, it didn't exhaust the pole of analogy.

And finally, we reached a third analogical layer. Actually, it seemed like these dependency relationships, inscribed into analogy, well… they had to refer to a particular form of expression. And what was the form of expression for these dependency relationships? Well, we proposed a third option for analogy. Here Rousseau came to the rescue: something more along the lines of modulation. It's up to us to develop a concept of modulation as rigorous as that of code, or that of articulation.

What bearing does that have on our main problem? When it comes to aesthetic analogy, modulation is the rule. More specifically, it's at work whenever resemblance or likeness isn't what produces but what is produced, produced by other means. These "other means," these non-resembling means that produce resemblance—means that bear no resemblance to the model and that don't produce a resemblance—that's what modulation is. Producing resemblance is what it means to modulate. All right. That's great because we have three forms of analogy: analogy via likeness; analogy via relation, internal relation; analogy via modulation.

Well, we need… I don't know… so let's back up. Our concern is twofold: maintaining a coherent concept, for all of these instances—a coherent concept of analogy covering all of these instances, while also keeping all three fundamentally distinct. So, why do I want, these three divisions, why do I want to give us more options? We'll drop them if they don't do anything for us.

With the first form of analogy—as likeness or as conveying a likeness, as productive resemblance—I'll call a *common* or *physical analogy*. And while that doesn't quite suffice, it'll work tentatively as a point of reference, for the time being…tentatively. I'll call the second form of analogy—as internal relations of dependency—you'll see why I call that an *organic analogy*.

And for now, let's call analogy *qua* modulation—resemblance produced through completely different means—*aesthetic analogy*.[58]

Let's specify our terms even further. The model for the first form of analogy would be molding, mold-casting. Casting a mold basically means having a resemblance, a likeness, imposed from without. I might define it as a "surface operation." I put a mold down onto some clay. I wait. What am I waiting for? I'm waiting for the clay to even out under the mold's impression. And then I lift the mold away… it conveys a likeness. That totally demonstrates common analogy, crude analogy. As molding. Anyway, look. It's a surface operation. I emphasize this point because I'm getting our concepts in order for later on. Yes, it operates on the edge. On the surface. You could also call this type of analogy a superficial or film analogy.

If I make it a point to find a real-world example, would… -- see… because I need one, a little all over the place; I'm attempting a sort of concretion around… I'm crystallizing it. Crystallization. Crystals are known to be individuated in layers. They grow on the edges. What matters isn't the internal substance. The crystal is fundamentally… it's a superficial development that grows on the edges. So, what's actually beyond the organic domain? What distinguishes organic individuality from crystalline individuality? How do their laws differ? It might be really important for our aesthetic categories later on.

How are organic laws and crystalline laws distinct? At the risk of confusing things -- so you see that we haven't left our essential problem -- what led certain critics to define Egyptian art by "crystalline laws," as opposed to Greek art, defined by "organic laws"? So, while it seems like it isn't relevant, it might be that we're laying conceptual groundwork. But how does organic depiction differ from molding? What *is* an organic depiction? Well, you can certainly tell that it's pretty different from crystallization. What is an organic reproduction?

Let me recall that I talked about this a completely different context, Buffon, the great Buffon, developed a particularly daring concept, for his time, a concept so daring because it was so philosophical.[59] On the subject of natural history, Buffon says something along the lines of… where you know -- it's a shame, really, because he was mocked for it, even in the 18th century… Buffon's idea has been a laughingstock. And actually, it's really beautiful; like all beautiful ideas, it invites both criticism and irony -- Buffon says: see, reproduction… he thinks… it's fascinating; fascinating because it would require—so you understand what sort of problem it is—it calls for a contradictory concept. And the wonderful, contradictory concept that Buffon develops is what he calls an "internal mold." A living thing reproduces not by molding externally—it might be messy, but in rough terms I might say "by crystallizing"—but via an *internal* mold.[60]

What makes the idea of an internal mold so strange? In effect, it's a mold that doesn't apply to the surface. A mold that molds the inside, which sounds absolutely contradictory. What does it mean to mold "the inside"? The only way a mold can reach inside is by making the interior into a surface. Buffon goes so far as to say: "Internal mold" is as contradictory as if I said "thick surface." Wonderful. So, there is something beyond molds, beyond extrinsic molds… Can we wrap our heads around the concept an intrinsic mold, an internal mold, or how it works? Look… Buffon clarifies: "It would be a measure, but at the same time, it's a measure that subsumes, contains diverse relationships between its parts. A measure that in itself incorporates a variety of relationships, internal relationships."

See, I've come back to the second sort of analogy. What might we call a measure with variable times, a measure with different times? Well, let's try something out. Isn't that what you might call a *module*? A module. Anyway. We're just getting our terms in order. There is the mold and then there is the module. It isn't the same thing. Wouldn't a module be something like an internal mold? Right? [*Pause*] Well, yes, and then there would be modulation. Now I've got a series of concepts. We can categorize analogy along three lines: mold, module, modulation. Great! Our concept of modulation is starting to come into focus. We have sort of a progressive series: molding, modeling, modulation.

Looking at either end of the series: what is the difference between a mold and a modulation? What is the difference between molding and modulating? In his book on individuation, Simondon explains the difference rather clearly. He says they're "like two ends of the spectrum."[61] To mold is to modulate permanently, definitively, establishing a balance and imposing a form onto material… in molding it takes a certain amount of time for the material to achieve the equilibrium imposed by the mold. And once it reaches this equilibrium, you turn out the mold. So, you've modulated it for good. But on the flip-side, from the other end of the sequence: if to mold is to modulate permanently… then modulating is molding—what sort of molding? It's a variable, temporary, and continuous mold. It's molding continuously.

How so? Because modulation is like a mold that never stops changing. It reaches equilibrium immediately, or almost immediately. Only it's the mold that's variable. Simondon's text -- the book is *The Individual and Its Psycho-Biological Genesis* -- page 41, it reads: "The difference between the two cases, molding and modulating, resides in the fact that, with clay, the shaping process is finite." -- The shaping process is finite -- "In a few seconds it gradually finds a state of equilibrium. Then the brick is unmolded. You use the state of equilibrium, unmolding the brick when it reaches this state." -- Here we go -- "With electronic tubes, however, one uses"— so now we're dealing with modulation -- "With electronic tubes, one uses a low-inertia energy source (a field of electrons). As a result, compared to before, it reaches a state of equilibrium extremely quickly (in a large-scale tube, billionths of a second). As a result, the control gate works like a variable mold. This mold distributes the energy source so quickly that it's performed with no appreciable delay. The variable mold adjusts how a source's potential energy is actualized over time. It doesn't stop once it reaches equilibrium" -- In fact, it reaches it immediately -- "It doesn't stop once it reaches equilibrium; it continues modifying the mold, i.e., the gate voltage. Actualization is almost instantaneous; it doesn't stop to unmold because the circulation of the energy source acts like a constant process of un-molding. A modulator is a temporary, continuous mold."[62] Wonderful—that's exactly what we needed for… [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence*]

Now… I think… at the same time… see, at the same time, we're figuring out our concept of analogy. Insofar as it has to satisfy a two-fold requirement—which is nearly contradictory, but that's no problem. Our twofold requirement… First: that we cannot be content to define analogy as likeness or as conveying likeness. In fact, analogy's finest moment, such as royal or aesthetic analogy, is when likeness is what is produced and not what produces. But on the other hand, at the same time, we must group all these instances of analogy under a single concept, including analogies of mere likeness.

And I'm inclined to satisfy both of these requirements by saying: in part, at least, likeness is not what defines analogy, and analogy language is modulation. Rousseau was absolutely right; analogical language is a language of modulation. And otherwise, I can group the different instances of analogy—including that of mere likeness, vulgar analogy—by saying: but be careful—modulation is only the end of a sequence, a sequence of sub-concepts, a sequence of operations: one that I'll call *molding,* another that I'll call *internal molding,* the third that I'll call *modulation*, in the strict sense.

Simondon concludes the page I was just on—so great, page 41-42—saying that there is a sequence. And then he goes on: "Mold and modulator are extreme cases, but the process of taking shape is essentially the same. It consists in establishing an energy regime, durable or no. To mold is to modulate definitively; to modulate is to mold in a continuous and perpetually variable fashion." There's something in between them, he says. He calls it "modeling." It's clear that modeling is the intermediary between molding and modulation. It already hints at a continuous, temporary mold. "Modeling" for us would be, perhaps, not quite precise enough a determination. We saw that it worked better for our purposes to have the three forms of analogy as: external mold, Buffon's internal mold, and modulation.

And now, we have … [*Pause; Deleuze whispers something to someone near him*]

You see… [*Laughter*] Wait, just give me one second, because I'm wrapping up… I feel… yes, in order to set our terms, I'll add: first, we have *molding*, which I'll link to a type of legality that for now we'll call *crystalline legality*; second, the *internal mold—organic legality*; and for the third… here, our wording changes at the moment… I'd like to call it either "aesthetic legality" or, drawing from Simondon, maybe "energetic legality."

So, you see that I can simply conclude this first point: "modulation," I claim, is a concept just as coherent, consistent as its counterpart of "articulation." It allows us both to define something particular about aesthetic analogy or the aesthetic act, as well as something about analogy in general. The particular aspect is how one distinguishes modulation from any sort of molding. And the general description is how there is a series that runs from molding to modulation and from modulation to molding. Right, so, that's the first point… Yes?

Georges Comtesse: I wanted to bring up language—digital language and analogical language, for example, what you find in information theory, communication theory, Pragmatism — [Paul] Watzlawick or [Gregory] Bateson, for example. It's that the difference in ground, Bateson in particular, in particular his first book, *Naven*… couldn't the distinction they draw between digital language and analogical language be totally covered and explained by a simple "linguistic channel"?

For example, you have… the speech you put out presupposes a linguistic channel where, within the molar units, the meaningful units, of language, there's a binary choice at work at the level of the elements in or at the level of articulation. That's a linguistic channel. The linguistic channel is a channel corresponding to spoken language [*la langue*].[63] Obviously, if we define morphemes and phonemes, meaningful units and distinctive traits, we're working with structure, that "of spoken language." And we're on a linguistic channel. Except that the digital/analog distinction doesn't reside—in information and communication theory, in pragmatist behavior theory—it doesn't exist at the level of the linguistic channel, at the level of spoken language, but at the level of language's *sense*. It's the difference between language and spoken language. For example, someone like Watzlawick says: "The real difference between analogical and digital language is that digital language does have a binary, but it doesn't address the elements of spoken language." Not just the elements of spoken language. The binary assumes that language, in order for the language's syntax to be homogeneous with its semantics, it has to recognize—in that identity—it necessarily has to recognize two elements as mutually exclusive: "and" and "or." That's crucial.

That is, if we recognize that when we talk, whatever the status of our linguistic channel, what we say in a language—according to or through spoken language—presupposes that "and" and "or" are exclusive, regardless of the content of what we say; then we're dealing with digital, unambiguously digital, language. While he says that analogical language, well, analogical language is when the exclusive difference between "and" and "or" fades away and is replaced by a mirror-image likeness, a reversibility between "and" and "or."

To take an example, a very famous example: analogical language might be—maybe it's an animal's cry. But in terms of humans, it might be a smile. He says that when someone smiles, you cannot tell if their smile comes from joy, or sadness, or love, or hate. In other words, in real life "and" and "or" aren't mutually exclusive. Such that analogical language, far from being a language with univocal meaning, where syntax and semantics are homogeneous, is rather a language with *equivocal* meaning. It's the profound equivocity of analogical language, i.e., the difference between analogical language and digital language only obfuscates—only a little, not too much—the fundamental structure of the channel, only it isn't linguistic. The channel being the difference between difference and identity, the difference between "and" and "or" being different and "and" and "or" being identical. "And" over "or" – "and" equals "or."

That is, the voice remains in all of pragmatic theory. Which by no means explains the theory of [*inaudible words*] and how… just how this channel's structure applies to them, and where such a structure comes from, one where afterwards the difference between digital language and analogical language can only be slightly blurred, certainly very misleading when it comes to the difference, the very subdivisions of language.

Deleuze: Excellent. Excellent. But… -- [*Deleuze speaks to someone who wishes to respond*] yes, just one moment -- but that all sounds like confirming comments. It's not… I mean, this is just me trying to understand. Is that an objection?

Claire Parnet: Not at all! It's—

Deleuze: Sorry, one second. Then you can keep going. Because… personally, what I'd object to—my only objection, and what's missing… I'm fine with everything you just added. The only thing bothering me is that, actually, analogy—this definition of digital language makes significant progress, but in my view, it remains essentially binary, the binary being that between "and" and "or." What bothers me is that this is still a primarily negative definition of analogy; it still doesn't offer a positive definition like what we've attempted with modulation. But I think that everything you said is really very good—that's the only thing I would add. Anyway.

Anne Querrien: [*inaudible words*] We would have to put it differently [*inaudible words*] … that is, instead of opposing "and" and "or," we should oppose two uses of "and." There is the exclusive "and," which really means "or"—that's the digital. And then there is the "and" in the sense of conjunctive synthesis, that is, it's "and, and, and, etc." – Anyway, we don't need to give examples, there are plenty -- And analog might just be the domain of disjunctive synthesis [*inaudible words*] …

Deleuze: Ah, yes, but now things get complicated. Yes, yes, hmm…

Anne Querrien: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, yes…

Anne Querrien: And then the other thing I wanted to bring up was on the last, the last "aesthetic of legality", which I'll call machinic rather than energetic because in fact I believe that legality, the three molds, etc. will corresponds to the three states of energy [*inaudible words*] …

Deleuze: That's the [*inaudible word*] complex; you're right; energy is everywhere.

Anne Querrien: [*inaudible words*] and modulation is the third law [*inaudible words*] …

Deleuze: Yeah, okay. That's not bad.

Richard Pinhas:[64] I just want to cut in here, because I haven't developed it. From a simple practical, scientific point of view [*inaudible word*], whatever language you use, and you learn it by computer [*inaudible words*], the "and" doesn't exist. So, then your question is resolved: there is no "and." You have zero and one; at the same time, the "and" is excluded from all possible computer language, from the most modern to the most rudimentary. There is no "and." The "or" functions wholly digitally. And at no point would it be acceptable to use the term "and" in the linguistic sense of the term, because you simplify the term in the semiotic sense with which we've become familiar in recent years. It doesn't exist.

Deleuze: Unless, Richard, I think that amounts to the same thing, unless we agree that, in the conditions in which Comtesse is operating, we agree that the binary is between "and" and "or," rather than between three terms.

Pinhas: It doesn't work like that.

Deleuze: If it's truly a binary language…

Pinhas: I'll just tell you how it works. That's not how it functions. It doesn't work. And it's completely… [*inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yes, but the "or" is between two terms. [*Anne Querrien tries to intervene*]

Pinhas: No, no, but… every computer, from the very simple early microprocessors to the most complex, the most complicated computers using [*inaudible words*] including the most complicated [*inaudible words*], it basically works [*inaudible words*]. These exclusions/exceptions form integrative modules on a higher level if you will. You could always rebuild something else and say that in an advanced computer language, you'll be able to form strings of characters that necessarily lead to conjunctions, but they'll be in separate chunks. But in very, very simple terms, the mode of digital operation precludes "and." I'm absolutely formal about that. If we use "and" to try and locate the criteria differentiating analog and digital, which means…

Deleuze: Right, I see what you mean… yes, yes, yes… yes, yes, yes… that seems… yes, that's… everything is allowed here. [*Throughout this exchange, Claire Parnet's comments are heard as she is directly next to the microphone*]

Another student: [*inaudible words*] …where he explains that there are two sorts of analogy. The first form of analogy, he says, has been around since Aristotle, an example of which might be like: "Old age is to youth what night is to day." And he says that you can look at it as an act of completion [*le fait de finir*], and so he says that there would first be this form of analogy that doesn't produce anything new, and it's based on the verb.

Deleuze: Based on…?

The student: On verbs, this would be completion, but responsible for that.

Deleuze: Yes, responsible for that.

The student: And then there is a second unfamiliar or less familiar form of analogy, which Bergson studied, and which would instead be based on the noun and would be, for example, dependence.

Deleuze: Right, yes, yes.

The student: We can say that the first analogy [*inaudible words*], it doesn't tell us anything new.

Deleuze: That's the mold, right.

The student: While on the other hand, the second would be based on a verb—an open-ended verb, right, so you don't know where it's going.

Deleuze: We need a third one.

The student: One objection I have to your… [*inaudible words*]

Deleuze: An objection? Ah, right… [*Laughter*]

Parnet: Not permitted!

The student: [*Inaudible words*] … conveying likeness, whether a likeness in relation or likeness in quality, which we'd normally think of as semantic analogy [*inaudible words*] in quality, as opposed to what would be relation-based analogy, and thus would be [*inaudible words*]. And the idea we end up with is that there's a kind of analogy that's structural. If it is structural…

Deleuze: You're the one drawing that conclusion. Not me, not me.

The student: Anyone would.

Deleuze: Oh, *anyone* would… well, then…. [*Laughter*]

The student: If it is structural, it's internal structure. It isn't external. Besides, when you refer to crystals by analogy, you say that crystals grow on the edges, but that's not what defines them. What defines them is their internal structure, so that has to change.

Deleuze: No. I don't think so.

Parnet: That works fine.

The first student: It doesn't work.

Deleuze: No, because at that point you have to say… no, you should just admit that such a definition of the crystal bleeds over into being a module, that it isn't a matter of molding. And what are crystallographers actually talking about when they talk about crystallization? They call it "seeding." It's a perfect example, then, of a module. It's not at all… yeah. No, unless we make adjustments, that wouldn't work. See, rather than a mold, an "internal mold," (again, I think it's a fantastic, wonderful concept) and modulation, we now have mold, module, modulation. The three forms of analogy. Look.

Anne Querrien: [*Inaudible comment*]

Deleuze: That's not all. As I see it, energy was what defined the external mold, but that—we'll see later… when it comes to art, energy is strictly subordinate to form. While elsewhere energy isn't subordinate to form. Those are the stages. You can distinguish them in terms of the three states of energy. Yes?

Comtesse: [*inaudible words*] … in disagreement with you: it's impossible to get around the particular problem of the voice in communication theory by directly translating it into the terms of *Anti-Oedipus*, to the extent that, in the work of—barring drastic over-simplification—to the extent that in Watzlawick's or Bateson's own work, what they fundamentally rule out is matter, energy, the unconscious. Instead of the unconscious—and this idea strikes me as total ideology—making symptoms depend on a circular causality of interpersonal interactions.

Anne Querrien: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: Well, it looks like we're all on the same page! [*Laughter*] Then… But in fact, Richard's comment is very important, and… [*Interruption of the recording*] [46:45]

… You're talking about a binary calculation, right?

Pinhas: It's bound to functional requirements. Whatever works.

Deleuze: Yes, that's right.

Deleuze: Yes. That's not wrong… Yes. But that's actually really helpful for explaining what articulation is.

Pinhas: But [*inaudible words*] … theoretical model comes out of practices [*inaudible words*]. Even when early computers began working, with the earliest computers—you find in Pascal's models, and so on—but they were discovered after, it started to get theorized afterwards. Computer meta-languages, including the advanced kinds like [*indistinct names of 1980s software*] that are used today, are derived from these laws. I mean, they came to appreciate that, effectively, computers function—computers broadly speaking, at least—function via a method of exclusion. Not that that's good or bad… [*inaudible words*]

Deleuze: That idea is crucial for our definition of articulation. Yes. It's fundamental.

Pinhas: Hence the necessity of articulation's definition, which we don't necessarily see with analog.

Deleuze: Well, you don't get articulation at all with analog.

Pinhas: Systematically, in every aspect of language, that is, in every operational computer language, whether for [*inaudible word*]-use or for [*inaudible word*]-use or whatever it might be, you'll run into articulation.

Deleuze: Okay. Well, this is perfect. Then let's move on; let's keep moving. Just one more thing I'll say, since we still have to come back to our business with painting, but I think… that… we're going to be much better equipped for when we do come back to it.

So… what is… in the technical sense, put in simplest terms… it'll be your job to expand on it, as always… in terms of technology, then, what is the act of modulation? As the limit, if you like, of every instance of molding or modeling. What is it? Well, two areas. I'll very briefly go over two areas in really childish terms, since I want to play it safe. The first area—see Richard Pinhas for any further comments or corrections. We distinguish two sorts of synthesizers: analog synthesizers and digital synthesizers. What's the difference? I mean, what is the basic difference, or what seems to be the basic difference between these two sorts of audio synthesizers?

See, I just want to find out if our concept of modulation speaks to technological applications. Well, analog synthesizers are called "modular." Digital synthesizers are called "integrated." What does it mean to be modular or integrated, in concrete terms? It means that in an analog or modular synthesizer, there is a connection between sounds; we hook up—I'm really simplifying things—disparate sounds. But this connection is forged on a genuinely "immanent plane" [*plan immanent*]. Put another way: when reproducing sound by connecting elements, producing a sound is achieved by means of a plane where everything is responsive. In other words, production is no less responsive than the product itself. In other words, every step of the process in an analog synthesizer is active and responsive. That's why the plane is immanent, since the process behind the product… the process of production is no less responsive than the product itself. At that point we can say there's genuinely a modulation. It's a modular synthesizer.

On the other hand, what characterizes the digital, or integrated, synthesizer? This time, the principle behind making the product—the produced audio—involves what's called an integrated plane, integrated specifically because it's distinct. What does this distinct plane actually entail? It entails homogenization and binarization. Binarization of so-called K-cases. Homogenization and binarization occur on a distinct, integrated plane. Such that the product's production entails a distinction between levels. The principle… [*Interruption of the recording*] [52:52]

Part 2

[*Overlap with previous tape:* … On the other hand, what characterizes the digital, or integrated, synthesizer? This time, the principle behind making the product—the produced audio—involves what's called an integrated plane, integrated specifically because it's distinct. What does this distinct plane actually entail? It entails homogenization and binarization. Binarization of so-called K-cases. Homogenization and binarization occur on a distinct, integrated plane. Such that the product's production entails a distinction between levels. The principle (*overlap end)*] … behind production won't be discernible in the product; it goes through an integrated plane and the binary code that constitutes it.

And this allows us to make a little bit of progress. This is because digital synthesizers have a [greater] productive capacity [*puissance*], I believe, than analog[65] synthesizers. How so? Already it's like something's telling us to stop thinking of the analog/digital distinction in terms of opposition, somehow it's possible (or desirable) to transplant code into analog in order to magnify analog's capacity [*puissance*]. [*Pause*] Do you see something to add here? I'm sticking to the basics in this.

Pinhas: Just one small thing. Digital methods [*inaudible words*] mathematical, countable time, while analog methods allow for a defining—one of their defining characteristics, in addition to the ones you described: real time.

Deleuze: In a way it's the same as—yes, it's the same thing. It follows directly from the idea of a principle of production that's just as discernible as the product, whereby time is necessarily real-time, whereas in the case of integrated planes where the plane is distinct—since you necessarily get non-real-time, because if you have a jump, you can only arrive at the product through an act of translation, conversion.

Pinhas: Building on that point, I don't know if it was a goal, but transplanting a digital control system into something, say, primarily analog—that'd be the norm in today's top-end systems…

Deleuze: That's right, that's right.

Pinhas: In other words, the only systems that operate efficiently in real-time are so-called hybrid systems, analog-based systems fitted with digital controls.

Deleuze: Yes, that's what is known as a true code transfer into analog. But what transfers code when it comes to painting? You can see it right away: the abstract painter. It's the abstract painter who pulls it off, and that's why all of painting's power involves abstraction. And that means…. it… That doesn't make painting abstract or mean that it ought to be abstract; it means that abstract painting consists in transferring code into the analog pictorial flow, and this is what gives painting power, so much so that, in a way, every painter makes use of abstraction; the diagram is in the painting itself. But then we start, we would start—see, something new is taking shape—no longer thinking of diagram and code as particularly opposed to each other but considering the possibility of transferring code into diagrams.

In other words, of doing—for those already familiar, I won't belabor it—of doing the complete opposite of Peirce. Because Peirce instead saw analog operations, diagram operations, within code. So, this would turn that on its head and make—well, it doesn't matter… Fine!

A second technological example, even simpler: What do you call a modulation when it comes to TV? What goes on there? What's the definition of modulation, if we're just looking it up in the dictionary? What does it tell us about modulation? It says that modulation is, right—it's an operation related to waves. It's the state a wave takes on—but in response to what? A so-called "carrier wave." What does it carry? Well, it depends on what signal is transmitted. The carrier wave is modulated according to the transmitted signal; see, it's simple. With the TV you look at every day, a carrier wave is modulated according to a transmitted signal. Alright? Good.

So, what does "modulate" mean? It means that you modify either the frequency or the amplitude of the wave—you're familiar with these two well-known terms: frequency modulation (FM), amplitude modulation (AM). You modify the amplitude or the frequency of the carrier wave according to the signal. Okay. What does the receiver do? It demodulates. That is, it recovers the signal. I'm barely scratching the surface; that's really rudimentary—but why do I find this interesting? Because it gives me a kind of rough example of what I call "produced resemblance."

Demodulation is the production of resemblance—how do you recover the signal? Not by conveying a likeness, [but] through modulation, i.e., by employing entirely different means. What other means? By altering the carrier wave's amplitude or frequency. All right. But in this case, see, I'm going with the easiest example: a continuous signal. What happens when the signal is discontinuous or discrete, or as they say, a signal consisting in a series of discrete pulses?

What if the signal is made of a series of discrete pulses? One of two outcomes. In this case, at any rate—before we get to the two outcomes—at any rate, you'll translate the carrier wave, which will give you something new, a sequence of periodic pulses. Converting the carrier wave into a sequence of periodic pulses. And then there are two outcomes.

First: with this sequence of periodic pulses, you either modify the pulse's amplitude, the duration—that is, the length of one pulse relative to that of another pulse—or the position, which is actually more interesting: see, you modify the pulse's position rather than its duration, that is, you offset its timing. Thus, you modify the amplitude, the duration, or the position. That's the first case, and that's what modulation is. Consider what problem that's meant to address. It's... it's a matter of—and this is very important for our purposes—of demonstrating when modulation can grasp the discontinuous as such. You can carry out a modulation of the discontinuous and a modulation of the discrete.

Second—something even more important, an even more modern process, which was invented around 1900 or so: binary code. More specifically, binary in 0-1: "0" when there's no pulse, "1" when there is a pulse. That's the best system. What do you get by grouping pulses in binary code? You get exactly the same result as what we just looked at: a transplant of code into analogical material or flux.

So far, so good. I'm trying to draw some conclusions before you… cut in, if… so, here's the point of this long tangent on the concept of modulation. As I see it, what we get from this is a concept of modulation that goes from mold to modulation proper. [Which] via the module, starts to take shape. The second point: from one point of view, we think of modulation and articulation, analog and digital, as two completely opposite determinations. But from another point of view, we could say that every digital language and every code is deeply embedded in an analogical flux. In other words, every code is in truth grafted onto an analog ground or an analogical flux.

The third point: analogy, in the strictest sense—or in an aesthetic sense—can be defined as modulation. How so? Precisely because there's no conveyance of qualitative likeness in an aesthetic operation, or an operation of the molding type, apparently at least, because there isn't simply a module conveying internal relations but a real modulation, that is, producing likeness through dissimilar means, non-resembling means. The production of resemblance through completely different means. The production of resemblance through non-resembling means. And that's what presence is, what we call the presence of the figure.

So, I'll come back to my definition of painting: if we're going to add yet another—there are so many definitions of painting—at least ours is framed by our problem, so it's sure to suit our purposes. We can't be sure that it's right, but at any rate it's no worse than any other definition. And besides, it's necessary because we formed it based on everything we covered before.

Thus, I'd say that to paint is to modulate, but *what* modulates *what*? What does it modulate, on what basis? Because to modulate is always to modulate *something* in accordance with *something*. It's to modulate *according to plan*.[66] Alright then. It's to modulate according to plan. What do you modulate to plan, that is, on a surface? The canvas. What is the "wave" in painting? The wave is quite straightforward. I can't say exactly what it is, because it's and/or, and/or—well, what is it? The wave, the carrier wave, is light *or* color. It's light *and* color.

To paint is to modulate light; it's to modulate color. Now we're echoing Cézanne: "modulate." But the word "modulate"—the way Cézanne uses it—is all the more interesting given that he sometimes contrasts it with something well-established in painting: modeling. See, we're back in the sequence: mold, model, modulate. Molding, modeling, modulation. Does Cézanne's achievement make him better than someone who came before? No, that's not how it is. But what sort of modulation does Cézanne claim to use? Simply from looking at a Cézanne, it's not a modulation of light. It's a modulation of color. And it's precisely because he finds—because Cézanne invents a new regime of color that invokes the concept of modulation. Right. And everyone else? Well, whatever it was they were doing, they weren't yet modulating color. Then we might have to ask, does that mean they're modulating light? But does modulating light follow the same rules as when you modulate color? I'm not so sure.

Cut to [Pierre] Bonnard's notes. Of all the great painters, Bonnard is among those who had the least to say. It's a pity because his notes are all… they're all gems. We find this in Bonnard's notes; we find the following quote—this is nearly *verbatim*: "With a single drop of oil—Titian would make a whole arm with a single dollop of oil. Cézanne, on the other hand, wanted his choice of every color to be deliberate."[67] It's a nice thought, but, well, what exactly is Bonnard trying to say?

Painters take one dollop of oil and paint an entire arm with a single color. That's not how Cézanne does things. Appreciate the fact that we're already dealing with the continuous and the discontinuous. Cézanne wanted every color to be deliberate. That is, he proceeded by juxtaposing colors. He painted an arm by juxtaposing colors. How so? By following a law. What law? A law of modulation. And for him, then, it's literally a modulation. Using the technical terms from earlier: it's a modulation via discrete pulses.

And what sort of modulation is the other method? He paints a whole arm with one color—it's obviously not a color modulation using discrete pulses; it's a modulation in continuity, which uses values instead of tones.

All values of a single color. All right. Our problem of the continuous and discontinuous, now in terms of modulation. Perfectly illustrated by Bonnard's comment on two approaches to painting an arm. Anyway. What does that mean? I mean, at this stage, if it's true that painting is the modulation of light or the modulation of color—or both at once—there will be extremely diverse kinds of modulation. We're left with a major problem: the problem of painting. At any rate, it would mean modulating. Okay, modulating—do we mean modulating broadly speaking, in a way equally applicable to molding or modeling? Or is it modulating in a strict sense, such that it's distinct from any sort of molding or modeling? We'll leave both options on the table and say that it's sometimes one, sometimes the other.

Finally, the last question: to modulate is to modulate *something*—light or color. But on what basis? What's the "signal" here? Modulation is based on a signal, a signal to be transmitted. What would the signal be? In other words, what is the signal of painting? It isn't the model. The model is already an instance, is already an instance where modulation comes down to, where it tends or leans toward the mold. So, if the transmitted signal isn't the same as the model, the model is simply a form of modulation in the broad sense. What is the signal? The signal is space. A painter paints nothing but space—and maybe time, too, but uh… they never paint anything other than space-time: that's the signal. The signal to be transmitted onto the canvas is *space*.

But what space? Perhaps the main styles of painting differ according to the nature of their spaces, the nature of their space-times. A space-time to be transmitted on canvas. All right. That gives me my complete definition: To paint is to modulate light, color, or light and color based on a signal space.

Well, it's still missing something—what do we get? What do we get? We get the figure, we get resemblance, we get a resemblance more profound than photographic resemblance. A resemblance to the thing which is more profound than the thing itself. We get a non-similar resemblance, i.e., resemblance produced through different means. The act of modulation is comprised precisely of these different means. What results from modulating light or color according to a signal space? The thing in its presence. Hence the focus of painting isn't the same once it resembles something; it's not figurative, clearly, since what's on the canvas is the thing itself. With that, I have all the parts of my definition.

As a result, there are only two problems left to consider, which is perfect, since it's the end of the year. Uh, two problems, two sets of problems: what are the major signal-spaces? What are the main signal-spaces in painting? First problem. Second problem: How does modulation work in each of these spaces? I mean, it's obvious, it goes without saying, that if you look at the Egyptian signal-space, it's not the same as the Byzantine signal-space.

So, if there were such a thing as a sociology of painting, you can see what it would mean: the identification of painting's signal-spaces based on groups or civilizations or collectivities. You could refer to them like people normally would: a Renaissance space, an Egyptian space, etc. And you'd figure out what form of modulation, in the broad sense, corresponds to the signal-space of an art, a period of art—whether molding, modeling, or modulation proper—as well as the laws governing this correspondence.

Yes, there was a comment earlier—no other comments? That's fine. You have a comment?

Anne Querrien: Current research into television technology is working on liquid crystal displays, where the image will—color will be displayed discretely point by point, and there won't be any grain like there is with TVs today, which make tiny… by combining red, green… sometimes black.

Deleuze: Won't that involve transplanted code?

Anne Querrien: Absolutely—then the screen becomes responsive, is grafted onto an analogical flux. The signal is still digitally coded, but the screen corresponds to what you've defined analogically.

Deleuze**:** Wonderful! Wonderful!

Another student: Like fiction, how advertisement from the future is described. Messages fed through crystals, some sort of Martian… And how they work is, like, they come into your home and constantly repeat their message.

Deleuze: What a time to be alive!

Pinhas: Just to support something important you were saying about the research. You brought up bundling discrete—or encoded—information, and that's so central to the discourse surrounding recent communication technology that they have a name for these groups of pulses: they're called *packets.*

Deleuze: Packets?

Pinhas: Not in French, in English.

Deleuze**:** In French?

Pinhas: Paquets, information packets, all the more important due to the fact that they've made networks, both private and national, for transmitting these packets; they're transmitting data, they're transmitting discrete pulses, and the national French network is called TRANSPAC. It's national—private groups aren't allowed to use it. It's not an obscure network, but it's not widely known yet. Which makes it so that you can send a packet of information from Paris to Lyon, or from Paris to Los Angeles. Transpac means easing and shortening the transmission of packets; because the information is bundled into packets, of course, we get the accumulation you were talking about, and it's become a key concept for communication technology.

Deleuze: Great! So can we steal a packet! [*Laughter*] [*Interruption of the recording, apparently following a break*] [1:21:46]

… [*Pause*] Well, since there are only two things left to cover, let's start with the first: the nature of signal-spaces. [*Pause, sounds of chairs and students as they return*] And I'd like to start things off with one type of space in particular. Just arbitrarily, so that we can try… bear this in mind: as we think about spaces, always come back to a central problem as our touchstone—that of modulation. Therefore, I'm picking signal-spaces based on what we need regarding the category of modulation.

And I'd like to come back to something I touched on years ago but under different circumstances: What space did so-called Western art come from, or: What exactly is Egyptian space, ultimately? Egyptian space being an example of a signal-space that inspires forms of painting and sculpture. I'm getting this from an author who's starting to take off in France but who still doesn't get his due, a Viennese author, a very important Austrian author from the late 19th, early 20th century named Alois Riegl. Because his contribution to aesthetics is indisputable. And, in particular, some of his analyses focused on Egyptian space. I'll list Riegl's main works to show you a bit—it's a book on… that's titled *Problems of Style*, so great, where among other things he discusses the evolution of certain decorative elements. When he moves from Egypt into Greece. Another really great book from Riegl: *The Group Portraiture of Holland.* Finally, there's what's thought to be his main work, *Late Roman Art Industry*.[68] And finally, to my knowledge the only book translated into French: *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*.

But *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts* still gives you an idea of Riegl's thought, so drawing from *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts* and *Late Roman Art Industry,* I'd like to work out a few characteristics that will pave the way for what's to come. Characteristics Riegl uses to describe Egyptian space, and you'll see that it works well with the idea of a signal.

Anyway, I'll delineate a few characteristics: the first characteristic—I'm getting this, I should point out, I'm getting this from Riegl. The first characteristic, one of Riegl's basic ideas, is that art is never defined by what one *can* do but by what one *will* do. At art's core there is a *will.*[69] And from a certain perspective, he holds on to a sort of idealist standard. Material—it's the idea that material always bends to a will. And that it's not a question of saying, "The artist didn't know how to do it." There is no know-how [*savoir-faire*], or at least, it's fundamentally subordinate to what Riegl calls a *will-do* [*vouloir-faire*]. The approach works for us because it's not me—the problems pose themselves. What's the deal with this "will-do"? What is it? Just what exactly is this "will-to-art"? He keeps coming back to this will-to-art.

But if we accept this point of departure, what is it that they want? What does the Egyptian artist want? Riegl's response is very brief: the Egyptian artist, as an Egyptian man—what does he want? He wants to extract essence. That itself should be noteworthy, because here we have somebody who isn't a philosopher, who's telling us that the Egyptian artist extracts essence—from what? From appearance. Why would they want to do that? Because appearance is what changes; it's the variable phenomenon. The phenomenon is appearance: appearance is tumultuous, appearance is dangerous, appearance is in flux, from which essence is extracted. Eternal essence. Simply put: essence, eternal essence, is individual essence. It's about preserving the individual in its essence. Thus, subtracting it from the world of appearance.

What should we, insofar as we're doing philosophy, take away from that? Because there's an odd discrepancy here: we're usually told that this is a *Greek* gesture. This seems like a minor detail, but it'll be important for us later on. Indeed, we're told, well, think of Nietzsche's writing, when he defines metaphysics and Plato. We're told that the fundamental axis of Greek metaphysics is the opposition between two worlds: a world of essences which is abstracted from appearances, a world of calm, eternal essences. Thus, a refuge beyond appearances; Nietzsche describes the enterprise of Greek metaphysics as this distinction between essence and appearance, as drawing essence out of appearances.

And Heidegger takes up this aspect of Nietzsche; it's intriguing—I mean, what's intriguing. Why is this relevant for us? After all, Riegl, on the subject of art, used these terms not to define Greek art but in order to define *Egyptian* art, as an Egyptian approach. It's reminiscent of the *Timaeus*, where Plato has the Egyptians say, "You Greeks are never anything but children to us." You Greeks are only children. So, what if we were wrong to define the Greek world by the distinction between essence and appearance, if it was actually a definition better suited, not to the Greek world, but to the Egyptian world? And what does Egypt have to say? What does Egypt say? What does the Egyptian say, according to Riegl? The Egyptian focuses on what's called the *ka*—that's "*ka*," k-a—a copy or double of one's individual essence, removed at death, etc., etc. It's the *double,* the subtracted double, freeing essence from randomness, from change.

But what is this essence? This individual essence. Its law is that of enclosure. It's closed off, shielded from accident, shielded from the flow of phenomena, shielded from variation—it's enclosed; it's an enclosed unity. The enclosed unity of the individual. What enclosure? Well, the contour. Individual essence is established by the contour which encloses it. Well, what is that? Riegl tells us that it's geometric abstraction. Enclosure is the abstract geometric line that surrounds the individual essence and shelters it from becoming. Every figure, that is, every individual essence's contour will be isolated. Well, there you have it, the will to extract essence from nature. Which Riegl—only, the translation says "improves nature":[70] it is art intended to improve on nature. Never, as Riegl says, is art meant to imitate nature; there are several things it can purport to do. According to Riegl, it can do three things: improve nature, spiritualize it, or re-create it. Egyptian art improves nature by extracting isolated essences from the phenomenal, from becoming.

Second characteristic: if the Egyptian will-to-art is to extract essence, how does it go about it? Through what means? Riegl says it's via surface-level transcription. The tool Egyptian art uses to reveal individual essences is the flat surface… how does that ward off the accidental, the changeable, or becoming? It's a matter of suppressing spatial relations by making them—by transforming them into planimetric relations, i.e., pinning them down onto a plane. Thus, Egyptian art uses the contour to isolate the form onto a plane. Contour isolating form onto a plane. See, it all comes down to space: what is *planned* [*planifié*] space? Indeed, variations come about—variations emerge, becoming emerges—through depth, through spatial relationships. Open spatial relationships are suppressed, giving way to a *planning* [*planification*] of space. There are no more relations; the aesthetic relationship is the one on the plane [*sur le plan*].[71] So, on the plane, the contour isolates the form or the individual essence; the contour is the geometric line, the figure is the individual essence, and the contour isolates the individual figure onto the plane.

Well, what does that mean? How do we translate that? Everything's become—all the relations are *planned.* Meaning that, for the Egyptian artist, form and ground absolutely, positively must be on the same plane. For form and ground to be equally close, equally close to each other and equally close to ourselves. So, that makes the Egyptian approach clearer: as close to each other as to ourselves. We take up both form and ground on the same plane.

What is that? Form and ground will be close to each other and no less close to us, the viewer. What does that mean exactly henceforth? Hey… [*Pause, Deleuze is interrupted by someone changing a cassette rather loudly*] In concrete terms, it is bas-relief; in essence, Egyptian art is bas-relief or what amounts to bas-relief—what's the opposite of bas-relief? High relief.

High relief—as if there were three stages: bas-relief, high relief, and then… and then what? Bas-relief is when the relief is barely distinct from the ground, on the verge of having form and ground on the same plane; you take in form and ground on the same plane. Then high relief: no shadow or very little shadow, no modeling. No overlapping figures…in accordance with the Egyptian will to art: no overlapping figures—as an example, no overlapping figures: almost a law in Egyptian art. Indeed, if figures are individual essences set off by a contour, having figures overlap would fundamentally be a flaw, and yet, and in fact, if form and ground are on the same plane, there are no overlapping figures; figures overlap insofar as there are distinct planes. Having figures overlap already implies… [*Interruption of the recording; there is overlap of the end of this paragraph into the following one*] [1:39:41]

Part 3

[*Overlap begins:* … and yet, and in fact, if form and ground are on the same plane, there are no overlapping figures; figures overlap insofar as there are distinct planes. Having overlapping figures already implies (*end of overlap)*] an art capable of distinguishing between different planes. Is it because the Egyptians didn't know how to make figures overlap? They didn't know how? Was it a lack of know-how [*savoir-faire*]? Not at all. In fact, sometimes, sometimes—in very rare instances—figures do overlap. When do figures overlap in Egyptian bas-relief? Oddly enough, among other things, it happens in battle scenes… in battle scenes and with rows of prisoners in particular. As if having figures overlap referred us to a world of variation and becoming only suitable for those who have lost their essence.

So, they knew how to do it, strictly speaking, but it ran counter to their will-to-art. Bas-relief means rejecting shadow, rejecting overlap, rejecting depth. Form and ground belong on the same plane. These rejections do not betray a lack of knowledge [*savoir-faire*] but the presence of will [*vouloir-faire*]. Which means what, exactly? Riegl is brilliant as always—Riegl is such a genius. For example, he analyzes drapery [*le pli*], the evolution of drapery, the folds in clothing. And he says, "Look at the folds in Egyptian bas-relief..." – Oh yeah, I forgot the rest -- Look at bas-relief; you'll see… High relief is when the relief is much more distinctive. There is a contrast between ground and foreground. As a result, you can almost imagine them turning. And finally, finally, a breakthrough—but is it a breakthrough or a shift in artistic will? [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:42:39]

… going around the statue. Right. Bas-relief is characteristically Egyptian. You might object that there are many Egyptian statues one can walk around. Sure, yeah, there are. But consider the circumstances. Like where there are figures that overlap—yeah, but shouldn't we note that it's mainly with rows of prisoners? When figures overlap, it's like they've been relegated to the world of phenomena. Anyway.

I was talking about folds. It's enough to compare Egyptian and Greek folds. And Riegl has some great passages on this. He writes: "Looking at the drapery, it's laid as if it were pasted down." But "pasted down" isn't criticism. The Egyptian fold, Egyptian drapery, is pasted down, and as a rule, they don't pile on layers. Riegl also provides reproductions and analyzes the lining, tucked up at the bottom of a dress, forming a double layer. How all of that is essentially flattened out on the same plane. The drapery is pasted down. There is no groove deep enough to cast a shadow. See, it's a flattened fold, as if it were ironed.

And Riegl starts to wax lyrical: “Indeed, compare this with the Greek fold.” Ah, the Greek fold. The Greek fold is something quite different. The dancer leaps, and how is she draped? Wow—such a different sense of harmony! Now with the chest, the drapery goes like this, is curved based on a kind of uh, a law of proportion. What would we call it? Let’s just say it follows a module. A module containing internal, variable relations. With the chest, it’s this movement, and with the legs. See, the suppleness of Greek drapery. Now that doesn’t mean that Greeks knew how to do something the Egyptians didn’t: by no means. Not that saying so would be wrong—just that it would be meaningless. What we can say is that they certainly didn’t interpret clothing in the same way. What could we say? About clothing? Here I’m getting away from Riegl—but it’s totally his idea, so not really. What might we say about clothing, the two opposite types of clothing. You could say, for instance, that Greek [Egyptian?] clothing[72] is where an edge is folded back onto another, and then the fold is flattened out as if it were ironed. We should call it “crystalline clothing.” It’s like Greek [Egyptian?] bodies are clothed in crystal. Crystalline clothing.

What about Greek drapery or clothing? It’s organic clothing. The laws have changed. Egyptian folds exhibit crystallinity. The Greek fold display organicism.[73] Then there are still other kinds of folds. I mean, if we went through the history of drapery—you could, right, if you wanted to—with drapery, you’ll find for example—but we’d have to take it pretty far; for one, we’d have to go through all of the Middle Ages, where drapery has an important role to play in Christian painting. But anyway, at some point we’d see that clothing changes in nature; it’s no longer organic.

For example, in the 17th century we’ll see—I won’t get into it here, but if it tells us anything, we’re just flagging things for later—it’s that clothing ceases to be organic in order to become optical clothing. Folding becomes a purely optical reality. Like the random folds in 17th century painting—like the fold-marks [*pli-trait*] are no long fold-lines [*pli-ligne*]. With the Greeks it’s still a harmonious line.

But that doesn’t matter—there’d be a long history and all sorts of variations in clothing in painting, in drapery, but what does that mean? Is it a coincidence that Riegl specifically says Egyptian laws are crystalline, geometric? And indeed, the significance of the contour—it’s the contour that isolates—what role does the contour play?

So, at the point we’ve reached, since according to our second characteristic, see our second… our first characteristic was the enclosed individual essence… then our second characteristic is that form and ground are necessarily on the same plane. Form is apprehended on the same plane as the ground.

Then what is the contour? It’s very interesting. The contour—insofar as form and ground are taken up on the same plane—the contour is independent from form. The contour is autonomous. It’s the geometric contour; it’s independent from organic form. Geometric contours. In other words, it stands on its own—why? Because it’s the boundary shared by form and ground on the same plane. It’s the boundary shared by form and ground on the same plane, so it’s autonomous; it doesn’t depend directly on the form; it doesn’t depend on the ground. It separates and relates the two indissolubly. It unites form with the ground and separates form from the ground. Where does it reunite them and where does it separate them? On the very same plane. The contour's autonomy. So, the contour is crystalline-geometric.

As a result, Egyptian relief or painting has three distinct elements: the ground (one that's calm because emptied of any phenomenal matter), the individual form (a stable, eternal essence), and the geometric contour that both separates the one from the other and joins them together on the same plane. It's a world that's crystalline-geometric.

What makes us Egyptian? We're all Egyptian because in a way, the Egyptians established the three elements of painting. They established the three basic elements of painting: ground, figure, and contour. Now you'll say, "That's too simplistic." No, not really—not really. What is it that brings Egypt back to life in our paintings? Quite a few things, perhaps. Perhaps this way no less than the other way around. We don't even know where the other way around comes from. I'm looking for what's Egyptian. All painting endeavors to minimize the difference between planes. It's… it's a pretty recent development in painting or innovation in painting: a delightful development known as weak depth. Weak depth, or… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:52:30]

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes, that's fine… yes, yes, yes…

The student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes, they are a seafaring people…

The student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Very good, very good… Perfect. [*Pause*] … What?

Anne Querrien: [*Inaudible*]

Claire Parnet [*to Deleuze*] : Spinoza ?

Deleuze: Well, there we have a sort of geography… You see, yes, with a modern painting—coming back to a particularly striking example, a painter I talked about a lot last time: Francis Bacon. -- What's so immediately striking in his paintings. Granted it's not Egyptian art, but what lets us say that, well, Bacon *is* an Egyptian, but it's not just that. He's an Egyptian.

Look at a painting: there's a sort of -- most, really, a large majority of Bacon's paintings, see, have three distinct elements—much more distinct, I think, than with any other painter today. But when you try to pick out these elements, you'll find it isn't hard with Bacon—you can spot it right away—he's a painter where the ground is made up of fields. They're fields. Straight off, you can see fields in a Bacon painting. And sections of fields—the field is more or less varied; sometimes it's a completely uniform field, which makes the figure… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:54:45]

… It’s fine, introduced into the field [*a jump in the recording*] … it’s not simply monotone, or mono… [*a jump in the recording*] … a monochrome field. Then you have a figure. A figure. And this figure, well, it’s always athletic, contorted. Obviously, the figure isn’t Egyptian, but it’s just as clear as an Egyptian essence.

And then you have a third element. For an example, I’ll use the cover of this book: see, so, you have fields—for instance, there’s this purple field, a gray field, a yellow—you get the idea, and then there’s the third element, this strange round area, this lovely round area here on the door. Generally speaking, Bacon is much more classical—that is, he puts round areas around the figure’s feet. Now that should tell us something about this history, the enduring persistence of Egyptian elements. If there’s something more important still, as far as color regimes are concerned—after all, it wasn’t out of piety that Christian artists, Christian painters, bothered with halos as much as they did. What exactly are halos? Even within one and the same halo, you can distinguish between a pictorial halo and a religious halo. Why they liked them so much—it’s clear that they took great pleasure in their halos.

The Byzantines were no strangers to halos—a halo really is something. A halo can be whatever you want. It can be a fantastic burst of color, it can be a fantastical light source; halos have to do with modulation. Okay, but primarily what are they? A halo is a certain state of being that begins with Egypt, namely, the contour that’s independent of form. What comes to occupy it is what’s left of a contour independent of form. The form of the head is lodged in the haloed contour. The halo distinguishes between form and ground, though it might be on the same plane, or sometimes there are different planes—at that point, while that’s changed, the independent contour that relates form to ground and ground to form will live on in the halo.

And there, Bacon—it’s as if, in this age of atheism, the halo comes back to catch us by the foot. Which would be breathtakingly insulting to any pious heart, a halo around the feet instead of around the head, but it carries out the same principle of the independent contour. Now in what sense is Bacon modern? He’s particularly modern since all modern painting is at stake in his work—how so? Because on close inspection, this figure, well, see, normally it would be a case—we’ll come back to this later—of so-called thin depth, a thin depth achieved by something other than perspective. But here that isn’t what matters—what does matter? Really, it’s the separation of three elements.

To my knowledge, I think no living painter goes as far as Bacon does in keeping three pictorial elements separated: figure, contour, ground. By transforming the entire ground into a field, by isolating the figure and the contour as relating field-to-figure and figure-to-field onto what’s presumably the same plane, or nearly the same plane. Okay, if this is modern painting, what about it is modern? It’s because you can easily see what ultimately interests him lies in these three elements, the regimes of color. What matters here is a kind of—a certain way of modulating color. More specifically, that there will be one modulation when it comes to the field, a very different modulation with the figure, and lastly, the halo’s role, the contour’s role in allowing for a sort of exchange between colors.

But obviously, that wasn’t the point for the Egyptians. But you could say that a painter like Bacon revives the three elements of bas-relief, whether looking at a Bacon painting or when reading Bacon's interviews, you'll happen upon a rather curious passage where Bacon says, "I've been very much thinking about sculpture." Well, this is interesting. He goes on, "Each time I want to do it I get the feeling that perhaps I could do it better in painting. So, I gave up on sculpture."[74] It's fascinating. He literally says, I'd like to do sculpture, but I can't make it work since my ideas for sculpture have already been addressed in my painting. What's happening here?

Let's go back to the Egyptians. A bas-relief is actually the transition between painting and sculpture. Is colored bas-relief sculpture? Is it painting? It's not paint on canvas, okay, but it is mural painting. It's really at the boundary between sculpture and painting. Indeed, there are problems that painting and sculpture share in common. But their common ground lies precisely in bas-relief—or at least some of their common ground lies in bas-relief.

As Bacon continues, he says, "Here is the sculpture I dream about." He says, "There would be three elements." That's not me messing with the text; that's literally what he says.[75] "There would be three elements," and he calls them "armature"—"the first element would be 'armature,'" he says, "and then there would be the figure," he says. Then he goes on: "I'd be able to move the figures around on top of the armature." Well, that's something—he'd slide the figure along the armature. He would slide it, right… See, but that specifically belongs to [the Egyptian tradition?]; it's really on the same plane; it slides. What would that be? By all accounts, the sort of sculpture he's describing works like a movable bas-relief, where the figures can slide on the wall. And he says, "As a result, my figures would look like they're rising out of pools."[76]

And indeed, there's a painting by Bacon that contains these three elements; it's incredible. There's a sidewalk as the field, a sort of dog—like a really stocky, mean bulldog—coming out of a pool, a pool of water or pee—I don't know what it is, it doesn't matter—but really, the figure comes out of the pool and onto the field of the sidewalk. Anyway, there are three elements: figure, ground/field, and contour, the pool. The contour becomes independent, and the figure comes out of the pool onto the same plane as the field, and the pool relates the figure to the field, the field to the figure.

So how is he *not* Egyptian? It's interesting that he tells us, "I couldn't do sculpture because I had already achieved [what I wanted to do] in painting. No, I won't get anything else from sculpture." Sculpture is how he wanted to achieve it, but it's through painting that he pulled it off. In other words: he could no longer be Egyptian because no one can be Egyptian anymore. So you have to make do with what you've got. Bas-relief, no matter what you do… of course, there are painters who've returned to bas-relief. Does that reflect [*someone coughs*] a present-day will to art? I can't say. But it's clear what it means. In what sense is Bacon Egyptian? I think it's because he's the modern painter whose Egyptian pictorial elements remain the most distinct and—how to put this— "equiplanar," on the same plane: the ground/field, the figure/essence, and the independent contour.

Hence you see why—back to Riegl—you see why, in the authentically Egyptian world, that's fully realized in bas-relief: bas-relief, which minimizes shadows, modeling, depth, what else? -- I'm blanking -- overlapping figures, it keeps them to a minimum or even does away with them altogether, with figures separated from each other, etc. … and everything such that form and ground are on the same plane. That's what we're calling geometric crystallinity. All right, you follow me so far? Just one more thing. Okay, that's how it goes with bas-relief. You'll agree that that works for bas-relief.

Okay, but what about the statues you can walk around? Statues aside, what then? What does all this mean? Everything on the same plane. Their houses, *their houses*, were ultimately intended to suppress volume. They were constantly trying to avoid volume because volume belongs to space, the matrix of becoming, the matrix of that which changes. It's shadow, it's relief, it's high relief, it's modeling, etc., etc. It runs counter to the world of the living. No easy task to put the world into the field [*en aplat*], that's Egypt's accomplishment. They managed to do it. But anyway, then, how do you get way from volume—outside of bas-relief? Riegl's answer is great… He says: "When you get right down to it, that's what the pyramid is all about." This part of Riegl is so nice. The pyramid is an ingenious shape, ingenious because it exorcises… The cube! … [*Interruption of the recording*] [2:06:23]

… It's all there, everything about the cube: shadow, and maybe also light, modeling, the inside, etc.–everything that can't belong in a flat world. The cube is like the primary expression of spatial relationships, of relations in space.

But we have to purge all spatial relations in order to translate them onto a single plane—which is what the pyramid does for the cube. And what's actually going on; how does the pyramid do away with the cube? Well, consider the fact that pyramids are religious monuments; what do they contain? They house a small burial chamber, the Pharaoh's burial chamber. But looking at a pyramid you wouldn't know—couldn't know—that it was made for a cube, and furthermore, it wouldn't make sense to say that it was. The pyramid is the process whereby the burial cube, the cube of death, is hidden away, subtracted. It's replaced, improved upon—the Rieglian concept of improvement fully applies here—the pyramid improves upon it.

And what exactly *is* a pyramid? Instead of a cube, it presents you with one side unifying three isosceles triangles, a well-defined surface unifying three isosceles triangles.[77] Then, of course, there's this movement, this kind of slope, which is just the plane's tribute to space, we'll have to… but which will be a way of transcribing spatial relationships as planimetric relationships. And this is what the pyramid is all about: translating volume into surface relationships. Isn't that beautiful? Lovely, it's a lovely thought.

As a result, on the contrary, you can draw out your little tune. By comparison, what is Greek architecture? Greek architecture will be the explosion, the emancipation of the cube. Already that opens, see, that opens up quite a few possibilities—you've done so well up to this point, so I'd like you to keep drawing it out yourselves. As Cézanne once said, "treat nature in terms of the cylinder, the sphere..." Oh, what does he say? Shoot, I forgot the third… the cone! That's it. "Treat nature in terms of the cylinder, the sphere, and the cone, with everything put in perspective."[78]

Many scholars have remarked how mysterious it is that Cézanne left cubes off his list. It's interesting why he leaves cubes out. Because, when you think about Greek art, the answer is simple. When you consider Greek art, the cubic form is the foundation for spatial relations. Even for someone like Michelangelo, for example. The figure's spatial coordinates form a cube. It's been that way ever since the Greeks. The character, the Greek temple is fundamentally cubic. Well, then, if Cézanne comes along and excludes the cube, it's because his primary concern lies elsewhere. Not with the Egyptians, nor the Greeks, nor with the Renaissance, etc. Right, so we have to appreciate how important that is.

But what is an Egyptian house? Their houses aren't pyramids, right, but what are they? They're [like the bases] of pyramids, that is, it's a house made of slanted trapezoids. And what's the decorative motif? The famous concave palmette. Really, the concave palmette is minimally raised, as raised as it's allowed to be. The plane will be on a slant. The pyramidal plane was a slanted plane and one that called for, or had a decorative correlate in, palmettes or half-palms.

And again Riegl, in a particularly brilliant moment, tries to demonstrate how the palmette undergoes a series of transformations in the Greek world—what do we get? We get something totally different: acanthus leaves, the famous acanthus leaves on Greek temples. While from the perspective of reproducing nature, you see, what acanthus is very important. It's a weed. What is a weed doing in temple? If the goal was imitation, obviously the Greeks wouldn't have chosen a weed as tribute to the gods.

But what Riegl demonstrates beautifully is that qualms with representation aside, the acanthus leaf is like a three-dimensional projection of the palmette. It's great—this is from *Problems of Style*; well, anyway. I'm just noting, this is where I'll wrap things up—see, the significance of… it's not restricted to bas-relief; pyramids and Egyptian houses are equally motivated by what Riegl characterizes as the Egyptian will to art: form and ground are presented and are taken up on one and the same plane. As a result, the space particular to the Egyptians is one where form and plane [ground][79] are on the same plane.

Our final point—the last point: what is… well what does… what does this signal-space look like? What is it? What does it evoke in us? What in us corresponds to this signal-space? We'll see next time. That's all. [*Sounds of students; end of the session*] [2:13:51]

Gilles Deleuze

Painting and the Question of Concepts

Session 6, 19 May 1981

Transcriptions: Voix de Deleuze, Part 1, Nicolas Lehnebach (duration 46 :36); Part 2, Fatemeh Malekah (duration 46:32); Part 3, Binak Kalludra (duration 37 :12) ; time stamp and revised transcription, Charles J. Stivale

Translated by Billy Dean Goehring

Part 1

… On the other hand, I'm in a tough spot because I'm of a mind to draw up some very basic color diagrams [*schémas*]—actually, that preempts what I'm about to say, but I'm thinking I won't have the courage to re-draw them next time, if you know what I mean.

So, if you like, you'll recall that we were in the middle of our analysis of Egyptian space, but I'll make a brief aside on these color diagrams [*schémas*] which I will need next time, and that's it. Then I'll explain them; that way I won't have to draw them again. I was an idiot; I started my drawings and then thought, *no!* And now that will have to do, you know? At least I won't have to do them next time. No, I'll draw them for you now. That's what you want, right? Right away. So, I'm going to go through with it, just to do it all over again [*Laughter*] —great! [*Noise*] I'm not really starting, but it's true that... [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence; there is a brief sequence of crowd noises, laughter*] [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:39]

… [*Pause; Deleuze's voice is heard away from the microphone, probably next to the blackboard*] As a starting point, you have… and you'll see it in these two figures: one is an equilateral triangle, here [*Deleuze tapes firmly on the board, laughter*] the other is a circle… the former is known as Goethe's "color triangle", the other is the so-called color wheel… [*Indistinct words*] I'll try to work through Goethe's propositions to make sure you can learn something from this. Apologies to those who already know all this.[80]

The first proposition: Goethe starts with a very important theme—I mean, if you understand this, you might understand the whole thing and how it all develops from [*indistinct words*] … he puts a lot of emphasis on it and the problems tied to color—he emphasizes the dark side of color. Color is dark—what does it mean to say that color is dark? It doesn't mean that he privileges dark colors; that would miss the point [*indistinct words*], there are dark colors, but when he talks about the dark side of color, he clearly has something else in mind. "Color" can be said to have a dark side, since it is the darkening of light. No doubt it's also the illumination of black. It is the darkening of white as well as the illumination of black—and how does it darken white? Darkened white is yellow, [*Pause*] and illuminated black is blue. [*Pause*]

There we have our two so-called primitive or primary colors, yellow and blue. See, here are yellow and blue in the color triangle—an equilateral triangle which itself breaks down into equilateral triangles. Say I want to form a color triangle out of equilateral triangles; if I put them in order, I'd have my two equilateral triangles [*Deleuze writes on the board*] at both ends of the base... yellow and blue. [*Pause*]

Due to the dark aspect of color, darkened light, color is inseparable from movement. You can sense that this is all really very, very rudimentary, but it's so Goethe, it's not surprising that this book was still… you didn't treat it [*indistinct words*] … Color is inseparable from a movement yet to be determined. You see what he did, it's already extraordinary, he started with white and black, but he cuts from white and black, he sort of changes direction. If you take a ray of light in depth and if you take white and black in depth, you find the whole range of colors sort of spread out, made distinct; that's how—I think that Goethe's deep concern – it is how color spreads out and becomes distinct from light, in relation to white and black.

And it's from this dark stage—darkened light, which implies an illuminated black—that all color unfurls. Initially in the form of yellow and blue, but I think there's movement that's already dynamic. Yellow as darkened light, blue as illuminated black—there's already a whole dynamic. What do we call this nascent dynamism? At the point now where—not in terms of white and black, since there we already have two colors, but in terms of yellow and blue—where the dynamism of color actually emerges.

Goethe has several names for the dynamism of color: intensification, saturation, darkening. Why darkening? In light of the dark side of color. [*Pause*] The intensification of yellow, or its darkening, into red. It's a simple experiment: you stack up several layers of yellow. In overlaying color on color, you have, you can discern, yellow's dynamic tendency toward red. Thus, you darken yellow. [*Pause*]

However—I think there's something important going on here in Goethe's work—however, you also move into red when you soften blue. What do I mean by softening blue? Blue is illuminated black. If you say that I'm softening blue, you mean that I'm softening the illumination. In other words, blue softened into black releases a tendency toward red. See how—I mean what's really important is how he doesn't view darkening and illuminating as contradictory. Color has a dark side. Color's dark side is at work when you darken yellow no less than when you illuminate blue, since you're illuminating an illumination when you illuminate blue.

Thus, the yellow tends toward red as it intensifies; blue tends toward red as it intensifies. What is pure red (what we would call magenta)?[81] It's—and pay close attention to Goethe's terminology here—it's "fusion," the point of fusion between yellow and blue. The point of fusion between yellow and blue at maximum intensification. Which leads us to say that magenta or red—pure red—is the ideal satisfaction, the fusion, of both colors, yellow and blue, at the point of ideal satisfaction.

So that's still… when I made my triangle I could have said: 1, 1' (*one prime*) yellow-blue, starting from light; 2, red as the maximum point of intensification; 3, I mix yellow and blue. See where red and green aren't symmetrical. Goethe says that green is the point of real satisfaction.

Red is the point of ideal satisfaction, or the point of fusion; green is the point of real satisfaction, or mixture. So, I can make my little triangle up-top red, as the point of maximum intensification, and I can make my little triangle in the middle green, between yellow and blue.

Green starts it over again. It's a sort of—the triangle is genetic: that's the main thing. There's a genesis of color in Goethe's triangle. Green gives us the idea. Green emerged as the combination of yellow and blue. Now I just have to mix yellow and red, which gives me orange above, in the triangle up above. Then I just have to mix red and blue, which makes purple. And there, I've generated my six basic colors—I'm highlighting this because often, when you read Goethe, they're listed as part of [*indistinct word*] of the color triangle. It's not just that there are colors: so-called secondary color blends and primary colors—three primary colors: yellow, blue, red; and three secondary colors: orange, purple, green—that's not it. I felt like the genesis in Goethe's text is really [*indistinct word*], and that the color triangle expresses this genesis.

In order, you have: the emergence of yellow, the emergence of blue, the twofold emergence of red via the intensification of both yellow and blue, the emergence of green via mixing, carrying on mixing through [*indistinct word*] Imagine if I put the colors' lines in color—that'd be lovely—so, what's left? I still have combinations—what combinations? [*Indistinct words*] … the color wheel earlier. The combination, yellow – green, here. The combination, green – blue. The combination, orange – purple. And so, the color triangle is [*indistinct word*]

It's simple but elegant [*indistinct words*] because again, I think it's obvious that if you treat it like a genetic triangle -- and moreover, you can't build it up gradually, I think you're led to construct it in order -- 1, 1', 2, 3, 4, 4', 5, 5' 5''… That's what the color triangle is [*indistinct word*] You could add to that: color's light-dark, white-black exterior, you can see how powerful, now, how color blooms out of its exterior. That's the origin of the different colors' independence; it's a genesis. So that would be… and I'd say [*indistinct words*] … The triangle is genetic. [*Pause*] So far, so good? Any issues? As for the color wheel, it is structural [*indistinct words*] [*Pause*]

I'm starting with yellow—there's a reason I'm starting with yellow—I'll put it at the top of my circle and from there I'll establish the first diametric opposition. What is the diametric opposite of yellow? Yellow is one of the three primitive or primary colors: yellow, blue, red.[82] The opposite of yellow is the combination of the two other primitive colors. Once I have my three primitive colors—yellow, blue, and red—a diametric opposition would be between one of these primitive colors and the combination of the other two. This diametric opposition is often known as the relationship between complementary colors.

What are two complementary colors? Two complementary colors are such that one is a primitive color, and the other is made by combining the other two. So yellow is diametrically opposed to the combination of blue and red, or purple. Consequently, if I started to draw my circle—notice that this circle is not at all genetic. It begins, starting with the problem of diametric opposition; it begins with drawing a structure. That's why I think that it's obvious that the color wheel is lifeless if you haven't first worked through the color triangle. [*Noises*] You can sense that I have a great preference for [*indistinct word*], a great preference for [*indistinct word*]. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, when it concerns the circle… What? [*Someone makes an inaudible remark*] So you've got your first diametrical opposition, yellow and purple, purple as the combination of blue and red forces us to put to our circle -- what you know already, there are six sections, the three primary colors and the three binary colors – so [*indistinct word*] blue and red, six sections for the three primary colors; purple is a combination of blue and red. [*Inaudible words*] Two other colors, henceforth through deduction, and here, it's no longer at all a genesis; it's a deduction of structure, it's a structural deduction whereby you put down your two other sections along the periphery: blue/yellow with green as the intermediary, yellow/red with orange. And you have, you can read from there, your diametrical opposition: just as yellow is diametrically opposed to purple according to the law of complementary colors, red is diametrically opposed to green, since red is a primitive color diametrically opposed to the combination of the other two: the combination of the other two is that between yellow and blue, and yellow-and-blue is green. So, the diametrical opposition between red and green, the diametrical opposition between blue and orange, since orange is yellow-and-red diametrically opposed with the third primitive color… Yes? I'm almost done.

One kind of relationship between colors comes about via diametric oppositions along the color wheel. It's the theme of complementary colors. Goethe's dotted line[83] suggests that there are other relationships. The other relationships are when the relations between colors follow along chords and no longer across the diameter. Diametric oppositions, in Goethe's terminology, [*inaudible words*] are harmonious combinations. Harmonious combinations between yellow and purple, orange and blue, red and green. They're the complementary relationships.

We leave diameters behind and consider chords. Two types of chords. You select two colors by passing over an intermediary. These must be called the big chords. These are what Goethe will call "characteristic combinations".[84] This is what I've written in dashes; the list of characteristic combinations will be: green – orange, orange – purple. You see you've jumped over yellow. You've drawn a chord in the circle such that you've brought together green and orange by skipping yellow. That's the big chord.

Move onto the second characteristic combination: orange – purple, skipping over red. Third combination: purple and green, skipping blue. In the other direction: combining blue – red, skipping purple; red – yellow, skipping orange; blue – yellow, skipping green. And you have your network of so-called "characteristic" combinations.

And lastly -- what I didn't include there to keep it from getting too complicated [*inaudible words*], but Goethe does include it – what he'll call, and it's not by chance and these are of great importance, what he'll call non-characteristic combinations.[85] [*Pause*] These are the small chords [*Pause*] where you don't skip colors; you just move from one color to the next. And the non-characteristic combinations include: yellow – orange, orange – red, red – purple, purple – blue, blue – green, green - [*inaudible*] You have your aggregate, your structural aggregate. What I find interesting is that it's your choice. I mean the triangle says genetically what the circle says structurally. In my view, I have my view, the circle is dead [*inaudible words*] which is important because I'm saying, you sense that it's not just the theory, it's the basis for the whole theory [*inaudible words*] In a sense, was it necessary to wait for Goethe so that …? We'll see… why it happened at that point in time…, why it happened at that point in time.

I’m saying, in my question, Delacroix made his palette into a real timer, a chromatic timer, a chrono…, [*Pause*] a chromatic timer, a chronometer, that is, a clock—you might say that he wanted to assign hours to the color wheel. That’s why there are so many… it’s already synchronous… [*inaudible words; Deleuze starts speaking to someone near the board*]

A student: [*Inaudible comments*]

So what Delacroix was doing with all that? It’s very important to put things in order; they were all very orderly, right? [*Inaudible comments*] He placed his colors, his colors [*Inaudible, noise*], and then he surrounded… in a big pile, and then he surrounded that with derived or blended colors and then that made a timer. [*Pause*] That’s an anecdote… it’d be like an exercise. If I were a painter, I’m sure that I’d be really into that… [*Long interchange with students near the board*]

A painter [*indistinct words*] a problem, of how to transform… how, according to these schemas, how can a painter arrange colors on the palette. That’s the first practical problem. Second practical problem: what does it mean when a painter hates a color? For example: Mondrian and green [*inaudible words*] … abomination. He can have all kinds of reasons [*indistinct words*] … to live in New York. New York is the only city in the world that… [*indistinct words*]

Claire Parent : That what ?

Hidenobu Suzuki [*both next to the microphone*] I couldn’t hear.

Claire Parnet: Gilles, we can’t hear over here…

Deleuze: Is that true? What can we do? I’ve almost finished… From the start you haven’t heard anything?

Claire Parnet: I’d like to know why Mondrian left for New York? [*Laughter, noise, indistinct words*]

Deleuze: Because he didn’t like green.

Claire Parnet: But why? New York is the only city in the world that…?

Deleuze: It’s the only city without any trees! [*Laughter, noise of diverse conversations*] [*Long pause; Deleuze continues chatting away from the microphone*]

There are colors missing from the palette. It’s also interesting to wonder, asking the painter, questioning the painter about the colors they use. Well, so, you could have all sorts of practical exercises. When a color is named after a painter. Based on that, I don’t think it’s about laws or norms. Especially with the genetic element of colors—that’s how basic decisions are made, and what’s more, it’s so genetic that it has depth. [*Pause*]

But what is its depth? First, it has strata. It's completely stratified; you have to read it perpendicularly. If the genetic color triangle had a structure, it'd be a perpendicular structure—why?

The first stratum: it casts light and darkness. That's the theme with color's dark side. And what proves that color has a dark side? You'll find it at the level… where this kind of emergence from white and from black, if you rotate your color wheel, you get gray from white and black, and that is the deepest stratum—color is emerging from light and darkness.

Then what we should note is that [*indistinct words*] it isn't the same space. The space of light and the space of color are not the same. Color will be… there isn't any color; that's what one means by "chromatic color." The principle of the relativity of colors. Color is created in this way, this first stratum casts darkness and light, casts gray, gray being understood as white and black.

The second stratum. It breaks off; it starts to break off from this foundation. Light and dark are color's foundation. White and black are the foundation of color, it emerges from this base. It emerges from this base in the form of yellow, blue, and their shared intensification: red.

At this point, relationships between colors are formed, irreducible to the light-dark relationship. The light-dark relationship still affects color nevertheless, in the form of light and dark colors. The light-dark relationship in color will determine the relationship between light and dark colors, and by no means does it exhaust color relations. It's what is called "value relations", value relations [*rapports de valeur*]. It's precisely in the relationship between light and dark colors. Color only exists through independent relationships, specifically, not between values but between hues, between colors with the same level of saturation. A perfect example is the relationship between complements. [*Pause*]

There are so many strata that… actually, let's go over a brief history of colorism.[86] What is colorism? [*indistinct words*] And I've come right back to Riegl. Riegl proposed a distinction between polychromy and colorism. Polychromy refers to any detail or any use of color—extraordinarily complex and extraordinarily rich—where color is still subordinate to something else. What do I mean? It can be subordinate to form, to form. You arrange your colors organically according to the lines of the form. Then you'd have polychromy. Egyptian art and Greek art are classic examples of polychromy. [*Pause*]

Color can also be subordinate to light. With painting you actually had to distinguish, if only vaguely, between a luminist tendency and a colorist tendency. Luminists are those who achieve color through light, and colorists are those who achieve light through color, through a treatment of color. Rembrandt [*inaudible words*] is rightly hailed as among the greatest luminists. [*Pause*]

Fine, there isn't just one possible subordination; I'd say, however, that's already no longer polychromy; you see, it's something else. But it isn't colorism either, because it isn't color for its own sake; it cannot develop in itself… it can realize any value relationship, [but] it can't fully develop all of its relationships in tonality or hue.

And with the color wheel, it's precisely Goethe who strongly emphasizes the following theme: based on the color wheel, each color—this accounts for why there's a movement, a dynamism to color—each color tends to evoke the tonality of the color wheel; basically, then, you'd have coefficients of speed or slowness. Every color suggests the entire color wheel, often via its diametric opposition in particular. Red will suggest green, and it's only in your eye that one complement suggests the other. That famous expression in every introduction to color: you stare at a color and then, once the color is taken away, your eye suggests the complementary color. For example, red suggests green.

So, what am I saying? If I were to give a brief overview of the history of colorism: I think that the moment when the first colorism appears it's like at the border of luminism, light, color and the problem of mixing. That doesn't mean [*indistinct words*] one does beyond the other [*indistinct words*], and colors come up out from ground. And the ground becomes captivating; it's like overlaying two grays. Colors come up out from a ground, from a dark ground. It's the famous dark color [*indistinct words*], yet this dark color is now meant to manifest the dark side of color, and these emerging, dark colors are? Are ultimately gray on gray; however, it's not a [*indistinct word*] gray since there is a luminous gray, a luminist gray from black-white, and a chromatic gray from green-red, complementary colors.

So, the initial colorism is actually the basis, it's actually the basis for this dark ground that expresses the overlay of both grays, such that colors emerge or come out of the ground. Here we don't need [*indistinct words*], they emerge from the ground. [*Pause*] And in fact, as vivid as they are, they demonstrate their dark nature. From there, all of colorism's progress, all the movement, all of colorism's dynamism will assert itself more and more—and what will that entail?... [*Interruption of the recording*] [46:33]

Part 2

… How does one reach this vivacity, expressing the relationship between colors and light? How does one achieve bright hues, since only bright hues express the relationship between colors? It will be done in stages.

Just looking at French painting, I'll use a sequence of three stages, three moments, in Delacroix. What do we see in Delacroix's technique? See, because it's a question of technique. We find something rather strange: the ground's dark color often lingers and for a long time, right, it's already fully color but dark color—only with Delacroix do we get bright colors. How do we move beyond this dark color, these dark colors—how do we draw out more vibrant hues? That's the crucial moment. It's always colorism that appears, that reappears; it's a problem.

And Delacroix invents a process that will be recognized even while he was alive, whether people mocked him for it or instead used it themselves: it's the process of using what are called "crosshatching." He will literally chop up [*hacher*] his dark color—there's no other word for it: green crosshatching, red crosshatching—and it's with crosshatching that color will realize its bright aspects, in bright hues.

One of Delacroix's greatest moments, "Give me a heap of purple and I will bring out an exquisite color," "give me a heap of purple and I will bring out an exquisite color."[87] It's not like that, it's not a literal formula, it's what he does on the canvas. [*indistinct words*] What becomes possible after Delacroix? The unfolding of relations, the unfolding of bright hues and the relationships between bright hues, in a way that no longer depends on color emerging from a dark ground.

It's as though Delacroix had kept—well, I'm going a little far with the dialectic, it didn't occur like this—it's as though Delacroix kept it only in order that he'd no longer need it. Which doesn't take away, which doesn't take anything away from his masterpieces built around dark color. Who's that? To isolate and heighten the relationship between bright hues without passing into dark color, dark color—of course, that is the Impressionist.

And that's perhaps the first time that colorism appears in its pure form: light, completely subordinate to color. It's perhaps the second time since there was Turner, Turner with his yellows There's a really beautiful, remarkable painting by Turner called "Homage to Goethe", since "Homage to Goethe" is like the pictorial version of the chromatic circle. [*indistinct words*] For the Impressionists, that's the problem. By the same token, Delacroix's crosshatching, which worked as crosshatching since it was used to chop up [*hacher*] the base color, the dark color [*indistinct words*] became the well-known Impressionist elements, the comma-stroke, the juxtaposition of commas, juxtaposition [*indistinct words*] no longer crosshatching chopping up the dark color but little commas on their own.

And well, throughout Impressionism, there are various style when it comes to commas: Monet's commas. That's not… that's how an expert recognizes [an artist]; sometimes you're hard-pressed to distinguish a Pissarro from a Monet, a little bit a lesser Renoir from a Degas. [*Pause*] An expert [*indistinct words*] With the comma, it's not about that, that there's a link. When the comma starts cracking and becomes Van Gogh's signature … [*inaudible words*] but Van Gogh's comma [*indistinct words*] understand that in the end, with colorism and the development of colors for themselves, it's as if the basic unit of painting delivered itself from a smaller unit, a kind of atomism. Delacroix's crosshatching turns into the impressionist comma; the impressionist comma turns into Cézanne's little dabs – well, "becomes", that's not… -- which turns into lastly [*the sounds of cassette pushed into records blocks Deleuze's voice*] the apparent impact of Seurat's points, will be transformed into the colorist relationships. [*Pause*] And after that… [*Pause*]

Well, there we are, how well I'm explaining things, right? We'll let all that marinate. For now, this is like a long parenthesis that I completed, and we have that accomplished. What we still need to look at now concerns color, but I didn't get to it yet so we've made progress, and now I'll come back to something else, but this is fine, that's what I'll need… [*Interruption of the recording*] [54:30]

[*After an apparent break, Deleuze has returned to his seat near the microphone*] …You see, the colors aren't good. It's a very nice triangle. [*Pause, noises of students returning*]

Okay, well, see: that's a parenthesis we could put before or after; everything else, it's something to take home with you, okay? You can read more about this in Goethe, right? I'd rather you read it, but if you don't read it... fine, fine, that's… Well, are there any comments, additions?

A student: White and black, [*indistinct words*] I read Goethe's text, and it's very complicated problem, because on the one hand, there are color[s]; he says, white is the first, the first genesis of darkness, and black is the essence of darkness, so they are colors; but at the same time, he challenges Newton on the question of white which is born from the color wheel. Goethe does not say at all that white cannot be generated from the color wheel; that's gray.

Deleuze: Absolutely.

The student: And this ambiguity that—

Deleuze*:* Personally, I think that the ambiguity is easily accounted for; it's what I was getting at when I said that the triangle should be interpreted genetically. Then color doesn't actually have an absolute beginning—rather, at the same time, white and black are both the milieu for the exteriority of color, the form of color's exteriority, which doesn't yet have any color inside, and the emergence of the inside. Especially since if we disagree with Newton, among other things, then it'd get complicated; we would have to, if we really focused on color, we would indeed have to pit everything in Goethe against Newton.

Anne Querrien: Newton, for me… I feel like he was using the laws of optics, decomposing light through the prism and…

Deleuze: Completely, right.

Anne Querrien: And I mean, on that alone, you'll find some pop science books on color, the idea that the eye's three primary colors [are]—and it's what was used in television—red, green, and blue and as for television, I have the equation here for its wavelengths: it's just about 51% red, 39% green, and 10% blue, and so according to the color triangle, that puts television over completely on the black side.

Deleuze: Yes, yes, it gets pushed over.

Anne Querrien: … pushed over to black, and on the other hand, a big article in the Sunday *Le Monde*—a fascinating article on how color images in television are coded to ensure that color broadcasts are compatible with black-and-white receivers, and well, they subtract color instead of adding it—and so pull it even further towards black, so that black-and-white receivers can pick up color broadcasts.

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes. [*Deleuze's tone is less than enthused, hence laughter all around him*]

Anne Querrien: So then, [*indistinct words*] … a comparison with technology [*indistinct words*] since they appear at the same time: printing—color printing—and the additive composition of colors in printing, Delacroix and company are completely parallel to the research on half-toning.

Deleuze: Or Seurat's method, right, in pointillism, would be another technical comparison to draw with punctual coding…

Anne Querrien: And photography [*indistinct words*] …

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, yes. [*Pause*] Well, okay, let's keep going… Yes, another comment?

The first student: Another thing, about the nine chromatic cycles…

Deleuze: A numerical correspondence.

The student: Except for nine, okay, we have three for the three colors, we have six, and now we can't have nine and go on directly to…, and if we keep on separating them—

Deleuze: Let's see.

The student: Whereas in the other—

Deleuze: We have three in the other.

The student: In the other, we have nine.

Deleuze: Oh, you mean in the triangle! Yeah, that's interesting.

The student: Yes, it's important that we get nine.

Deleuze: It's important!

The student: ...that we get nine, yes.

Deleuze: Well, aren't you an abstract mystic! [*Laughter*]

The student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes, it's important, but we should… I can't keep up because I'm totally wiped out. We can only get… With the wheel, don't we get…? So, three, three… -- Oh, this is really beyond me -- Think on this; it's an exercise: how we might get nine with the color wheel. [*Pause*] Yes, even though it's clear in the triangle—oh! You could maybe untangle a great mystery. Look! Well, [*Pause*] we'll set that aside for now, but again: we're going to need it soon. [*Pause*]

Do you remember the point we reached? We had just defined our first signal-space, the Egyptian space. But at the same time, this Egyptian signal-space wasn't made for painting, or at any rate, it certainly wasn't exclusive to painting. It's even expressed formally, infinitely more clearly, in Egyptian bas-relief. And my first question along these lines is: Won't this establish something long-term, something essential about painting? Won't it establish something long-term that's essential about painting, namely, the idea of flatness?[88] Because, look, many critiques have specifically defined painting in two ways—take [Clement] Greenberg for example, a contemporary critic I've already talked about. He says that painting consists in two things: flatness and the determination of flatness. That itself is interesting because what does that mean—the determination of flatness as distinct from flatness. Flatness and the determination of flatness. Okay, maybe, maybe but it's not so self-evident that painting is defined by flatness.

I mean, isn't there a depth to the canvas? [It's] why some—and not all—there are some painters who even revolve around there being depth to the canvas. Wouldn't this idea of painting as flatness and the determination of flatness in part come from outside of painting, from a very old horizon, the Egyptian horizon, an Egyptian achievement? Why? Because we saw if we try to define Egypt's signal-space, according to Riegl, we more or less get the following formula: form and ground are taken on the same plane, flatness—i.e., an equal flatness of form and ground. Form and ground are taken on the same plane, both equally close to each other and equally close to ourselves. That's what it is – if I try to sum up the presentation of Egypt according to Riegl – that's what it is: form and ground are taken on the same plane, both equally close to each other and equally close to ourselves. That's Egyptian bas-relief -- and we saw how it could be equally true for pyramids, in a more complicated way -- and that's Egyptian painting.

Yes, we'll have to hang onto this idea of "flatness." Perhaps it's Egypt that realized painting as flatness. And then this theme, he developed from there, but it didn't have any of the same urgency. Again, it doesn't go without saying that a canvas is flat. After all, there are some, there are some painters who paint backwards; many painters today paint backwards. What does painting backwards mean, if not that the canvas has depth? There are painters who problematize the idea of surface. There's a group—there's a very important group, the Supports/Surfaces group,[89] and then still other groups, a group that many Americans haven't stopped problematizing it. But we'll leave all that aside.

Flatness won't so much be the necessary outcome of painting as it will be painting's Egyptian horizon, painting's external Egyptian horizon. And indeed, that is what Egyptian space is. Is this the expression of a will to art, as Riegl puts it, or is it tied to -- then it's all fair game, we can always dream -- is it tied to certain conditions of both civilization and nature, right, the desert, bas-relief's relationship to the desert, the pyramid's relationship to the desert, the eye's relationship to the desert? Doesn't this relationship specifically imply of *planning* of space?[90]

Because, in fact, I'm hitting on something I didn't get to say last time, when Riegel tries to say what sort of vision corresponds to Egyptian space. See, on the side of the object—I'm just summarizing here— on the object side, there's indeed an operation of *planning*; the relationships in space are transformed into planimetric relationships. Well, form and ground are on the same plane, it's linearity and, like [Greenberg] says, [the determination][91] of linearity, that is, what determination of linearity will result from the fact that form and ground are taken on the same plane?

Coming back to what we covered last time: the determination of linearity that results from this involves three elements of painting. It's the three laws of painting precisely because form and ground are taken on the same plane, inhabit the same plane, that painting will have three elements: *ground*, *form*, and what relates ground to form and form to ground, namely the geometrical crystalline *contour*. The geometrical crystalline laws [*légalité*]. And I said that when we look, when we happen to look at a modern canvas, and are in a situation such that we—it's like we're forced, subjected, led to distinguish three elements: form, ground, and contour—then we can say, "An Egyptian's been here!" [*Laughter*]

I'm thinking of a painting, and maybe some of you know it off the top of your head, can see it in your mind—it's a beautiful painting, I think, really very beautiful! A painting by [Paul] Gauguin: *La Belle Angèle, La Belle Angèle.* What a painting![92] It's a very fine example—and in my opinion, it might be one of the first examples in modern painting—of what's called—I tried to put it in broad strokes—shallow depth, limited depth. There is depth but it's very, very limited; form and ground are really close to the same plane. What is the form? It's the head of a Breton named Angèle—one Gauguin was fond of: a real Breton! [*Laughter*] She's depicted with her headdress. She's perfect. Okay. Anyway.

What is the ground? It's—and this says it all—a field; it's a field.[93] With what we're given it's not clear who invented it; the letters are murky. Is it Van Gogh? Is it Gauguin? Well, it doesn't really matter who. Or was it another third member of their group? They made fields, but still—to liven them up—they put bouquets of flowers, like on wallpaper. They put little bouquets of flowers. There's a… Van Gogh was close to a postman in Arles. And he made several portraits of this postman. There's one of those—very, very fine—where the ground comprises a field like wallpaper. It's green, if memory serves. [https://www.peintures-tableaux.com/Portrait-du-facteur-Joseph-Roulin-2-Vincent-van-Gogh.html] Because he made several. There's a blue one—one with a blue field. There's a green one. And I think the green one has really charming little bouquets of flowers! Which weave a decorative motif onto the field. Anyway. There's the field, then. There's the form. What is it? The form is the head of the Breton. And she is clearly not treated as a field.

There's still one problem. You'll notice that it runs throughout the history of painting. When it comes to colorism, what do you do about flesh? It's right here, bizarrely, that painting and phenomenologists come together, because both are so animated by the question of flesh, by embodiment. It was the problem of flesh that led [Maurice] Merleau-Ponty to painting.[94]

What do you do about flesh? I tracked down a quote from Goethe, just to tie everything together...oh! Where is that quote? A very nice quote from Goethe—Here it is: "For flesh, the color should be totally liberated from its elementary state."[95] Flesh poses an odd problem for painting. How do you make flesh without winding up with gray? If there is a case—even in the case, even in the case of impressionism, flesh is even more of a problem. How do you depict flesh? Things are no big deal, but flesh doesn't exactly give off much light, you know! How do you prevent flesh from getting muddy? It's tough! You need to treat color in a particular way. So, it's incredible in *La Belle Adèle*—no, Angèle—in *La Belle Angèle.* Yes, *La Belle Angèle. La Belle Angèle*, since you have two color treatments corresponding to your first two pictorial elements.

Naturally, it wasn't like that with the Egyptians; that's why it's a great modern painting. You have one way of treating flesh And I'm jumping to… I'm foreshadowing because… Finally, one major solution to treating flesh, to treating flesh pictorially, is using what's called broken color;

it's by breaking the color. What is broken color? Well see later on, won't we! It doesn't matter, here we're situating a word, a new category in color; broken color is how Van Gogh and Gauguin, for example, treat flesh. Yet, alright. Alright. So, you have the use of broken color, the form, the figure, the use of color fields, the ground's treatment, you have your two elements.

And Gauguin uses a method that a guy, unfortunately a minor—well, not unfortunately!—a minor painter in Gauguin's day tried to bring back, and this painter called it "*cloisonné*."[96] You'll find it in *La Belle Angèle*: the figure is surrounded by a sort of yellow circle that'll be very important—for starters, this yellow circle unquestionably has a comic effect. Gauguin had a real sense of humor, visually; he's one of the most lighthearted painters, the most… yes, painting's comic. And when it's bracketed off in *cloisonné*, *La Belle Angèle* starts to look like a cheese tin, the side of a cheese tin; it's cropped like she's a Breton mascot for Camembert—that's just Gauguin, instead of… Well. And this yellow, this yellow line, is great because, really, that's what brings out the figure's broken color and the ground's color field [*ton aplat*]. And there's a kind of… And at the same time that'll be a crucial component of shallow depth, that is, it'll establish the form and ground "almost" at the same plane.

So, when you see a painting like this—or I mentioned Bacon which is actually very different—but when… when, in the large, large majority of Bacon's paintings, you'll find three elements that stand out. They aren't all necessarily like this. The three elements are: a field for the ground; second, the figure is always done in broken colors; and the autonomous contour, or what refers the form to the ground and the ground to the form, which in Bacon is no longer mere *cloisonné* with its volume, its surface or volume—it's kind of a rug—in the color-relationships with the grounding field, with the field of color. You might say there are three colors in Bacon that form a sort of rug or ring in the middle of which—or inside, at least—the figure is contained or propped up. Such that you get three regimes of color: a contour regime, secured by the rug or ring; the ground's regime secured by the field; a figure regime secured by the broken colors; and these three regimes, you can declare: homage to Egypt.

But this kind of return to Egypt is clearly a return to Egypt via thoroughly non-Egyptian means, since now we find the three Egyptian elements again in different approaches to color. And maybe you see what he [Greenberg] meant by linearity and the determination of linearity:[97] the Egyptians provide for linearity, or the identical plane shared by both form and ground, and thereby determine this linearity with three elements: form, ground, and autonomous contour. Well, if you've understood that, and that the Egyptians didn't settle it, and that it can live on only if a modern painter can recover it and resurrect Egypt via non-Egyptian means—then you've understood generally what happens every time, what happens all the time in art.

As a result, to wrap up our history of Egypt, there's just, there's a lot we should, at the end, we should talk about still, but it's fine -- there's one last thing to be done: as regards the subject, what's going on? We've defined the objective elements: the same plane for the form and ground; the three elements constituting the determination of flatness: the ground field, the form, the bas-relief figure; and the contour, once again, the geometrical crystalline contour, the geometrical crystalline law [*légalité*] that carries the form to the ground.

So, what stays in your eye, your Egyptian eye—it goes without saying that Egyptians have lost this eye and that today's Egyptians no longer have this eye [*Pause*] unless they do have it, I don't know… after all… well, anyway, yes [*Pause*] yes, yes, yes, yes, the eye… That's how Riegl defines the Egyptian eye, but you'll see that the Egyptian eye can only be defined according to its correlate, that is according to Egypt's signal-space. What is the Egyptian eye?

And so, in the first edition of Riegl's crucial text, *Art Industry -- Late Roman Art Industry* -- we find something difficult, something very simple but which comes across as difficult. The first edition tells us, sure! Yeah, this Egyptian space is a closed-in space; it invites a close-up view. No, that's not shocking. You might think that's not really artistically motivated: it's because of the desert and light that one's view is fundamentally drawn in; in Egypt, you look quite closely.

A student from outside: Excuse me… [*Inaudible comments; her remarks concern an official action at the university level requiring that students sign some kind of form*]

Deleuze: Where do we drop them off?

The student: [Room] C 196.

Deleuze: So, fill them out at the end, okay?

The student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: What's that? Oh! Yes, yes—

The student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: It's alright; the meetings are everyone's concern. You don't know about the meetings? Oh! That's my fault; I should have told you. Yes, yes, you know the dates? Oh dear.

The student: There's a committee room.

Deleuze: … And that we've yet to see, in teaching, it's true; I'd like a newsletter with updates on late-stage proposals for everyone in their respective fields to up-to-speed with proposals that are already far along—for example, the university project was catastrophic. It's not hard to understand. The university project consisted in bypassing university councils.[98] Well, our knee-jerk reaction is always that no one gives a shit about the university council! But hold on, what will you replace it with? And what about contacting the EBU—I mean, credits would have been distributed directly to the EBU. Which, clearly, hands regional unions—who are also complacent—absolutely put them in the ministry's hands, because there was no longer any university structure. Now that was a terrible proposal.

So, any time I talk to somebody in a given field, oddly enough, they confirm it. Not long ago I saw—they didn't tell me any secrets—I saw a banker and he said, you know, there was a plan to blow up banks' collective bargaining agreements—a very late-stage proposal. But it would be very interesting… -- yes, but that occurred in context of the banks, in a particular way -- it'd be interesting to get a rundown so that we know advanced proposals that'd go into effect one or two years from now. But for me, that's what elections are for. What were they plotting? This is no joke!

The student: General Assembly—you have the floor.

Deleuze: That's true; that's why I'm thinking if these meetings...

The student: …that's how we found out about it, at 10 pm… that's why we've decided to take action… so if you want to respond… Goodbye.

Deleuze: Okay, then. Goodbye. To reiterate: Yes, it won't do if only professors show up to these meetings. Everyone who is able to go has to… You should look into it. Personally, I think it's Friday or Saturday, but you—you think it's Thursday… At any rate, you all have to go, have to show up with numbers. Because it's important: to redirect—at present there is still a small chance to salvage something from everything that's… yes, so normally, as I see it, it's Friday and Saturday. Look! I'll stop there, alright, and we'll take a break since we've had enough! [*Class continues without break*] Listen to me! [*Some students try to quiet the one still arguing*]

Claire Parnet: Ah, what a chatterbox she is! Anne, shut up!

Deleuze: He [Riegl] is trying to say what sort of eye corresponds to Egyptian space. And I told you that in the first edition, he says, well! It's very strange: it's a near-sighted vision, then, it's near-sighted vision but how does the near-sighted eye behave? Well! He says, it's bizarre, but literally, see, form and ground both occupy the same plane, and I—the viewer, with my eye—I'm just as close. It's an eye that literally acts like touch. It's a tactile eye. It's a tactile eye.

And here Riegl—it's a little—anyway, what we need to see, what we get from this passage in Riegl, is that it's not a metaphor, that moreover, Riegl is pointing out two of the eye's functions: you have optical vision, and you have tactile vision. The eye as an eye is not—see, the tactile eye isn't an eye that's supplemented with touch, like when I use my hands to confirm something I've seen, when I tough a face, for example—that's not what it is. It's the eye as such that acts like touch, so this passage from Riegl is still ambiguous, and it's just—it's bizarre. It's in the second edition that he comes out and says that we should distinguish—indeed, he has to coin a complicated word to avoid equivocating—and he says there are like two visions: there's optical vision and there's vision that he calls "haptic," h-a-p-t-i-c, haptic vision. He borrows the word from the Greeks: *hapto*, which means to touch, the eye's touch, a haptic sense of sight.[99]

So, we'll define the haptic sense of sight, if we want to give it a real sense, the haptic sense of sight would be a use of sight that's no longer optical—no longer vision from a distance. See, optical sight is from a distance, relatively speaking; however, the haptic use of vision, or haptic sight, is a close-up sight that grasps form and ground on the same equally close plane. Well let's suppose, then, before you we take a break, I'm thinking—there are a lot of problems here!

We'll keep this word, haptic; after all, these categories, these categories, it might be really interesting because painting is intended for the eye, right, it's intended for the eye! But which eye? I might suggest that painting perhaps gives rise to an eye within the eye—that painting, okay, might literally have something to do with the so-called third eye. Would we have two optical eyes, two eyes for optical vision, and then a third eye? A third haptic eye? As a result, is it painting that produces the haptic eye? Is there a haptic eye outside of painting? I'm jumping ahead, that's no longer the Egyptians. See, it's knowing whether this talk of "the haptic" will do anything for us. And what would this haptic eye be?[100]

Anyway! Let's reconnect with everything we've covered today. Look. Light—light is the optical eye; light solicits an optical eye, perhaps. I don't know. Maybe we could say that. But doesn't color belong to a whole other eye? Isn't it a whole other eye? Doesn't color solicit a haptic eye? Wasn't all that earlier about how a haptic eye is reconstituted out of the optical eyes?

In a spirited letter, Gauguin says, "The painter's eye is in heat"— I don't remember what page, but it when it comes up it's pretty funny.[101] What is the painter's eye? This eye, which Cézanne himself claims turns all red, so red, so red—I come back home and my eyes are red, so red that I can't see anymore. Eyes so red they can't see anything: the painter's eye, Gauguin's eye in heat—it's really bizarre. Isn't this a really very strange kind of vision? Isn't it the reconstitution of a haptic eye, the Egyptian eye, the third eye, right?

I'm saying "third eye" not because it's in the brain. It isn't in the brain; it's in the nervous system, but only because, I mean, it's in the middle of the two other eyes. That's where the painter is. But then, is color—I don't know, let's take it as far as we can—wouldn't color be a way of reconstituting haptic sight that's totally independent and original compared to how the Egyptians created haptic vision? The Egyptians created haptic vision by placing form and ground on the same plane and by producing three elements: form, ground, and geometrical crystalline contours? But, for us, hasn't an Egyptian eye been recovered through non-Egyptian means, namely, through colorism? Isn't the haptic eye the eye that draws on an optical external milieu, white and black—the eye that thereby draws the inherent relationships between colors?

Alright, we've wound up with all sorts of questions left hanging, because now we stumble upon the question: The Egyptian world appears to be dead; it can only be resurrected via totally different means. What made the Egyptian world die off? Ah! What brought it to an end? [*Pause; someone answers from the back and Deleuze starts laughing*] I'm always bad about posing abstract questions, and well, I'll tell you, what caused the Egyptian world to die… [*Deleuze keeps laughing; another student makes a comment*] Sure, you might say that. You might put it another way. Okay, go take a break. Take a break. [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:33:02]

Part 3

… A lot of you during our break, a lot of you have been saying that you've been feeling sick and tired with this weather… I should just cave in and shorten class [*cheers and applause*], there we are! So, I'd just like to try to determine, see, we're trying to find out what this spatial event is, or rather this determination; I'll stick to the expression "linearity" and the "determination of linearity." Again, we saw it for Egyptian space. "Linearity" is the plane. "Determination of linearity" is the plane's three elements: ground, form, and contour.

I mean, what's causing this space to be somehow overturned!? Once again, this space will be so overturned that you'll only be able to find traces of Egypt using means that are completely—It'll be a resurrected Egypt. So, what could happen? If we stay there, we leave Riegl (or we'll come back to him, at least) but there we'll pose ourselves a question—and as always, like I'm always trying to show you, in a way, we don't have a choice—what might happen in this flat space where form and ground occur at the same plane as the three elements?

What's the accident? Accidents are accidents. Events are events. But what is accident and what is event? The spatial determination of the accident or event is exactly this. You have your Egyptian space—well look! Bas-relief. However slight, it's like an earthquake. It causes an earthquake. That is, the plane splits up; imagine that the plane splits up—but the aftermath, it's insane! The plane splits up, a foreground draws in, a background pulls back, even if only slightly. Disjunction of planes. Really, a disjunction of planes. From there—from there, anyway, it'll be fixed—there will be a foreground and there will be a background. And it's no big deal, as small as it is. The disjunction of planes; that'll be what brings us to other signal-spaces.

And after all, if I have a disjunction between planes, what does that give us—so we're really speeding through uh—what can come of it? A space where planes are disjointed, and which is essentially organized around the foreground. That's the first possibility -- I'm trying to think through the possibilities -- this is the signature of this space: there's a distinction between planes, but it's determined by the foreground [*avant-plan*]. I'm still using the concept of determination.

So that's great, that'll be great, this foreground-determined space. Then why not the other way around? Let's think of a background-determined space. Well that, you say, no—that's what we want whenever there's something new, that's what we want because that sounds great—a background-determined space. Let's break it down literally—a background-determined space: everything emerges from the ground, comes from the ground. So much power compared to the foreground-space! Form *comes out* of the ground in the most energetic sense of the word, while on the flip-side, when the fore-ground is predominant, the form sinks into the ground and determines its own relation to the ground—while here, form literally stems from the ground when the background is determinant. Ah, that must be a beautiful space—before being sure of it, I'm looking for logical positions for my spaces.

And what else can there be when the planes are disjointed?[102] There might be a third thing. It's funny—something very, very winding. As the planes are disjointed, you don't worry so much about the planes themselves, neither the foreground [*avant plan*] nor the background [*arrière plan*]. We'll generate everything between the two planes. But what's between the two, and what *can* be between them if it's not dependent on either the foreground or the background? I see three positions—logically, there are three.

But all, let's try to pin down some names. What about this artistic space where the foreground is determinant? So, there's volume—volume since the planes are disjointed. Anyway, you see that it's the end of the Egyptian world since volumetric relations have been liberated from planimetric relations. There is volume, but what's determinant is the foreground, because it's the foreground that contains the form, and the relationship to the background is determined by the form and by how the background takes shape in the foreground.

We'll all recognize this as Greek art. Take a Greek sculpture—it's a rare example; I'll still try to illustrate it clearly, but I like starting with a purely abstract schema. Not in order to apply it, but because I'd like to demonstrate something right away, the highs and lows of Greek sculpture.

What are the highs—the reliefs, brilliant reliefs. The Greeks had words for a sculpture's highs and lows, and the lows are the hollows—the hollows and the waves and the whole sculpture has different levels, and that's how the art is evaluated: Greek harmony entails the variable distribution of highs and lows in equal measure. It's the highs that are determinant in Greek sculpture, that is, it's in the foreground where form is worked out, and working out the form determines the relationship with the background.

It's an aesthetic space of the foreground where it's the form that's determinant. And [Henri] Maldiney puts it well when discussing this in his book, *Gaze Speech Space*[103] : It's wrong—oh so wrong—wrong to say that the Greek world is the world of light. It's not the world of light because light is strictly subject to form's requirements. Sure, it's the world of light, but non-liberated light, light subject to form; light ought to reveal form and submit to the requirements of form. And all Greek sculpture is this way of handling light, this wonderful way of handling light in the service of form. No longer the haptic world of the Egyptians—it's an optical world, only an optical world where light's in the service of form; it's an optical world that still refers back to tactile form: it's a tactile-optical world.

And that's why Riegl defines Greek art as tactile-optical art with a corresponding space: the primacy of the foreground over the background. Which results in what's likely the most profound conception of art as rhythm or harmony, rhythm and harmony in the Greek sense and not in the modern sense. But we'll get to that. From one revolution to the next, imagine the reverse: I hope you'll be convinced if you look at Greek sculpture, but the same holds for all of Greek art. Light—any light at all—light is subordinate to the cube's requirements, and the cube is the sort of environment particular to the foreground. It is form in two respects: there is a depth, there are shadows, there are lights, and all of that has to submit to the rhythm of the form, since the rhythm *is* form.

Well, so it's not at all a world of light—that'll have to wait; it's a serious problem because, see, it'll ultimately force us, next time it'll force us to really reconsider our conventional understanding of the Greek world.

Moving on to yet another revolution, what happened that could have reversed the Greek relationship such that the background becomes the determinant ground and that the form, the figure, springs from the ground? But it's a very different sort of figure when it springs out of the ground. It took what amounts to—look, we always talk about the Copernican revolution, and these revolutions are even more important, or at least just as important as the Copernican revolution. To say that Egyptian space gives way to a space determined by the foreground is just as consequential as saying whether the Earth revolves around the Sun or the Sun revolves around the Earth. It's about reversing the structure of space, let alone a second reversal where it's the ground, where everything comes from the ground.

Yeah, everything comes from the ground; that's how it is. How do you expect form to have the same bearing when it's determined by the foreground -- even if it's only responding to the background -- as when, on the other hand, it's literally projected by the background? By no means is it the same conception of form. When the background becomes determinant, where does the figure come from—it comes directly out of light and shadow. In other words, the space of the background is a space where light and shadow are liberated from form. Now it's form that depends on the distribution of light and shadow. It's a radical reversal of Greek space.

How did that happen? That's why it's so sad, because it seems that we no longer understand it—even books on this start off by associating this with Greek space, when it's the opposite of Greek space. So, there are similarities—obviously, there are similarities—but it's *Byzantine* space. Byzantine art's great place in art history is by no means due to this alone, but its hallmark is having the figure emerge from the background instead of determining the figure as a form in the foreground. This time, light *is* set loose—shadow even more so—the Byzantines are the first colorists, since liberating light from form isn't too far from liberating color. And the Byzantines are the first, I think, the first in art to manipulate both color scales: the luminous scale, in value, and the chromatic scale, in color [*tons*].[104]

And the Byzantines even had three primary colors: gold, blue, red—the three well-known mosaic colors—with complex relationships to white (as in marble) and black (as so-called "smalt"), which grow and form a kind of framework through the relationships between colors, and the first luminists, just like the first colorists, i.e., giving up polychromy for colorism and luminism, that will be Byzantine. That warranted persecution, as the emperor will end up persecuting these artists.

Well, this history—if you consider the opposition between Greek space and Byzantine space—this isn't a linear historical development. If I'm looking for another sequence (this time painting/painting), this is perfect. Just picture a Byzantine figure: everything has to emerge from the ground because the mosaic is in a niche. It's a far-sighted vision; it's far-sighted vision from the viewer's perspective. Far-sighted vision—mosaic is embedded in a niche, and you get these figures eaten up by eyes. It isn't form that defines the figure. What is it? Form answers to light; it answers to shadow and light. The eyes of a Byzantine figure are everywhere there—or the eyes spread to anywhere these gazes up from the ground do. It's the very antithesis to the Greek world. And it might be one of the most beautiful spaces—really there's no better or worse—but really, Byzantine space is… if you compare it to Greek space, it's the exact opposite of Greek space.

Alright. I'm looking for a sequence in painting—There's another guy, just like how I singled out Riegl, there's a major figure in the history of painting named [Heinrich] Wölfflin. It's translated in French—a rather good book—on the 16th-17th centuries. But he obviously read Riegl because among other things, we find, moving from the 16th to the 17th century—his analyses are very thorough, very detailed—moving from the 16th to the 17th century we leave behind the 16th century's still tactile-optical vision. First, it was something else. First, I'm looking at the short transition between the 16th and the 17th century. We move away from tactile-optical vision—that of [Albrecht] Durer, or Leonardo [Da Vinci]. So that already involves a lot of variation; I'm not saying that it's the same space, but in a way it all belongs to a tactile-optical space.

And in the 17th century a kind of key or major revolution starts to take shape which will be the discovery of a purely optical space. The discovery of a pure space that culminates with Rembrandt, for example, but plenty of others beside. But with these two spaces—16th century space and 17th century space—what comes first, as the first determination? The primacy of the foreground… if you can think of something by Leonardo da Vinci or Raphael, you'll see it right away. Yet with one remarkable innovation—Raphael, for example—the foreground is curved. Wonderful curve, and a wonderful discovery only possible thanks to the primacy of the foreground.

I think… let me clarify, since there are some things I'm taking from Wölfflin that are so great, and then there are some things that… well, this a bit of a tangent, but around the 16th century there's a wonderful discovery and it was the same, I think, as what the Greeks discovered. What discovery? Well, it's… I don't like it, but I don't have a better word: it's "the collective line." You can really see the contrast, with the Egyptian line. The Egyptian line is fundamentally individual; indeed, it's the contour of individual form. That the collective is able to take on form is an idea that… that didn't occur to Egyptians. In other words, for an Egyptian, an individuality can get stronger and stronger, but it's always structured as an individuality. Collectivity as such doesn't… that starts with the Greeks.

What do you find in Greek art? You get the invention of a line that no longer coincides with this-or-that individual, a line that encompasses several individuals. There aren't real lines anymore: it's the contour of the ensemble. The invention of the collective line means that the line becomes the contour of an ensemble. The Apostles, for example: of course, they're still individualized, but that's not the point. What matters is the enveloping line that goes from the left-most Apostle to the right-most Apostle. I'm thinking of a famous painting, *The Miraculous Draught of Fishes*, by Raphael.

Well, in my opinion it seems obvious, but we're no longer there, think about how the collective line can be made specifically—it's the line of the foreground. It's specifically—it can only be identified via the foreground, as if the fact that the foreground has become determinant allows us to overcome the individual limits of form. Whereby what takes on form—and that's insane from an Egyptian perspective—from a Greek perspective, what takes on form? In Greek statues it's an ensemble, even if it's only a couple. You know right away I can imagine the objection: *but there are plenty of solitary figures*—sure! We shall see. Well, no matter. Anyway, couples in Greek statues: great! The line is the contour shared by two individualities.

And what develops in 16th century painting? Leonardo da Vinci's collective line, or Raphael's collective line. They aren't the same. You can tell painters apart by their collective line, their style of collective line. Something remarkable emerges with 16th century painting: a tree has a collective line that doesn't depend on its leaves, and the painter has to render the collective line in the foreground. A flock of sheep has a collective line, both flocks of sheep and groups of Apostles; group-painting literally moves downstage, overwhelms the foreground. Yet that appears to be just as true for Greek art and for all other sorts of contexts as for 16th century art.

On that note, there's something that stands out throughout—or very often—in Leonardo da Vinci's writings, where he says: "Form must not be surrounded by lines."[105] Read that way, we risk of running into a contradiction because the sentence can be understood in two different ways, one of which Leonardo did not intend. You might think that it means that form should be free of lines. That's not what he means. Why not? Because the line's primacy is indisputable for him. Besides, what is a form free of lines? It's form subordinate to light and to color. Yet that's obviously not what da Vinci means. I think his writings and context make it clear that he means form shouldn't be contained by lines; it means that form exceeds the line of individuality. Form exceeds individual lines. But form will be determined by the line of the foreground.

Hence why it matters that Raphael starts to bend the foreground, like some kind of balcony, where the foreground itself is curved. That's one of the great achievements, the real achievements, of this period. But see, when it comes to space, I'd say the same thing goes for both 16th century art and Greek art; it's like they change signals.

The primacy of the foreground and the discovery of the collective line. Byzantium and the 17th century thus switch signals: the background has primacy, unleashing light and even color. But with the unleashing of light, everything comes from the ground [*fond*]. And that's what 17th century painting is all about. And it's so obvious, for example—I have something really simple in mind, a theme in the 16th century—it's well known, everyone's pointed it out—the 16th century theme: Adam and Eve. It's also one of Wölfflin's examples. Adam and Eve, standing side by side. It could be very complicated since this foreground is the foreground. It might be a curved space; it could be a curving foreground.

What perspective is famous in the 17th century? Diagonal. It's as if—if you will—there's no more foreground. Of course, there *is* one, but it's not what counts. It's like the foreground was punched out; it was punched out by a depth that drags the left toward… drags it toward or pulls it from the ground [*fond*], pulls the right from the ground.

There's no more foreground [*avant-plan*]; there's a differentiation based on the ground [*fond*]. It's clear, for example, in a great painting by Rubens that depicts the meeting of two people. In the 16th century they'd meet in the foreground and their meeting would take place in the foreground. Not at all with Rubens. Between the two meeting, there's practically an alleyway between them, made up of other people on other planes. So that each of the two meeting in the foreground—both of them—comes from the ground by differentiating, highlighting the alleyway separating them. They meet in the foreground, but only inasmuch as they each come out of the ground. It's no longer the foreground that determines things. Everything comes from the ground. It's the background that's determinant.

Anyway, in the end, then, there are two new spaces: Greek space or 16th century space, [and] Byzantine space or 17th century space, and then I was saying there's still one more—let's say we're no longer interested in planes, neither background nor foreground: what's between the two? Well, you have to be interested between the two. Who could be sufficiently barbarian to reject the plane and be interested in the in-between, and what would the in-between planes be? By what term can one call this thing that is neither ground nor form? What would that be?

For convenience, let's call it barbarian art. Maybe it's barbarian art. It has to be barbarian art—it should be, but who knows. And you see how we then come up with our three positions: primacy of the foreground; primacy of the background. Between them? The barbarians arrive—they always arrive "in-between." What happened? What happened is that somehow the Egyptian way of achieving unity shifted. The foreground and the background shifted. What's going on?

I said that it's either an accident or it's an event. Accident or event. That's the formula for accidents or events. Because once the planes have shifted, once there's a disjunction between planes, what do you want form to do? There's only one thing form can do: fall. It falls between the two planes. Or if push comes to shove, if it's animated by some miraculous energy, it will rise. Now we really get into the history of Western art—one that all comes down to rise and fall. The figure is constantly falling and rising. Say what? It's always on the verge of disequilibrium.

In other words, either accident or event—accident: the fall of the figure; event: the rise—the figure's ascension never stops. Fall and ascension are the two vertical movements perpendicular to the spreading of planes. They fall and rise again, you know, and what's the point? It's the aesthetic sensibility of, for example, it's the Christian aesthetic sensibility. The figure affected by this rising, falling. Deposition of the Cross and the Ascension.[106] And I mean at this level, we're no longer talking about religious categories; these are aesthetic categories. The succession, the endless series of the Depositions of the Cross or the Ascensions of Christ. And it'll never end. The figure is surrounded. It's no longer determined as an "essence"; the figure becomes fundamentally swept up by accidents or events. The painter of "essences" was Egyptian. Now accidents and events take their place, artistically. Always something just a bit off balance.

In a great text, *The Eye Listens* by [Paul] Claudel, specifically on Dutch painting, he analyzes in detail what he calls "a kind of imbalance." There will be no curtain painted that doesn't seem to… just fall back down.[107] Or in Rembrandt, the peeled lemons inspired by [*indistinct name*], or these greens that are on the brink of imbalance, so much so that Cézanne invents—this isn't what prompts him to invent, while he's also looking essentially for the point of imbalance of form. It couldn't be otherwise.

And in a few great passages Claudel asks, "What is a composition?" What is it, composition? *The painting* becomes the composition! In what way? In the celebrated form of the still-life, for example. And he says—he says it all in one beautiful sentence—he says, "Composition is organization in the process of coming undone." He doesn't say it like that, but almost.[108] It's organization in the process of coming undone. That is, it's an organization taken at the point of imbalance. And Claudel also talks about disintegration by light. Disintegration by light will be the motif running throughout his commentary on Rembrandt's *The Night Watch*.[109] We'll see that.

So, I'm just stating what we've established, that it is solely this that is… you get into all kinds of adventures once you discern a disjunction between the two planes. I'm not at all saying that everything gets mixed up, only that all these adventures fall under the heading: the fall or rise of accidents. These accidents can be all sorts of things. The line might be the collective line of a temporary group. Flocks of sheep, leaves rustling on trees in the wind, etc. It might be light that no longer coincides with the form of the object. that might be the eruption of color's break—in other words, painting found its essence in what was an accident for an Egyptian context.

Alright, good so far? Well, so what we need to… that's what we still need to look at; you can see what's left for us to cover. We still have two more meetings: all of this and then color. All this business with space, if I have time, and then color. Anyway, there you go. [*End of the session*] [2:10:00]

Gilles Deleuze

Painting and the Question of Concepts

Session 6, 19 May 1981

Transcriptions: Voix de Deleuze, Part 1, Nicolas Lehnebach (duration 46 :36); Part 2, Fatemeh Malekah (duration 46:32); Part 3, Binak Kalludra (duration 37 :12) ; time stamp and revised transcription, Charles J. Stivale

Translated by Billy Dean Goehring

Part 1

… On the other hand, I'm in a tough spot because I'm of a mind to draw up some very basic color diagrams [*schémas*]—actually, that preempts what I'm about to say, but I'm thinking I won't have the courage to re-draw them next time, if you know what I mean.

So, if you like, you'll recall that we were in the middle of our analysis of Egyptian space, but I'll make a brief aside on these color diagrams [*schémas*] which I will need next time, and that's it. Then I'll explain them; that way I won't have to draw them again. I was an idiot; I started my drawings and then thought, *no!* And now that will have to do, you know? At least I won't have to do them next time. No, I'll draw them for you now. That's what you want, right? Right away. So, I'm going to go through with it, just to do it all over again [*Laughter*] —great! [*Noise*] I'm not really starting, but it's true that... [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence; there is a brief sequence of crowd noises, laughter*] [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:39]

… [*Pause; Deleuze's voice is heard away from the microphone, probably next to the blackboard*] As a starting point, you have… and you'll see it in these two figures: one is an equilateral triangle, here [*Deleuze tapes firmly on the board, laughter*] the other is a circle… the former is known as Goethe's "color triangle", the other is the so-called color wheel… [*Indistinct words*] I'll try to work through Goethe's propositions to make sure you can learn something from this. Apologies to those who already know all this.[110]

The first proposition: Goethe starts with a very important theme—I mean, if you understand this, you might understand the whole thing and how it all develops from [*indistinct words*] … he puts a lot of emphasis on it and the problems tied to color—he emphasizes the dark side of color. Color is dark—what does it mean to say that color is dark? It doesn't mean that he privileges dark colors; that would miss the point [*indistinct words*], there are dark colors, but when he talks about the dark side of color, he clearly has something else in mind. "Color" can be said to have a dark side, since it is the darkening of light. No doubt it's also the illumination of black. It is the darkening of white as well as the illumination of black—and how does it darken white? Darkened white is yellow, [*Pause*] and illuminated black is blue. [*Pause*]

There we have our two so-called primitive or primary colors, yellow and blue. See, here are yellow and blue in the color triangle—an equilateral triangle which itself breaks down into equilateral triangles. Say I want to form a color triangle out of equilateral triangles; if I put them in order, I'd have my two equilateral triangles [*Deleuze writes on the board*] at both ends of the base... yellow and blue. [*Pause*]

Due to the dark aspect of color, darkened light, color is inseparable from movement. You can sense that this is all really very, very rudimentary, but it's so Goethe, it's not surprising that this book was still… you didn't treat it [*indistinct words*] … Color is inseparable from a movement yet to be determined. You see what he did, it's already extraordinary, he started with white and black, but he cuts from white and black, he sort of changes direction. If you take a ray of light in depth and if you take white and black in depth, you find the whole range of colors sort of spread out, made distinct; that's how—I think that Goethe's deep concern – it is how color spreads out and becomes distinct from light, in relation to white and black.

And it's from this dark stage—darkened light, which implies an illuminated black—that all color unfurls. Initially in the form of yellow and blue, but I think there's movement that's already dynamic. Yellow as darkened light, blue as illuminated black—there's already a whole dynamic. What do we call this nascent dynamism? At the point now where—not in terms of white and black, since there we already have two colors, but in terms of yellow and blue—where the dynamism of color actually emerges.

Goethe has several names for the dynamism of color: intensification, saturation, darkening. Why darkening? In light of the dark side of color. [*Pause*] The intensification of yellow, or its darkening, into red. It's a simple experiment: you stack up several layers of yellow. In overlaying color on color, you have, you can discern, yellow's dynamic tendency toward red. Thus, you darken yellow. [*Pause*]

However—I think there's something important going on here in Goethe's work—however, you also move into red when you soften blue. What do I mean by softening blue? Blue is illuminated black. If you say that I'm softening blue, you mean that I'm softening the illumination. In other words, blue softened into black releases a tendency toward red. See how—I mean what's really important is how he doesn't view darkening and illuminating as contradictory. Color has a dark side. Color's dark side is at work when you darken yellow no less than when you illuminate blue, since you're illuminating an illumination when you illuminate blue.

Thus, the yellow tends toward red as it intensifies; blue tends toward red as it intensifies. What is pure red (what we would call magenta)?[111] It's—and pay close attention to Goethe's terminology here—it's "fusion," the point of fusion between yellow and blue. The point of fusion between yellow and blue at maximum intensification. Which leads us to say that magenta or red—pure red—is the ideal satisfaction, the fusion, of both colors, yellow and blue, at the point of ideal satisfaction.

So that's still… when I made my triangle I could have said: 1, 1' (*one prime*) yellow-blue, starting from light; 2, red as the maximum point of intensification; 3, I mix yellow and blue. See where red and green aren't symmetrical. Goethe says that green is the point of real satisfaction.

Red is the point of ideal satisfaction, or the point of fusion; green is the point of real satisfaction, or mixture. So, I can make my little triangle up-top red, as the point of maximum intensification, and I can make my little triangle in the middle green, between yellow and blue.

Green starts it over again. It's a sort of—the triangle is genetic: that's the main thing. There's a genesis of color in Goethe's triangle. Green gives us the idea. Green emerged as the combination of yellow and blue. Now I just have to mix yellow and red, which gives me orange above, in the triangle up above. Then I just have to mix red and blue, which makes purple. And there, I've generated my six basic colors—I'm highlighting this because often, when you read Goethe, they're listed as part of [*indistinct word*] of the color triangle. It's not just that there are colors: so-called secondary color blends and primary colors—three primary colors: yellow, blue, red; and three secondary colors: orange, purple, green—that's not it. I felt like the genesis in Goethe's text is really [*indistinct word*], and that the color triangle expresses this genesis.

In order, you have: the emergence of yellow, the emergence of blue, the twofold emergence of red via the intensification of both yellow and blue, the emergence of green via mixing, carrying on mixing through [*indistinct word*] Imagine if I put the colors' lines in color—that'd be lovely—so, what's left? I still have combinations—what combinations? [*Indistinct words*] … the color wheel earlier. The combination, yellow – green, here. The combination, green – blue. The combination, orange – purple. And so, the color triangle is [*indistinct word*]

It's simple but elegant [*indistinct words*] because again, I think it's obvious that if you treat it like a genetic triangle -- and moreover, you can't build it up gradually, I think you're led to construct it in order -- 1, 1', 2, 3, 4, 4', 5, 5' 5''… That's what the color triangle is [*indistinct word*] You could add to that: color's light-dark, white-black exterior, you can see how powerful, now, how color blooms out of its exterior. That's the origin of the different colors' independence; it's a genesis. So that would be… and I'd say [*indistinct words*] … The triangle is genetic. [*Pause*] So far, so good? Any issues? As for the color wheel, it is structural [*indistinct words*] [*Pause*]

I'm starting with yellow—there's a reason I'm starting with yellow—I'll put it at the top of my circle and from there I'll establish the first diametric opposition. What is the diametric opposite of yellow? Yellow is one of the three primitive or primary colors: yellow, blue, red.[112] The opposite of yellow is the combination of the two other primitive colors. Once I have my three primitive colors—yellow, blue, and red—a diametric opposition would be between one of these primitive colors and the combination of the other two. This diametric opposition is often known as the relationship between complementary colors.

What are two complementary colors? Two complementary colors are such that one is a primitive color, and the other is made by combining the other two. So yellow is diametrically opposed to the combination of blue and red, or purple. Consequently, if I started to draw my circle—notice that this circle is not at all genetic. It begins, starting with the problem of diametric opposition; it begins with drawing a structure. That's why I think that it's obvious that the color wheel is lifeless if you haven't first worked through the color triangle. [*Noises*] You can sense that I have a great preference for [*indistinct word*], a great preference for [*indistinct word*]. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, when it concerns the circle… What? [*Someone makes an inaudible remark*] So you've got your first diametrical opposition, yellow and purple, purple as the combination of blue and red forces us to put to our circle -- what you know already, there are six sections, the three primary colors and the three binary colors – so [*indistinct word*] blue and red, six sections for the three primary colors; purple is a combination of blue and red. [*Inaudible words*] Two other colors, henceforth through deduction, and here, it's no longer at all a genesis; it's a deduction of structure, it's a structural deduction whereby you put down your two other sections along the periphery: blue/yellow with green as the intermediary, yellow/red with orange. And you have, you can read from there, your diametrical opposition: just as yellow is diametrically opposed to purple according to the law of complementary colors, red is diametrically opposed to green, since red is a primitive color diametrically opposed to the combination of the other two: the combination of the other two is that between yellow and blue, and yellow-and-blue is green. So, the diametrical opposition between red and green, the diametrical opposition between blue and orange, since orange is yellow-and-red diametrically opposed with the third primitive color… Yes? I'm almost done.

One kind of relationship between colors comes about via diametric oppositions along the color wheel. It's the theme of complementary colors. Goethe's dotted line[113] suggests that there are other relationships. The other relationships are when the relations between colors follow along chords and no longer across the diameter. Diametric oppositions, in Goethe's terminology, [*inaudible words*] are harmonious combinations. Harmonious combinations between yellow and purple, orange and blue, red and green. They're the complementary relationships.

We leave diameters behind and consider chords. Two types of chords. You select two colors by passing over an intermediary. These must be called the big chords. These are what Goethe will call "characteristic combinations".[114] This is what I've written in dashes; the list of characteristic combinations will be: green – orange, orange – purple. You see you've jumped over yellow. You've drawn a chord in the circle such that you've brought together green and orange by skipping yellow. That's the big chord.

Move onto the second characteristic combination: orange – purple, skipping over red. Third combination: purple and green, skipping blue. In the other direction: combining blue – red, skipping purple; red – yellow, skipping orange; blue – yellow, skipping green. And you have your network of so-called "characteristic" combinations.

And lastly -- what I didn't include there to keep it from getting too complicated [*inaudible words*], but Goethe does include it – what he'll call, and it's not by chance and these are of great importance, what he'll call non-characteristic combinations.[115] [*Pause*] These are the small chords [*Pause*] where you don't skip colors; you just move from one color to the next. And the non-characteristic combinations include: yellow – orange, orange – red, red – purple, purple – blue, blue – green, green - [*inaudible*] You have your aggregate, your structural aggregate. What I find interesting is that it's your choice. I mean the triangle says genetically what the circle says structurally. In my view, I have my view, the circle is dead [*inaudible words*] which is important because I'm saying, you sense that it's not just the theory, it's the basis for the whole theory [*inaudible words*] In a sense, was it necessary to wait for Goethe so that …? We'll see… why it happened at that point in time…, why it happened at that point in time.

I'm saying, in my question, Delacroix made his palette into a real timer, a chromatic timer, a chrono…, [*Pause*] a chromatic timer, a chronometer, that is, a clock—you might say that he wanted to assign hours to the color wheel. That's why there are so many… it's already synchronous… [*inaudible words; Deleuze starts speaking to someone near the board*]

A student: [*Inaudible comments*]

So what Delacroix was doing with all that? It's very important to put things in order; they were all very orderly, right? [*Inaudible comments*] He placed his colors, his colors [*Inaudible, noise*], and then he surrounded… in a big pile, and then he surrounded that with derived or blended colors and then that made a timer. [*Pause*] That's an anecdote… it'd be like an exercise. If I were a painter, I'm sure that I'd be really into that… [*Long interchange with students near the board*]

A painter [*indistinct words*] a problem, of how to transform… how, according to these schemas, how can a painter arrange colors on the palette. That's the first practical problem. Second practical problem: what does it mean when a painter hates a color? For example: Mondrian and green [*inaudible words*] … abomination. He can have all kinds of reasons [*indistinct words*] … to live in New York. New York is the only city in the world that… [*indistinct words*]

Claire Parent : That what ?

Hidenobu Suzuki [*both next to the microphone*] I couldn't hear.

Claire Parnet: Gilles, we can't hear over here…

Deleuze: Is that true? What can we do? I've almost finished… From the start you haven't heard anything?

Claire Parnet: I'd like to know why Mondrian left for New York? [*Laughter, noise, indistinct words*]

Deleuze: Because he didn't like green.

Claire Parnet: But why? New York is the only city in the world that…?

Deleuze: It's the only city without any trees! [*Laughter, noise of diverse conversations*] [*Long pause; Deleuze continues chatting away from the microphone*]

There are colors missing from the palette. It's also interesting to wonder, asking the painter, questioning the painter about the colors they use. Well, so, you could have all sorts of practical exercises. When a color is named after a painter. Based on that, I don't think it's about laws or norms. Especially with the genetic element of colors—that's how basic decisions are made, and what's more, it's so genetic that it has depth. [*Pause*]

But what is its depth? First, it has strata. It's completely stratified; you have to read it perpendicularly. If the genetic color triangle had a structure, it'd be a perpendicular structure—why?

The first stratum: it casts light and darkness. That's the theme with color's dark side. And what proves that color has a dark side? You'll find it at the level… where this kind of emergence from white and from black, if you rotate your color wheel, you get gray from white and black, and that is the deepest stratum—color is emerging from light and darkness.

Then what we should note is that [*indistinct words*] it isn't the same space. The space of light and the space of color are not the same. Color will be… there isn't any color; that's what one means by "chromatic color." The principle of the relativity of colors. Color is created in this way, this first stratum casts darkness and light, casts gray, gray being understood as white and black.

The second stratum. It breaks off; it starts to break off from this foundation. Light and dark are color's foundation. White and black are the foundation of color, it emerges from this base. It emerges from this base in the form of yellow, blue, and their shared intensification: red.

At this point, relationships between colors are formed, irreducible to the light-dark relationship. The light-dark relationship still affects color nevertheless, in the form of light and dark colors. The light-dark relationship in color will determine the relationship between light and dark colors, and by no means does it exhaust color relations. It's what is called "value relations", value relations [*rapports de valeur*]. It's precisely in the relationship between light and dark colors. Color only exists through independent relationships, specifically, not between values but between hues, between colors with the same level of saturation. A perfect example is the relationship between complements. [*Pause*]

There are so many strata that… actually, let's go over a brief history of colorism.[116] What is colorism? [*indistinct words*] And I've come right back to Riegl. Riegl proposed a distinction between polychromy and colorism. Polychromy refers to any detail or any use of color—extraordinarily complex and extraordinarily rich—where color is still subordinate to something else. What do I mean? It can be subordinate to form, to form. You arrange your colors organically according to the lines of the form. Then you'd have polychromy. Egyptian art and Greek art are classic examples of polychromy. [*Pause*]

Color can also be subordinate to light. With painting you actually had to distinguish, if only vaguely, between a luminist tendency and a colorist tendency. Luminists are those who achieve color through light, and colorists are those who achieve light through color, through a treatment of color. Rembrandt [*inaudible words*] is rightly hailed as among the greatest luminists. [*Pause*]

Fine, there isn't just one possible subordination; I'd say, however, that's already no longer polychromy; you see, it's something else. But it isn't colorism either, because it isn't color for its own sake; it cannot develop in itself… it can realize any value relationship, [but] it can't fully develop all of its relationships in tonality or hue.

And with the color wheel, it's precisely Goethe who strongly emphasizes the following theme: based on the color wheel, each color—this accounts for why there's a movement, a dynamism to color—each color tends to evoke the tonality of the color wheel; basically, then, you'd have coefficients of speed or slowness. Every color suggests the entire color wheel, often via its diametric opposition in particular. Red will suggest green, and it's only in your eye that one complement suggests the other. That famous expression in every introduction to color: you stare at a color and then, once the color is taken away, your eye suggests the complementary color. For example, red suggests green.

So, what am I saying? If I were to give a brief overview of the history of colorism: I think that the moment when the first colorism appears it's like at the border of luminism, light, color and the problem of mixing. That doesn't mean [*indistinct words*] one does beyond the other [*indistinct words*], and colors come up out from ground. And the ground becomes captivating; it's like overlaying two grays. Colors come up out from a ground, from a dark ground. It's the famous dark color [*indistinct words*], yet this dark color is now meant to manifest the dark side of color, and these emerging, dark colors are? Are ultimately gray on gray; however, it's not a [*indistinct word*] gray since there is a luminous gray, a luminist gray from black-white, and a chromatic gray from green-red, complementary colors.

So, the initial colorism is actually the basis, it's actually the basis for this dark ground that expresses the overlay of both grays, such that colors emerge or come out of the ground. Here we don't need [*indistinct words*], they emerge from the ground. [*Pause*] And in fact, as vivid as they are, they demonstrate their dark nature. From there, all of colorism's progress, all the movement, all of colorism's dynamism will assert itself more and more—and what will that entail?... [*Interruption of the recording*] [46:33]

Part 2

… How does one reach this vivacity, expressing the relationship between colors and light? How does one achieve bright hues, since only bright hues express the relationship between colors? It will be done in stages.

Just looking at French painting, I'll use a sequence of three stages, three moments, in Delacroix. What do we see in Delacroix's technique? See, because it's a question of technique. We find something rather strange: the ground's dark color often lingers and for a long time, right, it's already fully color but dark color—only with Delacroix do we get bright colors. How do we move beyond this dark color, these dark colors—how do we draw out more vibrant hues? That's the crucial moment. It's always colorism that appears, that reappears; it's a problem.

And Delacroix invents a process that will be recognized even while he was alive, whether people mocked him for it or instead used it themselves: it's the process of using what are called "crosshatching." He will literally chop up [*hacher*] his dark color—there's no other word for it: green crosshatching, red crosshatching—and it's with crosshatching that color will realize its bright aspects, in bright hues.

One of Delacroix's greatest moments, "Give me a heap of purple and I will bring out an exquisite color," "give me a heap of purple and I will bring out an exquisite color."[117] It's not like that, it's not a literal formula, it's what he does on the canvas. [*indistinct words*] What becomes possible after Delacroix? The unfolding of relations, the unfolding of bright hues and the relationships between bright hues, in a way that no longer depends on color emerging from a dark ground.

It's as though Delacroix had kept—well, I'm going a little far with the dialectic, it didn't occur like this—it's as though Delacroix kept it only in order that he'd no longer need it. Which doesn't take away, which doesn't take anything away from his masterpieces built around dark color. Who's that? To isolate and heighten the relationship between bright hues without passing into dark color, dark color—of course, that is the Impressionist.

And that's perhaps the first time that colorism appears in its pure form: light, completely subordinate to color. It's perhaps the second time since there was Turner, Turner with his yellows There's a really beautiful, remarkable painting by Turner called "Homage to Goethe", since "Homage to Goethe" is like the pictorial version of the chromatic circle. [*indistinct words*] For the Impressionists, that's the problem. By the same token, Delacroix's crosshatching, which worked as crosshatching since it was used to chop up [*hacher*] the base color, the dark color [*indistinct words*] became the well-known Impressionist elements, the comma-stroke, the juxtaposition of commas, juxtaposition [*indistinct words*] no longer crosshatching chopping up the dark color but little commas on their own.

And well, throughout Impressionism, there are various style when it comes to commas: Monet's commas. That's not… that's how an expert recognizes [an artist]; sometimes you're hard-pressed to distinguish a Pissarro from a Monet, a little bit a lesser Renoir from a Degas. [*Pause*] An expert [*indistinct words*] With the comma, it's not about that, that there's a link. When the comma starts cracking and becomes Van Gogh's signature … [*inaudible words*] but Van Gogh's comma [*indistinct words*] understand that in the end, with colorism and the development of colors for themselves, it's as if the basic unit of painting delivered itself from a smaller unit, a kind of atomism. Delacroix's crosshatching turns into the impressionist comma; the impressionist comma turns into Cézanne's little dabs – well, "becomes", that's not… -- which turns into lastly [*the sounds of cassette pushed into records blocks Deleuze's voice*] the apparent impact of Seurat's points, will be transformed into the colorist relationships. [*Pause*] And after that… [*Pause*]

Well, there we are, how well I'm explaining things, right? We'll let all that marinate. For now, this is like a long parenthesis that I completed, and we have that accomplished. What we still need to look at now concerns color, but I didn't get to it yet so we've made progress, and now I'll come back to something else, but this is fine, that's what I'll need… [*Interruption of the recording*] [54:30]

[*After an apparent break, Deleuze has returned to his seat near the microphone*] …You see, the colors aren't good. It's a very nice triangle. [*Pause, noises of students returning*]

Okay, well, see: that's a parenthesis we could put before or after; everything else, it's something to take home with you, okay? You can read more about this in Goethe, right? I'd rather you read it, but if you don't read it... fine, fine, that's… Well, are there any comments, additions?

A student: White and black, [*indistinct words*] I read Goethe's text, and it's very complicated problem, because on the one hand, there are color[s]; he says, white is the first, the first genesis of darkness, and black is the essence of darkness, so they are colors; but at the same time, he challenges Newton on the question of white which is born from the color wheel. Goethe does not say at all that white cannot be generated from the color wheel; that's gray.

Deleuze: Absolutely.

The student: And this ambiguity that—

Deleuze: Personally, I think that the ambiguity is easily accounted for; it's what I was getting at when I said that the triangle should be interpreted genetically. Then color doesn't actually have an absolute beginning—rather, at the same time, white and black are both the milieu for the exteriority of color, the form of color's exteriority, which doesn't yet have any color inside, and the emergence of the inside. Especially since if we disagree with Newton, among other things, then it'd get complicated; we would have to, if we really focused on color, we would indeed have to pit everything in Goethe against Newton.

Anne Querrien: Newton, for me… I feel like he was using the laws of optics, decomposing light through the prism and…

Deleuze: Completely, right.

Anne Querrien: And I mean, on that alone, you'll find some pop science books on color, the idea that the eye's three primary colors [are]—and it's what was used in television—red, green, and blue and as for television, I have the equation here for its wavelengths: it's just about 51% red, 39% green, and 10% blue, and so according to the color triangle, that puts television over completely on the black side.

Deleuze: Yes, yes, it gets pushed over.

Anne Querrien: … pushed over to black, and on the other hand, a big article in the Sunday *Le Monde*—a fascinating article on how color images in television are coded to ensure that color broadcasts are compatible with black-and-white receivers, and well, they subtract color instead of adding it—and so pull it even further towards black, so that black-and-white receivers can pick up color broadcasts.

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes. [*Deleuze's tone is less than enthused, hence laughter all around him*]

Anne Querrien: So then, [*indistinct words*] … a comparison with technology [*indistinct words*] since they appear at the same time: printing—color printing—and the additive composition of colors in printing, Delacroix and company are completely parallel to the research on half-toning.

Deleuze: Or Seurat's method, right, in pointillism, would be another technical comparison to draw with punctual coding…

Anne Querrien: And photography [*indistinct words*] …

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, yes. [*Pause*] Well, okay, let's keep going… Yes, another comment?

The first student: Another thing, about the nine chromatic cycles…

Deleuze: A numerical correspondence.

The student: Except for nine, okay, we have three for the three colors, we have six, and now we can't have nine and go on directly to…, and if we keep on separating them—

Deleuze: Let's see.

The student: Whereas in the other—

Deleuze: We have three in the other.

The student: In the other, we have nine.

Deleuze: Oh, you mean in the triangle! Yeah, that's interesting.

The student: Yes, it's important that we get nine.

Deleuze: It's important!

The student: ...that we get nine, yes.

Deleuze: Well, aren't you an abstract mystic! [*Laughter*]

The student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes, it's important, but we should… I can't keep up because I'm totally wiped out. We can only get… With the wheel, don't we get…? So, three, three… -- Oh, this is really beyond me -- Think on this; it's an exercise: how we might get nine with the color wheel. [*Pause*] Yes, even though it's clear in the triangle—oh! You could maybe untangle a great mystery. Look! Well, [*Pause*] we'll set that aside for now, but again: we're going to need it soon. [*Pause*]

Do you remember the point we reached? We had just defined our first signal-space, the Egyptian space. But at the same time, this Egyptian signal-space wasn't made for painting, or at any rate, it certainly wasn't exclusive to painting. It's even expressed formally, infinitely more clearly, in Egyptian bas-relief. And my first question along these lines is: Won't this establish something long-term, something essential about painting? Won't it establish something long-term that's essential about painting, namely, the idea of flatness?[118] Because, look, many critiques have specifically defined painting in two ways—take [Clement] Greenberg for example, a contemporary critic I've already talked about. He says that painting consists in two things: flatness and the determination of flatness. That itself is interesting because what does that mean—the determination of flatness as distinct from flatness. Flatness and the determination of flatness. Okay, maybe, maybe but it's not so self-evident that painting is defined by flatness.

I mean, isn't there a depth to the canvas? [It's] why some—and not all—there are some painters who even revolve around there being depth to the canvas. Wouldn't this idea of painting as flatness and the determination of flatness in part come from outside of painting, from a very old horizon, the Egyptian horizon, an Egyptian achievement? Why? Because we saw if we try to define Egypt's signal-space, according to Riegl, we more or less get the following formula: form and ground are taken on the same plane, flatness—i.e., an equal flatness of form and ground. Form and ground are taken on the same plane, both equally close to each other and equally close to ourselves. That's what it is – if I try to sum up the presentation of Egypt according to Riegl – that's what it is: form and ground are taken on the same plane, both equally close to each other and equally close to ourselves. That's Egyptian bas-relief -- and we saw how it could be equally true for pyramids, in a more complicated way -- and that's Egyptian painting.

Yes, we'll have to hang onto this idea of "flatness." Perhaps it's Egypt that realized painting as flatness. And then this theme, he developed from there, but it didn't have any of the same urgency. Again, it doesn't go without saying that a canvas is flat. After all, there are some, there are some painters who paint backwards; many painters today paint backwards. What does painting backwards mean, if not that the canvas has depth? There are painters who problematize the idea of surface. There's a group—there's a very important group, the Supports/Surfaces group,[119] and then still other groups, a group that many Americans haven't stopped problematizing it. But we'll leave all that aside.

Flatness won't so much be the necessary outcome of painting as it will be painting's Egyptian horizon, painting's external Egyptian horizon. And indeed, that is what Egyptian space is. Is this the expression of a will to art, as Riegl puts it, or is it tied to -- then it's all fair game, we can always dream -- is it tied to certain conditions of both civilization and nature, right, the desert, bas-relief's relationship to the desert, the pyramid's relationship to the desert, the eye's relationship to the desert? Doesn't this relationship specifically imply of *planning* of space?[120]

Because, in fact, I'm hitting on something I didn't get to say last time, when Riegel tries to say what sort of vision corresponds to Egyptian space. See, on the side of the object—I'm just summarizing here— on the object side, there's indeed an operation of *planning*; the relationships in space are transformed into planimetric relationships. Well, form and ground are on the same plane, it's linearity and, like [Greenberg] says, [the determination][121] of linearity, that is, what determination of linearity will result from the fact that form and ground are taken on the same plane?

Coming back to what we covered last time: the determination of linearity that results from this involves three elements of painting. It's the three laws of painting precisely because form and ground are taken on the same plane, inhabit the same plane, that painting will have three elements: *ground*, *form*, and what relates ground to form and form to ground, namely the geometrical crystalline *contour*. The geometrical crystalline laws [*légalité*]. And I said that when we look, when we happen to look at a modern canvas, and are in a situation such that we—it's like we're forced, subjected, led to distinguish three elements: form, ground, and contour—then we can say, "An Egyptian's been here!" [*Laughter*]

I'm thinking of a painting, and maybe some of you know it off the top of your head, can see it in your mind—it's a beautiful painting, I think, really very beautiful! A painting by [Paul] Gauguin: *La Belle Angèle*, *La Belle Angèle*. What a painting![122] It's a very fine example—and in my opinion, it might be one of the first examples in modern painting—of what's called—I tried to put it in broad strokes—shallow depth, limited depth. There is depth but it's very, very limited; form and ground are really close to the same plane. What is the form? It's the head of a Breton named Angèle—one Gauguin was fond of: a real Breton! [*Laughter*] She's depicted with her headdress. She's perfect. Okay. Anyway.

What is the ground? It's—and this says it all—a field; it's a field.[123] With what we're given it's not clear who invented it; the letters are murky. Is it Van Gogh? Is it Gauguin? Well, it doesn't really matter who. Or was it another third member of their group? They made fields, but still—to liven them up—they put bouquets of flowers, like on wallpaper. They put little bouquets of flowers. There's a… Van Gogh was close to a postman in Arles. And he made several portraits of this postman. There's one of those—very, very fine—where the ground comprises a field like wallpaper. It's green, if memory serves. [https://www.peintures-tableaux.com/Portrait-du-facteur-Joseph-Roulin-2-Vincent-van-Gogh.html] Because he made several. There's a blue one—one with a blue field. There's a green one. And I think the green one has really charming little bouquets of flowers! Which weave a decorative motif onto the field. Anyway. There's the field, then. There's the form. What is it? The form is the head of the Breton. And she is clearly not treated as a field.

There's still one problem. You'll notice that it runs throughout the history of painting. When it comes to colorism, what do you do about flesh? It's right here, bizarrely, that painting and phenomenologists come together, because both are so animated by the question of flesh, by embodiment. It was the problem of flesh that led [Maurice] Merleau-Ponty to painting.[124]

What do you do about flesh? I tracked down a quote from Goethe, just to tie everything together...oh! Where is that quote? A very nice quote from Goethe—Here it is: "For flesh, the color should be totally liberated from its elementary state."[125] Flesh poses an odd problem for painting. How do you make flesh without winding up with gray? If there is a case—even in the case, even in the case of impressionism, flesh is even more of a problem. How do you depict flesh? Things are no big deal, but flesh doesn't exactly give off much light, you know! How do you prevent flesh from getting muddy? It's tough! You need to treat color in a particular way. So, it's incredible in *La Belle Adèle*—no, Angèle—in *La Belle Angèle*. Yes, *La Belle Angèle*. *La Belle Angèle*, since you have two color treatments corresponding to your first two pictorial elements.

Naturally, it wasn't like that with the Egyptians; that's why it's a great modern painting. You have one way of treating flesh And I'm jumping to… I'm foreshadowing because… Finally, one major solution to treating flesh, to treating flesh pictorially, is using what's called broken color;

it's by breaking the color. What is broken color? Well see later on, won't we! It doesn't matter, here we're situating a word, a new category in color; broken color is how Van Gogh and Gauguin, for example, treat flesh. Yet, alright. Alright. So, you have the use of broken color, the form, the figure, the use of color fields, the ground's treatment, you have your two elements.

And Gauguin uses a method that a guy, unfortunately a minor—well, not unfortunately!—a minor painter in Gauguin's day tried to bring back, and this painter called it "*cloisonné*."[126] You'll find it in *La Belle Angèle*: the figure is surrounded by a sort of yellow circle that'll be very important—for starters, this yellow circle unquestionably has a comic effect. Gauguin had a real sense of humor, visually; he's one of the most lighthearted painters, the most… yes, painting's comic. And when it's bracketed off in *cloisonné*, *La Belle Angèle* starts to look like a cheese tin, the side of a cheese tin; it's cropped like she's a Breton mascot for Camembert—that's just Gauguin, instead of… Well. And this yellow, this yellow line, is great because, really, that's what brings out the figure's broken color and the ground's color field [*ton aplat*]. And there's a kind of… And at the same time that'll be a crucial component of shallow depth, that is, it'll establish the form and ground "almost" at the same plane.

So, when you see a painting like this—or I mentioned Bacon which is actually very different—but when… when, in the large, large majority of Bacon's paintings, you'll find three elements that stand out. They aren't all necessarily like this. The three elements are: a field for the ground; second, the figure is always done in broken colors; and the autonomous contour, or what refers the form to the ground and the ground to the form, which in Bacon is no longer mere *cloisonné* with its volume, its surface or volume—it's kind of a rug—in the color-relationships with the grounding field, with the field of color. You might say there are three colors in Bacon that form a sort of rug or ring in the middle of which—or inside, at least—the figure is contained or propped up. Such that you get three regimes of color: a contour regime, secured by the rug or ring; the ground's regime secured by the field; a figure regime secured by the broken colors; and these three regimes, you can declare: homage to Egypt.

But this kind of return to Egypt is clearly a return to Egypt via thoroughly non-Egyptian means, since now we find the three Egyptian elements again in different approaches to color. And maybe you see what he [Greenberg] meant by linearity and the determination of linearity:[127] the Egyptians provide for linearity, or the identical plane shared by both form and ground, and thereby determine this linearity with three elements: form, ground, and autonomous contour. Well, if you've understood that, and that the Egyptians didn't settle it, and that it can live on only if a modern painter can recover it and resurrect Egypt via non-Egyptian means—then you've understood generally what happens every time, what happens all the time in art.

As a result, to wrap up our history of Egypt, there's just, there's a lot we should, at the end, we should talk about still, but it's fine -- there's one last thing to be done: as regards the subject, what's going on? We've defined the objective elements: the same plane for the form and ground; the three elements constituting the determination of flatness: the ground field, the form, the bas-relief figure; and the contour, once again, the geometrical crystalline contour, the geometrical crystalline law [*légalité*] that carries the form to the ground.

So, what stays in your eye, your Egyptian eye—it goes without saying that Egyptians have lost this eye and that today's Egyptians no longer have this eye [*Pause*] unless they do have it, I don't know… after all… well, anyway, yes [*Pause*] yes, yes, yes, yes, the eye… That's how Riegl defines the Egyptian eye, but you'll see that the Egyptian eye can only be defined according to its correlate, that is according to Egypt's signal-space. What is the Egyptian eye?

And so, in the first edition of Riegl's crucial text, *Art Industry -- Late Roman Art Industry* -- we find something difficult, something very simple but which comes across as difficult. The first edition tells us, sure! Yeah, this Egyptian space is a closed-in space; it invites a close-up view. No, that's not shocking. You might think that's not really artistically motivated: it's because of the desert and light that one's view is fundamentally drawn in; in Egypt, you look quite closely.

A student from outside: Excuse me… [*Inaudible comments; her remarks concern an official action at the university level requiring that students sign some kind of form*]

Deleuze: Where do we drop them off?

The student: [Room] C 196.

Deleuze: So, fill them out at the end, okay?

The student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: What's that? Oh! Yes, yes—

The student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: It's alright; the meetings are everyone's concern. You don't know about the meetings? Oh! That's my fault; I should have told you. Yes, yes, you know the dates? Oh dear.

The student: There's a committee room.

Deleuze: … And that we've yet to see, in teaching, it's true; I'd like a newsletter with updates on late-stage proposals for everyone in their respective fields to up-to-speed with proposals that are already far along—for example, the university project was catastrophic. It's not hard to understand. The university project consisted in bypassing university councils.[128] Well, our knee-jerk reaction is always that no one gives a shit about the university council! But hold on, what will you replace it with? And what about contacting the EBU—I mean, credits would have been distributed directly to the EBU. Which, clearly, hands regional unions—who are also complacent—absolutely put them in the ministry's hands, because there was no longer any university structure. Now that was a terrible proposal.

So, any time I talk to somebody in a given field, oddly enough, they confirm it. Not long ago I saw—they didn't tell me any secrets—I saw a banker and he said, you know, there was a plan to blow up banks' collective bargaining agreements—a very late-stage proposal. But it would be very interesting… -- yes, but that occurred in context of the banks, in a particular way -- it'd be interesting to get a rundown so that we know advanced proposals that'd go into effect one or two years from now. But for me, that's what elections are for. What were they plotting? This is no joke!

The student: General Assembly—you have the floor.

Deleuze: That's true; that's why I'm thinking if these meetings...

The student: …that's how we found out about it, at 10 pm… that's why we've decided to take action… so if you want to respond… Goodbye.

Deleuze: Okay, then. Goodbye. To reiterate: Yes, it won't do if only professors show up to these meetings. Everyone who is able to go has to… You should look into it. Personally, I think it's Friday or Saturday, but you—you think it's Thursday… At any rate, you all have to go, have to show up with numbers. Because it's important: to redirect—at present there is still a small chance to salvage something from everything that's… yes, so normally, as I see it, it's Friday and Saturday. Look! I'll stop there, alright, and we'll take a break since we've had enough! [*Class continues without break*] Listen to me! [*Some students try to quiet the one still arguing*]

Claire Parnet: Ah, what a chatterbox she is! Anne, shut up!

Deleuze: He [Riegl] is trying to say what sort of eye corresponds to Egyptian space. And I told you that in the first edition, he says, well! It's very strange: it's a near-sighted vision, then, it's near-sighted vision but how does the near-sighted eye behave? Well! He says, it's bizarre, but literally, see, form and ground both occupy the same plane, and I—the viewer, with my eye—I'm just as close. It's an eye that literally acts like touch. It's a tactile eye. It's a tactile eye.

And here Riegl—it's a little—anyway, what we need to see, what we get from this passage in Riegl, is that it's not a metaphor, that moreover, Riegl is pointing out two of the eye's functions: you have optical vision, and you have tactile vision. The eye as an eye is not—see, the tactile eye isn't an eye that's supplemented with touch, like when I use my hands to confirm something I've seen, when I tough a face, for example—that's not what it is. It's the eye as such that acts like touch, so this passage from Riegl is still ambiguous, and it's just—it's bizarre. It's in the second edition that he comes out and says that we should distinguish—indeed, he has to coin a complicated word to avoid equivocating—and he says there are like two visions: there's optical vision and there's vision that he calls "haptic," h-a-p-t-i-c, haptic vision. He borrows the word from the Greeks: *hapto*, which means to touch, the eye's touch, a haptic sense of sight.[129]

So, we'll define the haptic sense of sight, if we want to give it a real sense, the haptic sense of sight would be a use of sight that's no longer optical—no longer vision from a distance. See, optical sight is from a distance, relatively speaking; however, the haptic use of vision, or haptic sight, is a close-up sight that grasps form and ground on the same equally close plane. Well let's suppose, then, before you we take a break, I'm thinking—there are a lot of problems here!

We'll keep this word, haptic; after all, these categories, these categories, it might be really interesting because painting is intended for the eye, right, it's intended for the eye! But which eye? I might suggest that painting perhaps gives rise to an eye within the eye—that painting, okay, might literally have something to do with the so-called third eye. Would we have two optical eyes, two eyes for optical vision, and then a third eye? A third haptic eye? As a result, is it painting that produces the haptic eye? Is there a haptic eye outside of painting? I'm jumping ahead, that's no longer the Egyptians. See, it's knowing whether this talk of "the haptic" will do anything for us. And what would this haptic eye be?[130]

Anyway! Let's reconnect with everything we've covered today. Look. Light—light is the optical eye; light solicits an optical eye, perhaps. I don't know. Maybe we could say that. But doesn't color belong to a whole other eye? Isn't it a whole other eye? Doesn't color solicit a haptic eye? Wasn't all that earlier about how a haptic eye is reconstituted out of the optical eyes?

In a spirited letter, Gauguin says, "The painter's eye is in heat"— I don't remember what page, but it when it comes up it's pretty funny.[131] What is the painter's eye? This eye, which Cézanne himself claims turns all red, so red, so red—I come back home and my eyes are red, so red that I can't see anymore. Eyes so red they can't see anything: the painter's eye, Gauguin's eye in heat—it's really bizarre. Isn't this a really very strange kind of vision? Isn't it the reconstitution of a haptic eye, the Egyptian eye, the third eye, right?

I'm saying "third eye" not because it's in the brain. It isn't in the brain; it's in the nervous system, but only because, I mean, it's in the middle of the two other eyes. That's where the painter is. But then, is color—I don't know, let's take it as far as we can—wouldn't color be a way of reconstituting haptic sight that's totally independent and original compared to how the Egyptians created haptic vision? The Egyptians created haptic vision by placing form and ground on the same plane and by producing three elements: form, ground, and geometrical crystalline contours? But, for us, hasn't an Egyptian eye been recovered through non-Egyptian means, namely, through colorism? Isn't the haptic eye the eye that draws on an optical external milieu, white and black—the eye that thereby draws the inherent relationships between colors?

Alright, we've wound up with all sorts of questions left hanging, because now we stumble upon the question: The Egyptian world appears to be dead; it can only be resurrected via totally different means. What made the Egyptian world die off? Ah! What brought it to an end? [*Pause; someone answers from the back and Deleuze starts laughing*] I'm always bad about posing abstract questions, and well, I'll tell you, what caused the Egyptian world to die… [*Deleuze keeps laughing; another student makes a comment*] Sure, you might say that. You might put it another way. Okay, go take a break. Take a break. [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:33:02]

Part 3

… A lot of you during our break, a lot of you have been saying that you've been feeling sick and tired with this weather… I should just cave in and shorten class [*cheers and applause*], there we are! So, I'd just like to try to determine, see, we're trying to find out what this spatial event is, or rather this determination; I'll stick to the expression "linearity" and the "determination of linearity." Again, we saw it for Egyptian space. "Linearity" is the plane. "Determination of linearity" is the plane's three elements: ground, form, and contour.

I mean, what's causing this space to be somehow overturned!? Once again, this space will be so overturned that you'll only be able to find traces of Egypt using means that are completely—It'll be a resurrected Egypt. So, what could happen? If we stay there, we leave Riegl (or we'll come back to him, at least) but there we'll pose ourselves a question—and as always, like I'm always trying to show you, in a way, we don't have a choice—what might happen in this flat space where form and ground occur at the same plane as the three elements?

What's the accident? Accidents are accidents. Events are events. But what is accident and what is event? The spatial determination of the accident or event is exactly this. You have your Egyptian space—well look! Bas-relief. However slight, it's like an earthquake. It causes an earthquake. That is, the plane splits up; imagine that the plane splits up—but the aftermath, it's insane! The plane splits up, a foreground draws in, a background pulls back, even if only slightly. Disjunction of planes. Really, a disjunction of planes. From there—from there, anyway, it'll be fixed—there will be a foreground and there will be a background. And it's no big deal, as small as it is. The disjunction of planes; that'll be what brings us to other signal-spaces.

And after all, if I have a disjunction between planes, what does that give us—so we're really speeding through uh—what can come of it? A space where planes are disjointed, and which is essentially organized around the foreground. That's the first possibility -- I'm trying to think through the possibilities -- this is the signature of this space: there's a distinction between planes, but it's determined by the foreground [*avant-plan*]. I'm still using the concept of determination.

So that's great, that'll be great, this foreground-determined space. Then why not the other way around? Let's think of a background-determined space. Well that, you say, no—that's what we want whenever there's something new, that's what we want because that sounds great—a background-determined space. Let's break it down literally—a background-determined space: everything emerges from the ground, comes from the ground. So much power compared to the foreground-space! Form *comes out* of the ground in the most energetic sense of the word, while on the flip-side, when the fore-ground is predominant, the form sinks into the ground and determines its own relation to the ground—while here, form literally stems from the ground when the background is determinant. Ah, that must be a beautiful space—before being sure of it, I'm looking for logical positions for my spaces.

And what else can there be when the planes are disjointed?[132] There might be a third thing. It's funny—something very, very winding. As the planes are disjointed, you don't worry so much about the planes themselves, neither the foreground [*avant plan*] nor the background [*arrière plan*]. We'll generate everything between the two planes. But what's between the two, and what *can* be between them if it's not dependent on either the foreground or the background? I see three positions—logically, there are three.

But all, let's try to pin down some names. What about this artistic space where the foreground is determinant? So, there's volume—volume since the planes are disjointed. Anyway, you see that it's the end of the Egyptian world since volumetric relations have been liberated from planimetric relations. There is volume, but what's determinant is the foreground, because it's the foreground that contains the form, and the relationship to the background is determined by the form and by how the background takes shape in the foreground.

We'll all recognize this as Greek art. Take a Greek sculpture—it's a rare example; I'll still try to illustrate it clearly, but I like starting with a purely abstract schema. Not in order to apply it, but because I'd like to demonstrate something right away, the highs and lows of Greek sculpture.

What are the highs—the reliefs, brilliant reliefs. The Greeks had words for a sculpture's highs and lows, and the lows are the hollows—the hollows and the waves and the whole sculpture has different levels, and that's how the art is evaluated: Greek harmony entails the variable distribution of highs and lows in equal measure. It's the highs that are determinant in Greek sculpture, that is, it's in the foreground where form is worked out, and working out the form determines the relationship with the background.

It's an aesthetic space of the foreground where it's the form that's determinant. And [Henri] Maldiney puts it well when discussing this in his book, *Gaze Speech Space*[133] : It's wrong—oh so wrong—wrong to say that the Greek world is the world of light. It's not the world of light because light is strictly subject to form's requirements. Sure, it's the world of light, but non-liberated light, light subject to form; light ought to reveal form and submit to the requirements of form. And all Greek sculpture is this way of handling light, this wonderful way of handling light in the service of form. No longer the haptic world of the Egyptians—it's an optical world, only an optical world where light's in the service of form; it's an optical world that still refers back to tactile form: it's a tactile-optical world.

And that's why Riegl defines Greek art as tactile-optical art with a corresponding space: the primacy of the foreground over the background. Which results in what's likely the most profound conception of art as rhythm or harmony, rhythm and harmony in the Greek sense and not in the modern sense. But we'll get to that. From one revolution to the next, imagine the reverse: I hope you'll be convinced if you look at Greek sculpture, but the same holds for all of Greek art. Light—any light at all—light is subordinate to the cube's requirements, and the cube is the sort of environment particular to the foreground. It is form in two respects: there is a depth, there are shadows, there are lights, and all of that has to submit to the rhythm of the form, since the rhythm *is* form.

Well, so it's not at all a world of light—that'll have to wait; it's a serious problem because, see, it'll ultimately force us, next time it'll force us to really reconsider our conventional understanding of the Greek world.

Moving on to yet another revolution, what happened that could have reversed the Greek relationship such that the background becomes the determinant ground and that the form, the figure, springs from the ground? But it's a very different sort of figure when it springs out of the ground. It took what amounts to—look, we always talk about the Copernican revolution, and these revolutions are even more important, or at least just as important as the Copernican revolution. To say that Egyptian space gives way to a space determined by the foreground is just as consequential as saying whether the Earth revolves around the Sun or the Sun revolves around the Earth. It's about reversing the structure of space, let alone a second reversal where it's the ground, where everything comes from the ground.

Yeah, everything comes from the ground; that's how it is. How do you expect form to have the same bearing when it's determined by the foreground -- even if it's only responding to the background -- as when, on the other hand, it's literally projected by the background? By no means is it the same conception of form. When the background becomes determinant, where does the figure come from—it comes directly out of light and shadow. In other words, the space of the background is a space where light and shadow are liberated from form. Now it's form that depends on the distribution of light and shadow. It's a radical reversal of Greek space.

How did that happen? That's why it's so sad, because it seems that we no longer understand it—even books on this start off by associating this with Greek space, when it's the opposite of Greek space. So, there are similarities—obviously, there are similarities—but it's *Byzantine* space. Byzantine art's great place in art history is by no means due to this alone, but its hallmark is having the figure emerge from the background instead of determining the figure as a form in the foreground. This time, light *is* set loose—shadow even more so—the Byzantines are the first colorists, since liberating light from form isn't too far from liberating color. And the Byzantines are the first, I think, the first in art to manipulate both color scales: the luminous scale, in value, and the chromatic scale, in color [*tons*].[134]

And the Byzantines even had three primary colors: gold, blue, red—the three well-known mosaic colors—with complex relationships to white (as in marble) and black (as so-called "smalt"), which grow and form a kind of framework through the relationships between colors, and the first luminists, just like the first colorists, i.e., giving up polychromy for colorism and luminism, that will be Byzantine. That warranted persecution, as the emperor will end up persecuting these artists.

Well, this history—if you consider the opposition between Greek space and Byzantine space—this isn't a linear historical development. If I'm looking for another sequence (this time painting/painting), this is perfect. Just picture a Byzantine figure: everything has to emerge from the ground because the mosaic is in a niche. It's a far-sighted vision; it's far-sighted vision from the viewer's perspective. Far-sighted vision—mosaic is embedded in a niche, and you get these figures eaten up by eyes. It isn't form that defines the figure. What is it? Form answers to light; it answers to shadow and light. The eyes of a Byzantine figure are everywhere there—or the eyes spread to anywhere these gazes up from the ground do. It's the very antithesis to the Greek world. And it might be one of the most beautiful spaces—really there's no better or worse—but really, Byzantine space is… if you compare it to Greek space, it's the exact opposite of Greek space.

Alright. I'm looking for a sequence in painting—There's another guy, just like how I singled out Riegl, there's a major figure in the history of painting named [Heinrich] Wölfflin. It's translated in French—a rather good book—on the 16th-17th centuries. But he obviously read Riegl because among other things, we find, moving from the 16th to the 17th century—his analyses are very thorough, very detailed—moving from the 16th to the 17th century we leave behind the 16th century's still tactile-optical vision. First, it was something else. First, I'm looking at the short transition between the 16th and the 17th century. We move away from tactile-optical vision—that of [Albrecht] Durer, or Leonardo [Da Vinci]. So that already involves a lot of variation; I'm not saying that it's the same space, but in a way it all belongs to a tactile-optical space.

And in the 17th century a kind of key or major revolution starts to take shape which will be the discovery of a purely optical space. The discovery of a pure space that culminates with Rembrandt, for example, but plenty of others beside. But with these two spaces—16th century space and 17th century space—what comes first, as the first determination? The primacy of the foreground… if you can think of something by Leonardo da Vinci or Raphael, you'll see it right away. Yet with one remarkable innovation—Raphael, for example—the foreground is curved. Wonderful curve, and a wonderful discovery only possible thanks to the primacy of the foreground.

I think… let me clarify, since there are some things I'm taking from Wölfflin that are so great, and then there are some things that… well, this a bit of a tangent, but around the 16th century there's a wonderful discovery and it was the same, I think, as what the Greeks discovered. What discovery? Well, it's… I don't like it, but I don't have a better word: it's "the collective line." You can really see the contrast, with the Egyptian line. The Egyptian line is fundamentally individual; indeed, it's the contour of individual form. That the collective is able to take on form is an idea that… that didn't occur to Egyptians. In other words, for an Egyptian, an individuality can get stronger and stronger, but it's always structured as an individuality. Collectivity as such doesn't… that starts with the Greeks.

What do you find in Greek art? You get the invention of a line that no longer coincides with this-or-that individual, a line that encompasses several individuals. There aren't real lines anymore: it's the contour of the ensemble. The invention of the collective line means that the line becomes the contour of an ensemble. The Apostles, for example: of course, they're still individualized, but that's not the point. What matters is the enveloping line that goes from the left-most Apostle to the right-most Apostle. I'm thinking of a famous painting, *The Miraculous Draught of Fishes*, by Raphael.

Well, in my opinion it seems obvious, but we're no longer there, think about how the collective line can be made specifically—it's the line of the foreground. It's specifically—it can only be identified via the foreground, as if the fact that the foreground has become determinant allows us to overcome the individual limits of form. Whereby what takes on form—and that's insane from an Egyptian perspective—from a Greek perspective, what takes on form? In Greek statues it's an ensemble, even if it's only a couple. You know right away I can imagine the objection: *but there are plenty of solitary figures*—sure! We shall see. Well, no matter. Anyway, couples in Greek statues: great! The line is the contour shared by two individualities.

And what develops in 16th century painting? Leonardo da Vinci's collective line, or Raphael's collective line. They aren't the same. You can tell painters apart by their collective line, their style of collective line. Something remarkable emerges with 16th century painting: a tree has a collective line that doesn't depend on its leaves, and the painter has to render the collective line in the foreground. A flock of sheep has a collective line, both flocks of sheep and groups of Apostles; group-painting literally moves downstage, overwhelms the foreground. Yet that appears to be just as true for Greek art and for all other sorts of contexts as for 16th century art.

On that note, there's something that stands out throughout—or very often—in Leonardo da Vinci's writings, where he says: "Form must not be surrounded by lines."[135] Read that way, we risk of running into a contradiction because the sentence can be understood in two different ways, one of which Leonardo did not intend. You might think that it means that form should be free of lines. That's not what he means. Why not? Because the line's primacy is indisputable for him. Besides, what is a form free of lines? It's form subordinate to light and to color. Yet that's obviously not what da Vinci means. I think his writings and context make it clear that he means form shouldn't be contained by lines; it means that form exceeds the line of individuality. Form exceeds individual lines. But form will be determined by the line of the foreground.

Hence why it matters that Raphael starts to bend the foreground, like some kind of balcony, where the foreground itself is curved. That's one of the great achievements, the real achievements, of this period. But see, when it comes to space, I'd say the same thing goes for both 16th century art and Greek art; it's like they change signals.

The primacy of the foreground and the discovery of the collective line. Byzantium and the 17th century thus switch signals: the background has primacy, unleashing light and even color. But with the unleashing of light, everything comes from the ground [*fond*]. And that's what 17th century painting is all about. And it's so obvious, for example—I have something really simple in mind, a theme in the 16th century—it's well known, everyone's pointed it out—the 16th century theme: Adam and Eve. It's also one of Wölfflin's examples. Adam and Eve, standing side by side. It could be very complicated since this foreground is the foreground. It might be a curved space; it could be a curving foreground.

What perspective is famous in the 17th century? Diagonal. It's as if—if you will—there's no more foreground. Of course, there *is* one, but it's not what counts. It's like the foreground was punched out; it was punched out by a depth that drags the left toward… drags it toward or pulls it from the ground [*fond*], pulls the right from the ground.

There's no more foreground [*avant-plan*]; there's a differentiation based on the ground [*fond*]. It's clear, for example, in a great painting by Rubens that depicts the meeting of two people. In the 16th century they'd meet in the foreground and their meeting would take place in the foreground. Not at all with Rubens. Between the two meeting, there's practically an alleyway between them, made up of other people on other planes. So that each of the two meeting in the foreground—both of them—comes from the ground by differentiating, highlighting the alleyway separating them. They meet in the foreground, but only inasmuch as they each come out of the ground. It's no longer the foreground that determines things. Everything comes from the ground. It's the background that's determinant.

Anyway, in the end, then, there are two new spaces: Greek space or 16th century space, [and] Byzantine space or 17th century space, and then I was saying there's still one more—let's say we're no longer interested in planes, neither background nor foreground: what's between the two? Well, you have to be interested between the two. Who could be sufficiently barbarian to reject the plane and be interested in the in-between, and what would the in-between planes be? By what term can one call this thing that is neither ground nor form? What would that be?

For convenience, let's call it barbarian art. Maybe it's barbarian art. It has to be barbarian art—it should be, but who knows. And you see how we then come up with our three positions: primacy of the foreground; primacy of the background. Between them? The barbarians arrive—they always arrive “in-between.” What happened? What happened is that somehow the Egyptian way of achieving unity shifted. The foreground and the background shifted. What’s going on?

I said that it’s either an accident or it’s an event. Accident or event. That’s the formula for accidents or events. Because once the planes have shifted, once there’s a disjunction between planes, what do you want form to do? There’s only one thing form can do: fall. It falls between the two planes. Or if push comes to shove, if it’s animated by some miraculous energy, it will rise. Now we really get into the history of Western art—one that all comes down to rise and fall. The figure is constantly falling and rising. Say what? It’s always on the verge of disequilibrium.

In other words, either accident or event—accident: the fall of the figure; event: the rise—the figure’s ascension never stops. Fall and ascension are the two vertical movements perpendicular to the spreading of planes. They fall and rise again, you know, and what’s the point? It’s the aesthetic sensibility of, for example, it’s the Christian aesthetic sensibility. The figure affected by this rising, falling. Deposition of the Cross and the Ascension.[136] And I mean at this level, we’re no longer talking about religious categories; these are aesthetic categories. The succession, the endless series of the Depositions of the Cross or the Ascensions of Christ. And it’ll never end. The figure is surrounded. It’s no longer determined as an “essence”; the figure becomes fundamentally swept up by accidents or events. The painter of “essences” was Egyptian. Now accidents and events take their place, artistically. Always something just a bit off balance.

In a great text, *The Eye Listens* by [Paul] Claudel, specifically on Dutch painting, he analyzes in detail what he calls “a kind of imbalance.” There will be no curtain painted that doesn’t seem to… just fall back down.[137] Or in Rembrandt, the peeled lemons inspired by [*indistinct name*], or these greens that are on the brink of imbalance, so much so that Cézanne invents—this isn’t what prompts him to invent, while he’s also looking essentially for the point of imbalance of form. It couldn’t be otherwise.

And in a few great passages Claudel asks, “What is a composition?” What is it, composition? *The painting* becomes the composition! In what way? In the celebrated form of the still-life, for example. And he says—he says it all in one beautiful sentence—he says, “Composition is organization in the process of coming undone.” He doesn’t say it like that, but almost.[138] It’s organization in the process of coming undone. That is, it’s an organization taken at the point of imbalance. And Claudel also talks about disintegration by light. Disintegration by light will be the motif running throughout his commentary on Rembrandt’s *The Night Watch*.[139] We’ll see that.

So, I’m just stating what we’ve established, that it is solely this that is… you get into all kinds of adventures once you discern a disjunction between the two planes. I’m not at all saying that everything gets mixed up, only that all these adventures fall under the heading: the fall or rise of accidents. These accidents can be all sorts of things. The line might be the collective line of a temporary group. Flocks of sheep, leaves rustling on trees in the wind, etc. It might be light that no longer coincides with the form of the object. that might be the eruption of color’s break—in other words, painting found its essence in what was an accident for an Egyptian context.

Alright, good so far? Well, so what we need to… that’s what we still need to look at; you can see what’s left for us to cover. We still have two more meetings: all of this and then color. All this business with space, if I have time, and then color. Anyway, there you go. [*End of the session*] [2:10:00]

Gilles Deleuze

Painting and the Question of Concepts

Session 8, 2 June 1981

Transcriptions: Voix de Deleuze, Part 1, Julien Paris et Dalila Sellami (duration 1 :07 :09); Parts 2, 3 & 4 Emray Ilaf ; correction : Christine Spianti (duration 1 :11 :00) ; time stamp and additional revisions, Charles J. Stivale

Translated by Billy Dean Goehring

Part 1

[*While we follow the Paris 8 section breaks, we indicate additional breaks for convenience's sake***]**

Today we should... we should just, well, not finish... but we should lay down some guidelines for this problem with color. So, that's what I'd like.

Incidentally, I'd really like to see if they have enough time at the end, and if they're here—Paul, uh, Paul Tolli, Paul Tolli… See me, Paul, if you have time, okay? Traumer—is Traumer here? The one who gave me, who sent me a paper on Goethe, Treve… See me later, alright? Uh, Le Tortois. LeTortois is here, okay. Michèle d'Albin? Michèle d'Albin isn't here? And uh, Ms. Petitjean? Is Ms. Petitjean here? You'll come see me later?

Anyway… So it's still very complicated—it's very complicated… It's so complicated because this is precisely our problem—where we ended up last time. It's precisely that there is… We'll put it this way, based on everything we've done before, we'll put it this way, alright: there are regimes of color… Not only are there colors, but there are regimes of color.[140]

That already gives us two options: regimes of color can accompany the spaces we saw previously, the sign-spaces we saw previously and the modulations characteristic of these spaces… Or else a whole other problem, a whole other aspect: aren't there regimes of color which themselves constitute a sign-space and which are subject to their own modulation?

As a result, things are already a bit shaky, eh? Since by introducing this—for now—very vague notion of "regimes of color" (in the plural), there would be regimes of color that one could identify practically, historically, theoretically, scientifically. But these being unequal, there would be a correspondence between the scientific determination of regimes of color, the practical determination, the historical determination. There'd only be a series of correspondences.

But to start with, I see two options for regimes of color: Either they'll correspond to a signal-space and to a modulation defined by other means… Or else they will themselves make up a colorist, coloristic space and a chromatic modulation all their own. And color is probably capable of uh… is capable of both?

As a result, what would this be? How would one define a “color-regime”? The point is that a color regime doesn’t mean that all the colors…it means a certain treatment of color…What is coherent about a treatment such that it’d make us say, “Ah, yes, here we have a ‘color-regime’”? And what would these “color-regimes” be?

Well, I’d want to define them in three ways… according to three characteristics… No, four characteristics:

First, for there to be a color-regime, the ground needs to be determined in one way or other… “the ground”… The ground isn’t necessarily determined by color. You might see how a color-regime will imply its own coloristic space and chromatic modulation… if the ground itself is colored. But a color-regime might very well adhere to another sort of space, to another sort of modulation… So, the idea of the ground, which is so fundamental in painting—the ground will be the first requirement for a color-regime to satisfy.

But what does “ground” mean, exactly? A ground—and I find the notion very interesting—is twofold; it’s a twofold concept. On one hand, the ground refers to so-called “support”. What *supports* line and color is the ground. That is the first established definition. As in when you talk about… a plaster ground… or a chalk ground[141] … or a colored ground, fine. And it’s in this, you see, that our system must constantly include echoes. I’m saying *immediate echoes*[142] in the history of painting. For example, you have grounds from the 15th to the 16th century, well-known grounds being researched and gradually perfected, formulas for plaster, so-called “slaked” plaster[143] in particular, and which will serve as the painting’s ground, that is, they’ll determine the quality of the support.

But at the same time, the notion of ground refers to something else: the background, but not just any background, not in just any regard. On the one hand, the ground is the support’s determinate quality; it’s the determination of the support, and on the other hand, it’s not exactly the background, but it’s the determination of the background’s value, the determination of “variable” value of the background. It’s the very nature of the ground *qua* quality of the support which, in a way, will engender the relative position of the background.

What does “the relative position of the background” mean? Well, we saw it in the sign-spaces we examined earlier. Renaissance painting implies -- this is too general, but as we’ve seen, you can always tweak it -- Renaissance painting implies a background position subject to the foreground’s requirements. 17th century painting, in a way, implies a sort of reversal, a shift in values in the sense that everything emerges from the background; and by Byzantine painting, things had already shifted in favor of the background. So, I’d say that the ground is both the quality of the support and the variable position of the background. That would be the first characteristic of a regime of color, what is the ground like?

The second characteristic: What then is the role of color in the modulation, in the modulation taking place on the surface supported by the ground? We’ve already covered the different types of modulation.

The third characteristic of regimes of color: it's the character of the hues.[144] That is, a regime of color implies a certain privilege – provided that we clarify later what I mean by "privilege" -- privileging a type of hue. What is a type of hue? You could say that a type of hue is actually very simple, you see. There are two variables in color; we've been over it, I'm back to the schema that I asked you to, to reflect on the kind of terminological schema.[145] First, a color can be light or dark. Second, it can be saturated or washed-out. It's a bit like with alcohol, if you will. For example, it's a bit—the distinction is quite simple, you see—like the distinction between titration and dilution; anyone who drinks alcohol knows it, but even those who don't drink. It isn't hard to understand. You have an alcohol of 40%. You dilute it; your 40% alcohol is still 40% alcohol. It's diluted 40% alcohol. If you absorb it undiluted, it's saturated 40% alcohol. See, saturated/watered-down… saturated/diluted forms a pair consisting of color—it's the "purity" factor.

From there, you combine that with the pair light/dark: a hue might be light or dark, saturated or washed-out, that is, diluted. Combine both pairs, [and] the possible combinations will give you the types of hue. The first possibility, light / washed-out… is "pale." Light / saturated, the second possibility, light / saturated… are bright hues, "bright." Dark / saturated: these are the "deep" hues. Dark / desaturated: these are the "muted" hues.[146]

I'd say a regime of color implies the dominance of one of these types of hue. I'd, then I'd say: very well, we can imagine "pale" regimes… "bright" regimes, "deep" regimes, "muted" regimes. Alright, but what's this about "privilege," "dominance"? What does that mean? It's very simple. It doesn't mean that most of the colors will be—in "pale" regimes, for example, it doesn't mean that most of the colors will be pale hues; that might be true, but I'm thinking of something else entirely.

Again, everything I'm saying—especially today, right—might be wrong. Fix it; don't just modify it, but correct it for yourselves, yes, because… It's not necessary that all the hues be pale—or see, there aren't more of them. I mean something else, that… The "pale" matrix… pale hues will be the way in which, in accordance with the ground, in such a regime—it's not always like this—in such a regime, when I talk about a "pale" regime, I mean that the pale hues will be the way in which, depending on the ground, all of the colors—including the "bright," including the "deep," including the "muted"—are distributed. So, it's not at all a sign of frequency; it's a sign of importance, the importance of the pale hues, negotiating between the colors and the ground.

A "bright" regime doesn't mean there won't be any "muted" hues. Sometimes there aren't muted hues in a "bright" regime. For example, the Impressionists avoid muted hues. Okay. But there can be some; it's just that these hues, the colors in general, and the ground, will be negotiated by the bright hues. At that point, it'd be a "bright" regime. So, I could add this third criterion to the other two.

Finally, the last criterion for regimes of color is that—this time I'm looking for a scientific, or quasi-scientific, parallel. You haven't forgotten that our problem is always one of analogy. Since we wanted to define analogy by just modulation and not— and not at all as conveying resemblance -- so… so, then… how, scientifically…? What does colorimetry have to say about how color is reproduced? It comes down to analogy.

You see a color; you reproduce it. How do you reproduce a color? We're told three things: that there'd be three different methods. I'm wondering whether these three methods—you see what I mean, these three methods, these scientific approaches -- won't they have a practical equivalent and an historical equivalent, you know, tying everything together?

In the first approach… You're looking at a complex beam of light. Not simple, not monochromatic, not of a single color—a complex beam. How do you reproduce it? One of colorimetry's basic principles is that every complex beam, or every complex luminous flux, can in principle be reduced to a white beam accompanied by a monochromatic beam.

Hence the formula: f -- I'm getting this from some dictionary… I mean, it's very… uh… hold onto these formulas because I'd like to tease out, you'll need to have them in mind… if we're going to draw anything from them -- the formula is: f – that is, the complex luminous flux, the colored flux, of a given color, equals: $f\,(T)$ f (little d, up top, right? As a coefficient—little d) + f (little w).[147]

What this formula means is very simple: f is the complex flux of light of a given color; $f\,w$ is "flux of white light"—the w refers to the English; + $f\,d$ is the monochromatic beam whose wavelength is $l(d)$… $l(d)$, the "dominant wavelength".

Basically, see, the beam's wavelength f -- mark it "little l" -- and then you have the formula f (little l) = $f\,(w) + f\,(l(\mathrm{d}))$.[148] You've replaced your complex beam with a beam of white light, combined with a monochromatic beam whose wavelength is different uh… from what you started with. That's the so-called dominant wavelength method. What's more, in some cases, in some cases, your monochromatic, dominant wavelength beam cannot itself be included in the reconstruction of the original beam. Moreover, this first combination, obviously, right, to put it another way, is: flux of white light plus a monochromatic beam, and… that can, in principle, recreate any complex beam. That's the first method. Hang onto that, okay? Because we're going to need it.

The second method. Why a second method? Because the first method is very, very theoretical. You'd have to be able to determine very precisely… [*Interruption of the recording*] [21:28]

… of three primary colors, three primary colors. In the previous case, the color matrix started with white. Here, on the other hand, it's based on a tricolor system. What are the three primary colors? They are: blue, red, green. Why blue, red, green? You'll recognize these from TV screens. Why blue, red, green? You'd think it would be blue, red, yellow! It's simply because you cannot render a complex beam with blue, red, yellow. Why not? Such rendering requires that the three primary colors be such that none of them can be "counterbalanced" by the other two. So, if you go with yellow, blue, red, you'd have a chance of counterbalancing red with yellow and blue. So, it isn't possible; your three primary colors, then, will be: red, green, blue. There are some remarkable paintings in [Nicolas] de Staël's work; there's a landscape that's really something. Under the title “Agrigente,” a landscape with an area, I’ve forgotten the exact breakdown, in only three colors plus black and white. Those three colors: red, green, blue.

Well, this method, no longer a dominant wavelength method which privileges white, is a method known as “additive mixing.” It corresponds to the formula: any given flux *f*, any colored flux, equals *f r,* red flux, plus *f g,* green flux, plus *f b,* blue flux.[149] Okay, last we come to… [*Deleuze does not complete the sentence*]

Third, the third possible method, only now we’re switching domains: this time we have to move away from the ray of light and onto the colored body, whether pigments or filters. What happens? What happens in a filter? What is the color of a body? You already know that a body’s color is precisely the color that the body doesn’t absorb. It’s the color that the body reflects, diffuses, or transmits. Why are plants green? The standard answer, as in the Larousse, is that plants are green because they absorb red, because chlorophyll absorbs red (light); they are green because they absorb red; chlorophyll absorbs red and so reflects green.

Alright, you can imagine, then, mixtures of pigment, a synthesis of pigments, but what is this synthesis? Either yellow pigments absorbing blue and sending yellow or green back to the eye, or blue pigments -- oh, what did I say? I must have mixed it up… I don’t know -- Yellow pigment thus absorbs blue and sends back yellow and green. Blue pigments absorb yellow and send back green and blue. You mix both types of pigment, you’re left with—the blue is absorbed, the yellow is absorbed, and you’re left with a purely green reflection.

What do you call this mixture, or this synthesis? This synthesis will be “subtractive” mixing. It can’t be done with light rays. Note that subtractive synthesis, subtractive mixing, can produce whatever you want besides white. How can it render black? If each body absorbs what the others reflect, then you’ll have black. So, there can be black with subtractive synthesis or subtractive mixing, but you can’t have white. Those, then, are my three scientific formulas from colorimetry, the simple version.

Well, but we forget, we forget these formulas from colorimetry; it doesn’t matter when. My question—listen carefully for the nuance—is whether those working in the pictorial arts haven’t already been working with regimes of color. The last criterion for a regime is the means of reproducing color. We’ll stop there, since it gets too abstract.

That’s how I’d first define a regime of color—I need the time; don’t you have a watch? [*Someone passes him a watch*] -- I would define a regime of colors by four characteristics, four characteristics. First, by the state of the ground in both senses of the word: as determination of the support—the modification of the support—and as the variable position of the background. Second, by a corresponding modulation. Third, by a hue privileged among the four primary types: bright, pale, muted, deep. By one of the four primary means of reproducing color: the dominant wavelength method, compared to a white flux; the method of additive synthesis; the method of subtractive mixing.

That being said, it's a good thing that I went over it again, since my second characteristic actually disappears, since modulation is included in the last characteristic. So, in fact there are only three characteristics. There—*whew*—a short break… [*Interruption of the recording*] [30:34]

… Here we are. Yes, alright? Alright. Then I'll come back to my problem… If it's true that we can define regimes of colors, sometimes these regimes of color can refer to previously defined spaces and to previously defined modulations, sometimes they refer to a space peculiar to color and to a chromatic modulation that we haven't yet defined.

Well, let's look at a bit of history, the history of painting. I'll try to define a "Renaissance" regime of colors, for example. We'll see how it turns out—if we can get to a little bit of technique, but really in the interest of our examination into regimes of color -- would there be a "Renaissance" regime of color, with so many exceptions, so many problems? That's how life goes with the history of painting. And well, yes! I think there is a regime of colors, but—as we've just described it, and no doubt there's more to say—but what's famous about Renaissance painting is the use of "white" grounds.

So fine, white grounds, let's start from there; that might bring us back to our first colorimetric formula, but we can't push it too far, since they did it as *painters,* in *practice*—not as scientists. They use white grounds; what does that mean? It means that the support is coated with a layer of plaster, a special plaster, a plaster treated in a special way, or with a rather thick layer of chalk—what's going on there?

Now, there is a painter known—important for the history of painting—there is a painter known for having perfected this system, and well before the Renaissance—that is, the Renaissance took up something long in the making; it's just that this particular painter was a turning point between the Renaissance and what came before. It's the great Van Eyck, to the point that—Van Eyck's secret formula is a common fixture in the history of painting—and Van Eyck's secret starts with the use of so-called slaked plaster[150] as a ground. Van Eyck died around 1440—I'm pulling from the dictionary—1440, that is, before the birth of Leonardo da Vinci but not by much; Leonardo da Vinci was born in 1452. There's a recent book of criticism that puts a lot of emphasis on Van Eyck and considers Van Eyck as a painter among painters—everyone's free to choose their own painter among painters, but this time it's based precisely on this mysterious white ground… because there's a lot involved in this white ground: actually, obtaining slaked plaster involved a whole process with plaster and glue, so the "pharmacy" of painting, the "chemistry" of painting, became a real concern.

It's Xavier de Langlais, Xavier de Langlais, who wrote a very interesting book, with Flammarion, called *The Technique of Oil Painting*, and it's terrific; it's a joy to read.[151] It's funny because it's a very particular sort of criticism you can find in every artistic discipline. I think it's literally—uh, you could call it, uh, reactionary, uh, but in a good way. You'll see what I mean by good reactionary. It's someone who halts who halts development at a certain point and says "No, no, stop there, we're done, it's all downhill from here!" Know what I mean…? They're delightful, actually [*Laughter*] — "This is the cut-off point", but on second thought, actually, on second thought: "But there was still Mozart." He wasn't so bad… Ha [*Laughter*] No, so in music, for example, there are many fans like this of Gregorian chanting… Bam! "There's nothing after Gregorian chanting"—it's a decline, a slow, slow decline… we shouldn't joke because… [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence*] It happened in philosophy, a happy moment, with Neo-Thomism— [Jacques] Maritain, he was great, Maritain": "St. Thomas", Bam! … After that, it was hard to… Descartes, "if there was a little St. Thomas in Descartes" [*for Maritain*], so much the better.

And you'll see there was something strange. Sometimes the ones who are frozen in time and don't want to bother with anything else turn out to be surprisingly modern, and they are fine — in two regards — first, they have a lot to teach us about their cut-off point. And that's easily explained: they're so wound up by where they think "it's all over" that they have a profound technical knowledge of the period where "everything" stops, after which things decline, so ok. But to understand what's going on with Gregorian chanting, you have to ask someone like that. To understand St. Thomas, you obviously have to ask Maritain. And then everything else is decadence. As a result, according to them, you're better off starting from scratch.

Back to our example, because I'm fascinated by it, the example of Xavier Langlais: he'll say that "oil painting reached its height in Van Eyck." Already in the Renaissance, thanks to the white ground, thanks to slaked plaster, after which everything fall apart—Already in the Renaissance, of course, Van Eyck's secret is maintained, but they already understand it less clearly; things are already on the decline in the Renaissance, but they nonetheless retained something of the great Van Eyck, but it's awful after that… What's so awful about it? Here we see Xavier de Langlais's stubbornness, his personal obsession: craquelure. Paintings crack, so Xavier de Langlais no longer recognizes them. Paintings after Van Eyck crack more and more, and he loses it when it comes to really "cracking" painters. [*Laughter*] In particular, the punching bag for Xavier de Langlais is an 18th century English portraitist called [Joshua] Reynolds, since Reynolds—and we'll see why, in terms of his regime of color, there's no avoiding craquelure in Reynolds—but Delacroix gets contempt from Xavier de Langlais: he doesn't know how to do his job, as his craquelure demonstrates…

He bitterly says of the Impressionists that "they had good ideas but no know-how" and that "they never could solve the problem of ground." See, I'm coming back to my question about the regime of color; Xavier de Langlais is someone for whom there is only *one* regime of color: the great regime of the dominant wavelength, that is, the white ground.

That's not bad, but let's make time for—there has to be something! My God. My God, there is something… Here you have the first regime of color, I'm thinking of the Renaissance which holds Van Eyck's secret, who used it and modified his support by way of "plaster" or "a thick layer of chalk." What happens after that? Two phases: on the white ground, they make what's called a "underpainting," and they wash the "underpainting"; the washed underpainting on the white ground—that's the second phase; that's how they work; third phase, they spread and place the colors… in what way? They put paint down in thin layers.

A quick aside so you'll understand—you should have understood at the beginning, but if you didn't get it at the beginning, that's fine, you'll understand later—a quick aside: my first two phases, white ground, washed underpainting, what does that give you? Of course, it gives you the formula, "light / washed-out," what I described as the "privileging of pale hues," privileging pale hues. Which doesn't prevent the third phase; they put down colors—maybe bright colors, maybe saturated colors, maybe deep colors—but the principle remains: a thin layer of color on a white ground, such that the white ground peeks through, especially, for example, through clothing.

The white ground will give the colors luminosity, and as for the shadows—what will they do? Well then, they'll saturate the color, the color placed on the ground. They'll saturate the color; they'll go through several layers and one of the first formulas is "color placed on a white ground over the underpainting," following the lines of the underpainting—that's the first formula of so-called "glazing": a thin layer of color on the ground.[152]

But although they use the word "glaze," as a technical term, I'd rather insist on saying "that isn't true glazing"; it's a glaze in a very general sense. We'll see why I have this reservation; I'll try to say why I have reservations. I'd prefer to save—I have every right to—save the word "glaze" for another regime. Okay.

That's the first regime. What did I mean by calling it the "Renaissance formula"? What all painters—well, okay, almost all painters. See, white ground, washed underpainting, glazed color. That gives me—I'd say I'm justified in saying that—it's a pale regime even if the pale hues aren't dominant, even if there aren't exclusively pale hues. It's a pale regime because the ensemble of colors, whether they're bright, saturated, deep, what have you, are obtained through this matrix: white, washed underpainting. Yes, it's very clear, very clear.

Now what happens here that'll really belong to the history of the Renaissance? How does that move painting? What happens is still rather intriguing: painters in the Renaissance who borrow Van Eyck's system—in particular, the Italians get it from Flanders, and then we see that through Italy, it comes back to Flanders and to Holland… very odd route… -- and okay, okay… something happens: Renaissance painters -- I'm talking about the greats… so it's not a critique. For Langlais, that itself is a critique -- they'll tend to gradually thicken… the white ground. Their technical prowess hinges on a thickening of the white ground. The white ground becomes a thicker white, or at least more and more opaque… Very important, if you follow me—it's the last sticking point; if you understand this, you'll understand everything that comes after—in particular, the truly great painter.

So, it bothers Langlais because, he says, obviously he's a genius, among the greatest of painters; he's a genius—it's frustrating—and at the same time, his technique is already setting the stage for decadence. Since it's no longer the old Van Eyck ground, yet the greatest painter known for thickening—a visible, considerable thickening—the support's ground is Titian; the white ground becomes very, very thick and very opaque. You can sense that this will already be a nascent form of luminism, that it will really foreshadow certain aspects of the 17th century. The white ground becomes very opaque. Even Leonardo da Vinci: bizarrely, his plaster seems – "seems", as specialists have said -- not really thicker than Van Eyck's but still more opaque.

It's interesting how these differences, which really come down strictly to differences in technique—what will come of making a thicker white ground? A very thick plaster? It has some strange consequences; it appears to result in two things, at least, it seems… it turns out that there are two results:

The first thing is that washing the ground—diluting with water or with turpentine—the dilution becomes darker and darker, it's as though color creeps back into the ground, that is, the colors of the underpainting will in themselves affect the whole ground; instead of a white ground, as it gets opaquer and thicker, the white ground starts to take on color—that's the first major difference. A pale color, sure, the color is pale… but it is colored.

The second notable difference you need to understand —all else being equal, in both cases, it's the work of the painter—the underpainting is under threat, the underpainting stage is under threat… by what? Underpainting will gradually be replaced by "working *impasto*" as the ground gets thicker; and what does it mean to work *impasto*? It ought to be opposed to the underpainting.

Working *impasto* is the method of *pentimento,* the painter's *pentimento*:[153] namely, instead of a well-defined underpainting, after which all that's left to do is add colors, there's a perpetual reworking, working impasto or if necessary, the painter… will rework, at which point, and starting particularly with Titian, one finds such moving things—the painter's *pentimento*—or when you look very closely or when you look at it scientifically, you see the trace of a *pentimento*—for example, in a fifth leg of a horse, the leg that was covered up in order to reposition its legs.[154]

So, I'd say that the three -- the Renaissance's evolution, technically as far as the regime is concerned -- the regime of the color white, [of] the white ground is distinguished by three things: a gradual increase in thickness and opacity, grounds are more and more starkly colored, the substitution of *pentimento* for underpainting.

Indeed, for someone like Langlais, it's all quite sad: this thicker plaster… this ground that's already colored and absorbs color directly, and abandoning underpainting in favor of working *impasto,* and so on—it leads him to think, "Ah, well, yeah—painting has taken a wrong turn…" If I say he's nonetheless a modernist, it's because he's so convinced that oil painting was already in decline during the Renaissance that he says: hurray for acrylic paints, hurray for oil-less paints, for contemporary paints—yes, so… He reverts to being very modernist, saying, "oil painting is over, so better start over with acrylic, vinyl, and so on". You know what I mean? Well, back to what I was saying.

So, this is how I'd define the Renaissance regime: there is a, well, a regime of color—and see, that's bound up with everything from before—there's a regime of color, but by necessity this regime of color is dedicated to another sort of sign-space and modulation. The sign-space—we saw—of the Renaissance is the tactile-optical space, defined by the collective line and the primacy of the foreground. But note that the primacy of the foreground is specifically established by the white ground. Note that it's specifically the underpainting that establishes the collective line—and that doesn't prevent there being a regime of color, insofar as you "glaze," or pseudo-glaze, whatever your colors might be—that's what I'd call the "pale" regime of color, dedicated to Renaissance space, to tactile-optical space, and to the collective line's modulation.

That’s our first regime of color… alright? Yes? Not too hard?

A student: Very much so!

Deleuze: Very hard… Too hard?

Students: [*Various comments, inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes, but it’s hard for me, too… [*Laughter*] Yes, it *is* hard. No, it’s…Well, as we make more progress, maybe it’ll get…

I’ll move on to a second stage, another regime of color; let’s look at another regime of color, one that risks complicating while also simplifying things—who knows—we’re going to consider the 17th century regimes of color—the 17th century. It’s intriguing, because it seems like, for the sake of convenience, I was looking for a single—but I couldn’t get around it—one single, varying trait, and now there are so obviously two, two that’ll form a sort of clamp. Around what? Well, both of them, around the luminism of the 17th century.

Remember that it still won’t be about a space of pure color; it’ll be a regime of color subject to what? Subject to the optical space, which is how we defined the 17th century, and relative to the corresponding modulation, the modulation of light and no longer the modulation of the collective line. So, the regime of color still doesn’t refer to its own proper coloristic space; it’s dedicated to another kind of space, the optical space of light. However, it represents a drastic change compared to the regime of the Renaissance.

A painter emerged at the end of the 16th century who was incredibly important, technically, and whom sadly, predictably, Xavier de Langlais abhors so much that he doesn’t even talk about him. Caravaggio—but what does Caravaggio do? What does he invent? The strangest thing: he invents—of course he had predecessors, you’d have to find them—but he invents the—I can’t seem to find the right word—He invents the “dark ground,” the pitch ground, or more precisely, the “red brown” ground, a red brown[155] … a red brown ground, right… and what difference does that make? Then the support is modified by this sort of—how can I put this—of indefinite color.

I’ll emphasize that because when, when [Heinrich] Wölfflin talks about certain aspects of luminism in the 17th century he says -- oh my! [*An object falls in the room]* -- exactly that: the ground is an indefinite color. What does “indefinite color” mean? Well, what matters is that it’s something indefinite; I can’t say, strictly speaking, it’s this-or-that color but it is *some* color. Whereas with the Renaissance formula you had a white ground—in other words, color obtains in a non-colored matrix—and coloring only began after the underpainting, here you have an indefinite color; you get the feeling that all the colors together in their dark nature. This fully illustrates what Goethe says—“every color is dark,” “every color is obscure”: the matrix of color and this kind of dark bath which will make up the painting’s “ground.”

What is that supposed to mean? And why? You see, all of our concepts come back into play with this dark ground, with this obscure matrix. There’s a good chance that it—what?—ensures the primacy of the background. This time, the ground is responsible for securing the background’s primacy—what does securing the background mean? Everything springs from the background. You can already guess that it's no longer about glazing colors on a white ground… It'll come down to having every color, every gleam, all the brightness—that is, all the light—emerge from the dark ground, from this "dark matrix."

And the dark ground will be even darker for the shadows; it will make the colors pop out, and naturally, the painter's primary task comes to be that of blending, blending. He'll blend the bright colors, the colors into the shadows—it's a whole other regime of color—and this will be one of the poles of the birth of luminism. These bright lights that burst out from a dark ground—a famous example: Caravaggio's *The Calling of St. Matthew.*[156]

A student: [*Inaudible question*]

Deleuze: Why yes, it's valid, obviously, since he places his shadows and degrades them. I'm not saying he invented blending—blending now turns into something fully a part of the second task, since inevitably—the ground will thus be colored in an indefinite way, it'll be the dark ground, the shadows will be organized in such a way that they emerge from the dark ground instead of being "placed on" it.

So, yes, Caravaggio's *The Calling of St. Matthew* is a famous example of this, a depiction of St. Matthew in a dive, a seedy dive, in pitch-black shadow, a ray of light from a narrow window on Christ. Christ's hand points at Saint Matthew like: *you… you…!* As in, *you, follow me!* And his hand is catching the light, right; it's a great herald for Luminism.

Yet, in terms of technique, if we look at where these dark grounds -- which Caravaggio perfected -- come from, it seems that Tintoretto, it seems you'll find them already in Tintoretto's paintings, in some of Tintoretto's paintings. Well, here we have a regime of color. Just like I was saying earlier about the so-called "pale" regime, with a white ground and washed underpainting. Here, however, it's a dark ground and *impasto* color. This time it's [the regime of] the saturated-dark and of the washed-dark. In other words, it's already a mixed regime, one that's at once a regime of deep hues and of muted hues.

And while there, too, all the hues are "produced," and if I I'm looking for an equivalent, I'd say roughly that this time the matrix [is] the mixture of three colors that don't complement each other—the indefinite color is this mixture: this dark mixture of colors taken in their dark nature, in their obscure nature—that is, the three primary colors that don't counterbalance each other. In other words, it'd be a regime of additive mixing.

But in the other direction—so that Luminism is doubled—in the other direction, what do you have? You have the legacy of the Renaissance that presses on, and precisely in doing so, its meaning will completely change, that is: one picks back up, starting from Titian, this thickening of the paste and this thickening of the paste will give the 17th century -- I'm specifying that Caravaggio had above all a fundamental influence on the 17th century: it spread everywhere. It went to Spain: [Jusepe de] Ribera and El Greco. It was all over France. He also had influence on the Flemish—so Caravaggio was kind of a turning point. -- So, the other path, the extension of Titian, recall that this white ground became thicker and thicker so much so that it no longer supported a underpainting but was the object of *impasto* work and took on color. Well, that'll be very important because that will be the birth of "glaze," properly speaking; going back in time, starting from painting's origins, the ground becomes more and more starkly colored, while the painting is done more and more *impasto*… It's Rubens who goes all the way --so that you'll move away from glaze, strictly speaking -- to wit, colors are applied to a light ground, on a light, colored ground. In other words, glaze, in the strict sense, is [putting] "color on top of bright colors," on top of colors that are sharp and above all "sharp and translucid colors," and if necessary, "brilliant colors applied to a bright ground." Why not apply bright colors: precisely because bright colors are too opaque. It's the colors that will make "the ground" and one glazes because one applies color to this bright ground.

Yet if that's Rubens's formula—for example, colors like ultramarine or pitch will be applied to the bright ground. I believe one of the first to have proceeded like this in Titian's line—but who represents a deviation from Titian, a precipitation—is a Spaniard, so Spain would have these two painters who… Ribera descending from the Caravaggio formula, and [Francisco] Herrera… who literally paints on pink grounds, often not always, on silver pink, sort of silvery pink grounds… this is glazing, properly speaking.

As a result, I think the strict definition of glazing is exactly the one provided by Goethe, only it rightly excludes—it's not glazing if I put colors on a white ground in the Renaissance way, strictly speaking. The definition Goethe provides for glazing—he distinguishes three grounds. In his *Theory of Colors*, in a quick overview, he says well, okay, there is the white ground in chalk—he doesn't mention plaster, but in fact it was mostly plaster—there is the white ground of the Renaissance, the dark reddish-brown ground of Caravaggio, whom he does mention—he cites very few painters, he cites Caravaggio—and he says: one must also add glazing to the list. He defines glazing as what happens when one treats an already-applied color like a bright ground. So, despite how the word is used, I'd rather not apply the word "glaze" to when color is applied on a ground which isn't itself already a color, a necessarily light color. It's only glazing when you place colors in thin, transparent layers on a light ground… Yet what does that give you? This… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:08:14]

Part 2 [*Start of the second transcript at Paris 8*]

… his other formula. What other formula? The Caravaggio formula is once again dark, saturated, or washed-out. Dark, both saturated and washed-out—saturated at times, saturated in one sense and washed-out in another sense. So, it's a regime I'd call—following our terminology—a deep and muted regime, as opposed to the Renaissance's pale regime.

Rubens's regime, where you put down color on a light, colored ground, is the other side of Luminism. This time it's not that the light is drawn out of a dark ground or shines a spotlight into dark ground; the light is in the background and it's… it's great stuff. There's no backlighting, nor Caravaggio's style of light. There isn't a ground; the light is always localized and either it's drawn out of the dark ground, or it shines a spotlight into the dark ground like in *The Calling of Saint Matthew*. Only an indeterminate light that bathes the background, with the foreground dark instead: that's the real form of glazing. But it goes without saying that, for example, in Vermeer you see it constantly—very often, at least: the light background and the shadow of the back… of the foreground. It’s an extraordinary formula, but it’s also there -- I don’t have time to get into it but… -- it’s also there in a painter who is nevertheless very, very important—it’s also there in Rubens. Here, I’d ask, what regime would that be? It’s a bright, light regime… No, sorry, it’s a saturated, light regime. It’s a saturated, light regime—that is, a bright regime.

But all I want to cover here before we take a break, you see there are regimes of color that depend on, that come back to the space we examined before, and in particular, I’m coming back to two spaces we examined before: the tactile-optical space of the Renaissance, modulated by the line, by the collective line. And that provides, or that entails, or that corresponds to a pale regime of color. But the color presupposes this space and this modulation.

In the 17th century, optical space, modulating light or modulated by light. Here again, you have a regime of color, but there are several regimes of color: either the Caravaggio-type of regime or the Rubens-type of regime. As different as they are, they both fall under luminism. They’re luminist regimes; they’re regimes made up of color, serving an optical space and the modulation of light.

What do we mean when we say that the true advent of colorism occurs, in western painting, in the 19th century? In my opinion, it’s very simple. It’s not that the other centuries lacked… all the problems with color were… they had them.

Why was the problem with color posed in a new way in the 19th century? Because the regime changed? Yes. The regime of color is changing. Absolutely, as a function of the criteria we’ve seen, related to the preceding criteria. And at the same time, it’s not just that the regime of color changes. It’s that painters of the time probably needed something their predecessors didn’t. In other words, colors are not only a regime that one invents or reinvents, which in itself already implies a supreme colorism. But furthermore, it is color which determines a new type of space, no longer tactile-optical space, nor the optical space of light, but a space truly proper to color. And a modulation proper to color.

So, I’ll stress that all these accounts of color—complementary colors, diametric oppositions between complementary colors—you get the feeling that, you think, “well what exactly does it mean?” That was so important in the 19th century, [but] not anymore today—much less so, at least. In the 19th century, the law of simultaneous contrast, that is, the complementary and diametrically opposite relationships between complementary colors is color’s highest premise.

Again, my sense is that this isn’t a problem for painters today. It ultimately culminates, if you will, with Seurat. Okay, I don’t mean that Seurat has been overcome; I mean that even when painters take something or borrow something from Seurat, they totally ignore what’s really at stake in Seurat: contrast, complementary contrast. I am saying, today that’s no longer the problem, it’s no longer a problem, but it’s, you know, an activity…

It’s the same thing in philosophy, it’s the same thing in music, *etc.*, and you can’t say that works responding to a given problem are in any way overcome, but it explains why we see them in a new light. There is a sort of decentering that takes place, something that was essential for the artist responsible for a painting stopped being essential for us from a practical point of view. As a result, our evaluation of the painting will emphasize things that were meaningless for… There's a whole history inside the painting, you know?

But today, right, contrasts are very interesting, but anyway, painters really no longer resemble… through that, for a very simple reason: they discovered things so much more… more complex in terms of color that, naturally, they weren't content with the… this higher law.

And before that? Now, the relationship between complementary colors, you know, we shouldn't exaggerate— we knew about them: following up on a comment just now, it's already there in Da Vinci; already in the Renaissance. They knew all about it. They knew how to use it in practice; in a way, they knew it optically, they knew it practically. Alright. In the 17th century, in the 17th century you'll find any combination—in Rembrandt—you'll find any combination of complementary colors you can imagine. When Rembrandt uses dark grounds, which you'll often find in Rembrandt, where light is drawn out, you might have a red foreground, a bright red foreground, and there's a muted resonance with the background, in a green or greenish dark ground. It's extremely clever, this resonance between the bright red and the greenish ground. Okay. I'm thinking of a specific painting, "Le Bain de Suzanne".[157] Alright. They know all about it.

So, what makes us say, Aha! It kicks off in the 19th century! It's because they only sort of knew about it in the 17th century; they didn't really use it. I mean they knew about it in a "It goes without saying" kind of way. It goes without saying since the relations between complementary colors can be deployed – understand what I'm trying to say -- complements, contrasts, oppositions between complementary colors can only be deployed in the 17th century based on a totally other sort of ground or ground treatment. À la Caravaggio, for example.

On the other hand, these same problems with complementary colors become essential once the ground's treatment brings them to the fore. So, it's only with the 19th century that something makes this problem—despite being secondary for 17th century luminism—will become a central concern for a period known as colorism in the 19th century, and for Impressionism in particular. That has its day. Today the problem of color—colorists don't take that route anymore.

So, what happens in the 19th century? What happens in the 19th century—you might already guess—it's what cast Xavier de Langlais into bottomless despair—it only gets worse and worse; that's why he says: they didn't know how to paint. Or rather, it's more complicated than that; they very well knew how to paint. He says they're great painters. Yeah, great painters, but they didn't know—as they say—how *to prepare*. They forgot how to prepare.

So, we have all the reactionary themes, speed… to hell with speed! At the end of the day, see, they wanted to work quickly—it's not as true for the… but anyway. They go more quickly; they don't prepare. They know how to paint; they don't know how to prepare. What does "preparing" mean? Well, it's the fundamental act of painting since it's all about the support. They stop preparing. Then there are actually some who don't prepare at all. For example…

Claire Parnet: [*Inaudible question, about the egg*]

Deleuze: Yes, egg was the binding medium, but it was tied to the underpainting. If egg went away, it's only because underpainting concerns became obsolete with *impasto* work… Yeah?

Claire Parnet: [*Inaudible question*]

Deleuze: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yes, technologically, we'd have to bring up…there's also the advent of tubed paint, which changes everything. Well see, one couldn't, for example, it wasn't possible to paint outside before tubed paint. But tubed paint is very recent: the 19th century.

So, how did they do things before? With Rubens, it's very straightforward. He prepared his paints. There were jars of prepared paint. There were jars of paint. He made his jars, three for each hue: a bright hue… No, a color, a shade, and a tone. He had his three little jars. And for gradients he painted onto the shadows, into the shadows. And then he had paints on his palette, which he used, in a pinch, to make accents. Well, I'm really getting ahead of myself, making accents. See, the process had a sort of sequence to it: preparing the ground, thick in the case of… preparing a thick ground; working *impasto* on already-placed colors, potted paints with gradations, with a distribution of shadow and light, etc.; and then, thirdly, crucially, dabs of paint on the palette for making accents.

So, if I were to describe the, the 19th century in very broad strokes, the techniques of the 19th century—but here I'm really going too fast -- I'd say that the ground becomes less and less important. The work of support, in fact, what *does* happen with it? You even have painters who, then, work directly on the canvas. Paint on paint [*couleur sur couleur*]. I find that great because that's… it's the formula—the formula for real glazing. Paint on paint. The base is treated by color paint.

There are some Signac works, for example, he's not the greatest, but some of Signac's paintings are intriguing precisely because there isn't any ground. Or in Manet, for example, there is the use of raw, so-called unworked plaster. Which in fact is rather odd since, at that point, such plaster is very absorbent.

In other words, it's almost the same—in my quick overview—as having a colored ground. They'll work… I mean, the advent of colorism in the 19th century, it seems to me, comes down to people, to painters, who work with paint on paint. They no longer go through a white medium, nor with… an external white medium, nor through an internal color medium, a dark medium.

Now, that's great; it means that color begins to exist for itself. It comes to exist for itself on one condition: that painters are capable of constituting a coloristic space and a modulation proper to color. You get what I mean? A modulation proper to color, a coloristic space—what does that mean? It means that it'll no longer be mediated by light; light will be derived from color. The line will be derived from color, etc.

So now that we've stepped back, we can devise a series of stages going back further and further. You had three easy periods in the Renaissance: white ground, underpainting, a pseudo-glaze of color. In the 17th century you had—and it had already culminated with Titian—a thicker and therefore increasingly colored ground. Working *impasto* gets around the need for underpainting.

And lastly, the triumph of color with Titian's accents. In the 17th century, you have a kind of time contraction, and things are rushed.

In the 19th century, if I were to sum up the problem of colorism in the 19th century, right, color is in the accents, there's nothing left but accents. A whole world is made up of what would, for others, be final accents. Hence what I said last time: Delacroix's cross-hatching, where Delacroix still uses a Caravaggio ground. Only everything condenses, right onto the ground; he'll make cross-hatches that draw color out of the ground. And then the Impressionist comma-stroke, the Impressionist accent, where it's a bit like we say in music: ah, well, it's the accents that count. They discover that with color it's the accents that count. Henceforth, it's no surprise that it's the comma-stroke, that the unit becomes—this space's unit becomes—either Delacroix's cross-hatching, or the Impressionist comma, or Seurat's dot-stroke.

So Langlais has a legitimate concern, but still, we have to recognize who—he says there's only one guy who makes it out—that is, whose work doesn't crack: Seurat. In other words, his treatment of the ground, his use of it, his dot-stroke, etc., prevents it from cracking; it holds up. See, there's always an expectation that things last. As Cézanne puts it: "I wanted to make of Impressionism something [solid and] enduring," the sense that a form of painting does or does not last.[158] Very important for a painter. It's a sort of question of time—we'll see, if we have time, why time comes up here. Painting that takes up time. If it does crack -- Langlais isn't totally off -- if it cracks after 20 years, it's annoying in any case. We still don't how well the colors will hold… "petroleum" paints, acrylics, etc. We don't know. We'll have to wait, but it's already inscribed in the painting, although we can't say in advance. It's inscribed in the painting: does it last, the weight, the time, etc. Paintings have a way of being at the time, of being in time, of having weight, etc. But Cézanne's idea of making Impressionism something durable and solid came down to problems with technique.

Claire Parnet: [*Inaudible question, regarding a bleached canvas*]

Deleuze: It's possible… There is a lovely novel by Balzac on that.[159] Yes, yes, it's very possible… Like any problem of restoration… So, it's amazing; Langlais says there are only—there are only a few beautiful works by Delacroix: it's the ones that were restored by someone other than Delacroix. Then it isn't bad, he says, since it was done by people who knew what they were doing. Alright.

See, what I want cover before our break, it's that… there's yet another regime of color in the 19th century. In fact, it's one that I'd also call bright. But how is it different from the bright regime of the 17th century? It's completely different because the 17th century's bright regime, right, involved precisely a glaze on a light ground, while now they proceed with a painting of accents. Accents have completely… Here, there really—there isn't glazing any more, there's isn't any more… it's no longer… there isn't any ground. The ground tends to disappear or be neutralized, etc., and achieves color for itself, which from there will deploy for themselves the relationships proper to color—first and foremost, the principal relationship, the princely relationship between complementary colors.

Hence the possibility of a modulation of color, and a modulation particular to color, even though, before, regimes of color were the most brilliant in the world, were just as brilliant—but they were dedicated, again, to other sorts of spaces and ultimately dedicated to colorless spaces, whether tactile-optical space or the optical space of light and therefore dedicated to a modulation that was defined otherwise, whether the modulation of the collective line or the modulation of light. While here, we reach the opening of a space through color and of color, a space proper to color, a space united by accents.

In the end, I'd say that it's no longer the underpainting nor even working *impasto*. A painting of accents is something different still. And so are led to this issue with the regime of color that, finally, for the first time in… well, I'm exaggerating… in western history, develops a space that can only be exclusively defined in terms of color, and a modulation that can only be defined in terms of color. So, there's very little left for us to cover, very little—it's seeing what this space and this modulation consists in. Let's take a break… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:30:49]

Part 3 [*our division*]

[*Noises of chairs and chatter*]

There's not much to cover, then. I'll just lay out some guidelines. That's all. At the very least, it'd be even better to discuss, if you want, that'd be good, too. That's it… alright, some ways forward… right, yes?

Georges Comtesse: About the question of the white or blackish ground… The Renaissance and the 17th century, for example… The problem is the shift that results specifically from this problem of the ground and of colors, of light and colors; the shift we find in contemporary American painting, in particular in the painter Sam Francis. It's very interesting to see just where this shift is located because it's precisely in him [that] there is a white ground, and the colors of the rays, a bit like Delacroix, rays that cross the white ground like that. And the particularity, contrary to Goethe for example in his *Treatise on Colors*, where ultimately black and white are like the matrices of the color triangle, only that connotes—black and white basically stand for light and shadow. It's… whereas in Sam Francis there is another shift, inasmuch as white is in no way shadow or light. White is, he says, "the color of every color, the primitive color" and he calls it "the dazzling color," the dazzling-distracting color and it's the very dazzling that… where the painter paints the birth of the painter's gaze onto the canvas.[160] It's complicated.

That is to say, as opposed to white as a dazzling-distracting color, light becomes black. Or else shadow passes into light, or light returns to the shadow, either way. At any rate, it spills over binaries, and it shatters the color triangle. The color white as simultaneously white and black. And then, regarding color, the sorts of chromatic bands that it spreads across the canvas, it's totally fascinating. It's not a color somehow placed onto a white ground, nor even one lifted off a white ground; it's that colors emerge from the dazzling-distracting-whiteness. They emerge while seeming to disappear at the same time on the plane. It's a sort of simultaneity, neither presence nor absence—it's the simultaneity of the emergence and the disappearance regarding the event, the dazzling event that can at the same time be that of a black hole for the painter.

Thus, there is a rather extraordinary variation regarding the ideal cut you've traced in the history of painting or the history of regimes of color.

Deleuze: Very well put. Very well put. What we especially need to avoid, in effect, is believing that it's a revival of Renaissance spaces, even a modern revival. Because it's in response to colorist demands that all this modern colorism, with the role of white—it's not only Sam Francis, of course—it's because of that… Oh well, good, that's all I meant. But then I'm going very fast, to give you some guidelines and to wrap up.

I'd say, based on… If you understand the requirements of this new—both regime of color, another bright regime, and this regime's new requirements, i.e., the deployment of a corresponding space and modulation. I'll outline… I'll outline a first stage—I'm dividing it into stages like this in order to give you some points of reference. In Impressionism then, by definition you get a painting of accents. The reality of the situation, what turns out to be fundamental, is the relationship between colors, which determines a new space. What makes that so fundamental? Again, relationships between colors existed well before that. They weren't displayed in a purified form. I just mean they weren't able to appear in a purified form on account of the ground's long history over the Renaissance and the 17th century. Whereas they now have free reign. You might say that what softens color, or what builds color, is another color. It's no longer mediated by a matrix or by a ground—however you define matrix and ground. In the Renaissance no less than in the 17th century, there is this mediation by the matrix or the ground. Not here. No, there is no longer any need even if the ground remains; the ground no longer serves that purpose. It's the colors that regulate each other and that are deployed for themselves, constituting a space.

So, my first cue is thus… it has to begin with a method of painting bit-by-bit. It seems necessary that it begin with painting bit-by-bit, like the Impressionists, since again, the small pictorial unit, the comma- or the dot-stroke, is specifically what replaces underpainting and *impasto* work. Really, it's the punctual constitution of space. Punctual not because it's made point-by-point but rather because the space is thereby understood as a network, a sort of point relation. Points are fundamentally linked. Only, with this first stage I want to point out—that of Impressionism—it's sort of a problem of practical privilege, since the relationships between colors, now in the foreground, have been doubled. Theoretically, you can always say that [the colors] are arranged well; practically, if you are a painter, you need to privilege one or the other. You necessarily privilege one or the other.

Remember, you can conceptualize the fundamental color-color relationships -- unfortunately, my circle's been erased… You remember the color wheel; good thing I made it ahead of time, since I wouldn't have time to do it… You remember the color wheel?[161] -- Well, the color-color relationships can be put either in terms of diametric opposition—the relationship between complements: for example, red/green, which defines a diameter of the circle. So, color relationships in the form of diametric oppositions are the relationships between complements: simultaneous contrast. Or it might be a peripheral relationship produced by chords, from one color to another, skipping an intermediary color—or even if it doesn't skip. So, there are peripheral relations transitioning between colors and diametrically opposite relations. But see, the impressionists, whether with they're using commas or dots, are forced to… at any rate, they use both. It’s for that reason that every impressionist text refers to both laws anytime color is discussed: the law of contrasts and the law of analogs. The law of contrasts designates the diametric opposition between complementary colors; the law of analogs designates the chords or the peripheral course around the color wheel.

Thus: law of contrast and law of analogy. For example, in Cézanne you find it constantly, but it’s in all the impressionists. You constantly see this reference to both sacred laws. Why can’t they do one without the other? Well, they can’t deny, for example, that complementary colors… Even if you proceed along the edge, you’ll reach complementary colors by going around the wheel. And complements are singular points on the circle’s periphery that you’ll cross along the way. So, running along the periphery will pass through and will involve complementary colors, contrasting colors.

But conversely, there’s a contrast between two complements. All that contrast implies that you don’t juxtapose them. In what sense? If you overlap two complements, you wind up with gray. Opposition implies that both complements—for example, your red and green, so long as we take them in large, pictorial terms, as surfaces—are very distinct, otherwise they couldn’t be opposed. They aren’t juxtaposed since one has trouble shading from one to the other, into the other. When you proceed like they do with Impressionism, and you saw why they worked like that, with little bits of color. When it’s little bits of color and no longer in sections. For example, if you work with dots or commas, at most you could juxtapose, almost juxtapose, two spots—a red one with a green one. You can’t juxtapose two dots since the juxtaposition of little bits—I won’t get into it, we all know—it’s precisely the definition of optical mixture as opposed to chemical mixture. That is, it’s the eye that blends them. If you juxtapose little red dots with little green dots, the eye automatically performs an optical mixture; it makes gray.

So, it’s necessary that, if you make a little red dot and a little green dot, there has to be enough space between them for you to blend from red into green and for the blend, or the gradient, from green into red. And this blending can be done in light/dark but it can obviously be done in color. There is a tonal gradient in the color spectrum no less than from light to dark.

Therefore, if you privileged contrasts, or diametric opposition, you’re nevertheless bound to run into peripheral transitions in color. If you privileged peripheral transition, you’re nevertheless necessarily bound to hit major contrasts, the diametric oppositions. You might say: *so what? That’s well and good; we’re reiterating… That’s the definition of colorist space.* Yes and no. In practice, you have a very curious decision to make. You have painters for whom, truly, everything is organized around diametric oppositions with the impressionists. And it still is in neo-impressionism. Seurat never stops telling us: what counts in the end are complementary relationships. It’s the relationship between complements, and peripheral transitions are only relevant for blending from one complement to the other. And that, indeed, is the method of pointillism. It’s over, I think. But—but—but there are others who greatly prefer analogy, working along the periphery, that is, they prefer the relationships between neighboring colors on the color wheel, neighbors at variable distances, depending on the chords you choose and that, that’s very interesting. So, you have to wonder with either one.

Well, here’s an outlier: Pissarro. Pissarro really is a painter. I’m not at all saying that there aren’t any contrasts in his work, or that there aren’t any complements in his work; I just mean he isn’t interested in that. What interests him is building a world out of gradients of color. In other words, what interests him isn’t opposition, it’s transition. These aren’t oppositions between tones; they’re transitions from one tone to the next, with gradations in half-tones, quarter-tones, etc.

And it’s odd, because you may wind up with ambiguities, in impasses that are breathtaking because they are creative. Pissarro, the most benevolent painter—he’s old, he’s taught so much to other painters, he occupies a rather respected position in the group. *Ah, old Pissarro*, etc. The dignified, perfect, amazing Pissarro. At the same time, he really admires what… I mean it’s so rare in human nature for old guys to look up to what the youth are doing, we have to commend him. It’s beautiful, to have kept…

Pissarro is amazed, Seurat, he finds Seurat—who to him is a very young man—he thinks what Seurat’s doing is marvelous. And so, he’s digging Seurat’s dot-strokes. And at the same time, he’s uneasy. This old painter, as talented as he is, says: *well, yeah, he’s right, he saw something and he saw the necessary link between the little bit, the point, the limit, the small bit and the world of color that we’re all searching for. Seurat found it,* he says. Okay, well, and he’s into using dot-strokes since it has to do with capturing this space of color. But he never felt comfortable with it, and you have Pissarro’s famous pointillist works. He isn’t comfortable with it. That’s what we mean by saying, yeah, he’s using a method, but he isn’t the one who created it; it doesn’t work. Something gets in the way.

But it seems to me that the hang-up is straightforward. It’s straightforward. It’s that the method of using dot-strokes was an excellent method for building a space of color that emphasizes opposition, diametric opposition. What interests Seurat is the other aspect of the color wheel, the peripheral line between neighboring colors. There’s no reason to use dots. The dot-stroke loses its necessity; the dot-stroke is sort of gratuitous. Just like the painters who made the dot-stroke gloomy, the un-vivid dot-stroke, the un-colored dot-stroke: there is Henri Martin. At a time when everyone was coming down on and jeering at Seurat and his bright dot-strokes, there was one jackass who adopted his method, who used dot-strokes—but dots… little non-colored dots, little uncolored dots. Irrelevant. Everyone thought it was terrific—well, I’m exaggerating… Henry [sic] Martin sold a lot of paintings; Seurat didn’t. It didn’t work for Seurat.

So, it was really confusing. Here you had work completely devoid of method. Mindlessly making dots. He made dots [and] everyone said: *What pretty dots!* [And in Seurat’s case:] *Ah, no, that doesn’t fly. It doesn’t work.* Pissarro wasn’t like Martin; he adopted the method through a sort of love for Seurat. He said to himself, *there’s something here I can make use of.* No, the method didn’t really suit him because, again, his problem was the transition from one tone to the next.

And I’d almost say the same thing about… Then, with Cézanne, it turns into something inextricable. Cézanne made this whole colorist space, well beyond—I don’t know—he brought it to a kind of absolute perfection… Last time I pointed out the coexistence in his work of the luminist method, specifically, tackling the same subject using the luminist light/dark approach, local colors, etc., blending the local color in shades, light/deep, etc. Anyway! And then the other method that he's really the first one to pull off, the first one to even systematize—although it varies with each painting; he isn't using a formula—and that specifically involves: toss out any problems concerning light, from the get-go. Don't let any light show, don't show any lines; instead, make relief-effects with color. And the relief-in-color will be, will take, establish, a sequence—only he never uses the same sequence twice, obviously—a sequence of colors, step-by-step in the order of the spectrum. A sequence around a culminating point.

So, you see that here, too, both aspects are combined. Because the culminating point will be complementary with another point, located elsewhere in the painting, but all of the volume, all of the color-volume, will be rendered by this sequence of small blotches—since he doesn't use points but fairly small blotches—a sequence of blotches moving along the order of the spectrum.

So, depending on the paintings of… I referenced this article by an Englishman,[162] a very detailed article on Cézanne, where he analyzes a dozen different sequences, alongside reproductions of the paintings. Unfortunately, they're in black-and-white… But that doesn't matter. Anyway!

I'd almost say that Cézanne in a way seems closer to Pissarro than to… than [there are] differences. It's Cézanne who cries out: what matters is the transition between tones! Yet what prevents him from—you see where the technique is headed, it develops into an extraordinary technique—when filling in part of a sequence, he'll forbid himself from using any mixture. He has to find the right hue every time. The gradation must be one made of color—Not… not one from… light to dark. Every time, he has to find the right tone in the sequence. Otherwise, he leaves it blank. The renowned [Ambroise] Vollard, upon seeing a blank spot, noted, "But that's strange; this spot is blank." And he responded: "Please try to understand—if I use a blend or roughly guess at the color, it's ruined. I'll have to start over. I'd have to start over, starting with that color that I applied to quickly."[163]

It's like he's searching for transitions. And when Cézanne frothed against Gauguin it's because, he says, "Gauguin took everything from me; he took everything, but he understood nothing." That was completely unfair, since I think Gauguin didn't take all that much, and he understood it perfectly well. He says: "Gauguin didn't understand the main problem, the problem of transitioning, transitioning between colors in the order of the spectrum." Here he tells us his method. See, I'd say that's the first stage. This space of color, made up of pictorial units or little pieces, stirs up a problem for the first time, namely, how to make two paths coexist in this this space: the peripheral path and the diametric path. And in each painter, how does that take place, how…? Alright! That would be the first stage.

What happens after that? If I make… Sorry, just some points of reference. But it was extremely important… see, this business with Cézanne's sequences, or this space made up of little bits—this colorist space made up of little bits—it's already a micro-space, pictorially, compared to previous schools. It's funny… it's a funny thing, this colorist micro-space: it's the triumph of brightness. You can see how brightness is achieved via these sequences in a totally different way from the bright regime of the 17th century. They're two completely different regimes.

But then… But then… I'd say… If I were to circle back to what I said earlier. Remember that in my comments about the diagram—hopefully you remember some of it—I said that what's frustrating about the diagram is that it's continually oscillating between two poles: between code—and there might be codes grafted onto a diagram; in fact, it's necessary for there to be some—and interference, pure interference. We see it clearly in the history of color such as I've tried to describe it. You'll find the pole of interferences, for example, perfectly demonstrated in Caravaggio's dark grounds. When the ground… [*Interruption of the recording*] [1:55:03]

Part 4 [*our division*]

… in terms of the diagram regarding the other pole. It doesn't take much for it to be a code. And ultimately, ultimately, in light of some of Seurat's remarks or even some of Seurat's paintings, you think: what is he introducing to painting? A veritable code, a pictorial code of dot-strokes. With dot-strokes. It turns into a code. And in Cézanne, even in Cézanne, the sequences along the order of the spectrum—it's like the equivalent of a color code, a code particular to color, with its two main laws, its two main formulas: diametric opposition and the gradual transition between hues. Alright, then.

What happens after that? After that, what I'm getting at, it's that this coloristic space—it's wonderful. Nothing else to say—it's, it's perfect. A thing disappears, I believe, when it produces work as intended, when it was meant to… when it's saturated by its own product. Then it can disappear and die; we move onto another problem. Another way of addressing problems of space. But there were two problems with these small units, with the first stage of using small units.

The first problem was: what to do? You had sequences from point to point, bit by bit—types of sequences, alright. But wouldn't that destroy the architecture, the architecture of the painting? Little blotches, dots, etc.—how do you maintain structure? And really—how do you preserve the structure perpendicular to the colored sequences? Or to the diametric oppositions? How do you maintain structure? That's the problem. It isn't easy with Cézanne: there is a whole game of diagonals in Cézanne where, in a way, the line is brought back in. A Cézanne line, and so on, in order to preserve structure or to reintroduce structure into this colored field, into space-as-colored-field. [Lawrence] Gowing goes so far as to talk about a virtual architecture in Cézanne, based on examples.[164] Even if the lines aren't traced, a sort of structure of planes perpendicular to the colored sequences has to be maintained, or else the painting winds up—well—*limp*. Winds up—I don't know—it winds up… just boneless. But Cézanne pulls it off. But what? Now there's no longer any code. It's no longer a code of color; it's something else. So that's the first problem: how do you maintain structure?

The second problem: the small units also compromise something, namely, the specific form, the singular form of the object, the singular form of the object in danger of shattering into the dust of these little bits. For Cézanne too, it's a real problem. He works out his whole theory of the culminating point, precisely in order to preserve the sort of singular volume of the object.

Well? It seems, it seems, that we've come to those who'll break with impressionism to establish a kind of… of… to establish a sort of expressionism, in particular Van Gogh and Gauguin. This is the turning point for them. It's as if—there are a thousand other things to say, that's why… they're only guidelines. My impression is that those are really their problems. Well, that's great, Impressionism gave us everything, did it all. Cézanne is a great man. They don't like Seurat. Seurat—Van Gogh did, Van Gogh is kinder; he also likes Seurat. Even he thinks that Seurat's dots and his comma-strokes—that they can work. But Gauguin is a lot harsher. He made up a funny song about Seurat, with the refrain: *one dot, two dots, three dots.* He didn't make it, no, one of his friends. I'd love to find someone who could put it to music, because it's a charming song—very, very cheerful. But anyway, he hated the stuff. And then cut to Cézanne saying, *Gauguin took everything from me, [but] he didn't understand it at all.*

What did Gauguin want? And what did Van Gogh also want, although maybe less… less… in a less pointed way. I believe this is what they wanted: to protect two things—but it'll require a new space and a new use of color. Totally new. It's what first sparks Impressionism. Preserving the architecture, that is, reintroducing solid structures, on the one hand, and on the other hand, reconstituting the singular volume of the thing in itself. And how will they do that? While they do find an interesting and elegant solution, it will in effect spell the end of Impressionism. Then Impressionism lives on with Signac or Seurat's neo-impressionism, but Van Gogh—already with Van Gogh, not to mention Gauguin—takes it in such a different direction that it really isn't Impressionism at all.

What is it then? What do they do? Well, I think they retrieve, right, they retrieve… restore architecture—what do I mean? Restore architecture, which is to say, they elevate color. It's not about going back to an Italian or Renaissance sort of architecture, what in the Renaissance was called the painting's composition—it's not about that at all. Because at that point they couldn't go backwards. They had to come back and reinvent an architecture of color and through color. How will they do that?

That's the first direction: restoring architecture through color with color. They rediscover something that then had already existed, but they rediscovered it in an absolutely new context: finally, they'll discover color-structure. They'll discover color-structure, and in this regard they're surprisingly modern, that is, something like what Comtesse just said, citing the example of Sam Francis, but there are many American painters who use a color-structure. This is kind of a triumph, I think, for a modern form of painting, more modern than impressionism.

And what is it? In simplest terms, color-structure is the return to the field regime.[165] It's the field, color laid flat, a monochromatic color laid flat onto the canvas. And that clearly has nothing to do with a return to the Renaissance. It's actually the use of color-structure, while in the Renaissance structure is maintained by something else entirely; it's maintained by an instance, a type of collective line, so it's completely different. And this restoration of the field's going to be incredible; it'll lead to all sorts of things. But the field, the field, the monochromatic field—what does that mean?

And this is about the same time, remember, that Van Gogh and Gauguin enter the fray. What does that have to do with anything? You see what Cézanne means when he says, "But Gauguin didn't understand anything about transition." Nothing at all. Or rather, you could just as well say, it's true that Gauguin didn't understand anything about transition, but that's not his problem—you can't expect people to do everything, right? On the flipside, Cézanne doesn't understand anything about Gauguin’s problem. Gauguin’s problem is how to make a structure out of color. The monochromatic field is the simplest form of structure; it’s a uniform structure.

“Then that’s no good,” you might say, “In what way is a field a structure?” Well. Because something starts to take shape, something we’re still dealing with, where American painting delved down and conquered a formidable coloristic space: a kind of band-structure relationship. What one might call band-structure or ribbon-structure. What does that mean? This structure… Now we can see that color turns into structure. When you combine flat structure, the field, with a band of ribbon, there’s something specifically colorist going on. For example, some of Sam Francis’s work is like this. One of the greatest American painters in this vein is [Barnett] Newman, who rightly, is rightly called an abstract expressionist.

What does that give us? I mean, you make a monochrome field and you’re going to introduce— in cases of complex structures— you’re going to introduce divisions, sections. Sections? Sections either of another color, for example a field of—it doesn’t matter—a red field and… with a violet section, and you can have a field several sections. Or you just run a band of a different color across your field: what happens? You get this whole interplay. It’s monochrome. You can include light and dark shades in your field. There are some painters who did that, but not for long. Since the point is that the field be monochrome and that the only intervening differences be not in value—light/dark—but differences in saturation.

At what level do these differences in saturation operate? Of course, it depends on where in the field, depending on whether it’s close to the ribbon or far from the ribbon. You’ll have relations of proximity between the field and the ribbon that crosses it. The field and the ribbon that crosses it or bisects it—there’s any figure you can think of: a section, a rectangular section in the field, a ribbon cutting across it all the way from top to bottom or from right to left, from left to right, etc. All sorts of figures. And depending on the field’s color and its relationship to the ribbon’s color, what’s going to happen, what kind of saturation?

Once you’ve understood these ribbon-structure or field-ribbon sorts of complex structures, you’ll come back to pure monochrome, that is, to a pure field. And at that point you’ll see that it obviously makes a structure. That the differences in saturation can themselves introduce a whole framework, a whole structure, that is, they can function like sections, only non-localized sections, or like non-localized ribbons. So that’s a first detail.

Here you have a deployment of color-structure. Then you might ask: what does that change? See, at this stage, this is what I was talking about earlier: they couldn’t care less about complementary relationships. That’s over. Why is that? You’ve come back to painting in broad strokes—and it’s true that currently there’s a very important trend to return to the large, to large-scale. Well, you come back to that: are you going to say that what motivates your sections of the field are complementary relationships, diametric oppositions? No, that’s over! It’s not over, it’s not over—I don’t mean that it’s over. I mean, well, it was really… That well has run dry; it’s… know what I mean? I’ll reiterate that if you think about it, I think it’s the same thing in philosophy, it’s the same thing for… it’s the same thing everywhere. There are some things that are, well… they haven’t lost any of their timeliness so long as we don’t repeat them; if we repeat them, it’s…. beating a dead horse, it’s a waste of time. That well’s run dry. We have to look elsewhere, we have to look elsewhere, if only to, and depending on… After all, if Cézanne did what he did, it was so no one would be able to repeat Cézanne. And it's the same with literature, it's the same with philosophy, it's the same thing everywhere. Okay, good! It's not the complementary relationships, it's differences in saturation between hues. What does I mean?

At this point I'll only briefly refer to a great text, which came after Goethe, by Schopenhauer.[166] Schopenhauer had revised Goethe's theory in an early essay. And his revision was really interesting because he introduced the idea of a space proper to color and a weight proper to color. It was really strange, because he said that there's no reason for the color wheel to be divided in equal parts.

With devilish cunning, he proposed the following division: it was generally accepted that the wheel was abstractly divided, abstractly, into three parts—the three-part color wheel. In effect there are three complements. There are three complementary relationships: blue/red—no… Sorry: red/green, blue/orange, etc. You have three complementary relationships. You divide your circle in three, in three equal parts. Then, if you follow me, every two colors, every complementary pair, occupies one third of the circle, but within each third of the circle the relationship between one complement and the other—the relationship between a color and its complement—is not symmetrical. So, for example, blue and red would be two-to-two: here the third of the circle would be divided in two, but the blue-to-orange relationship isn't even.

In other words… And for example, I don't remember the numbers, it's like 2 thirds, 2 thirds and 1 third. You see? Thus, each group of complements has its own area of distribution. I think that's important because with that, we already have a sort of structuration proper to color. Color has a sort of spatializing quantity that varies from color to color. He made a few remarks on weight that I found innovative, especially in light of how interested Americans today, American colorists, are in color having a kind of weight.

And a color theorist, a modern one named [Josef] Albers, has a very, very concrete takeaway from all that, since he's a practicing painter. It's what he calls quantity studies, color's spatializing quantity or weighable quantity, the weight of color. And Albers ends this bit by saying: "Such quantity studies have taught us to believe that, independent of harmony rules, any color 'goes' or 'works' with any other color, presupposing that their quantities are appropriate."[167] I believe that's what modern painting is. If you… So long as you only use diametric oppositions or gradations between colors, there were still laws.

And Impressionism knew how to discover these laws, develop these laws, demonstrate these laws—impressionism got as much out of them as it could. But down, down below, there was something still humming, still… I don't know what—a lawless world. And the lawless world is when you introduce new coefficients of color, spatial energy, for example, or weighable energy, and then everything goes with everything if you put the right coefficients! I really like this line, because it's a real painter's line: "independent of harmony rules, any color 'goes' or 'works' with any other color"—*that's* colorism.

And there is a text by Van Gogh that I find astonishing. When Van Gogh experiments with fields, it has—especially compared to Cézanne—that has a lot of practical consequences: a change in values. It's when Gauguin and Van Gogh—I'm not saying they stuck with it—but it's a turning point where they say: ultimately, the only thing worth painting, what it's really about, is the portrait. They say we have to develop, we have to go back to portraits and make a modern portrait. It's an about-face from Cézanne, because the Cézannian hierarchy (he wasn't shy about it—it was very clear) was: landscapes, still lifes, while portraits only, right, for Cézanne? A portrait? No, and it makes sense what with his method. It makes sense; it's integral. No way around it. There's nothing wrong with portraits, so long as you treat them like still lifes or landscapes. Which is why Cézanne's portraits are so much like still-lifes. But now it's the other way around. A return to portraits.

What does that mean? It can be totally traced back to this history of the evolution of color. Of course, there's a return to portraiture because (now I've run out of time, so that's perfect) because it's no longer the diametric oppositions that count, what do you get when you come to color-structure? What is the color connected to? With fields; it's bright hues, the bright regime.

What are they going to be connected to? No longer to complementary colors, no longer to gradual transitions, but to a funny thing called "broken color." And what are broken colors? A broken color is… If two complementary colors combine, you end up with gray. A broken color is when you combine complements, but one is dominant over the other. A broken blue—you'll call it a broken blue—a broken blue is a blue… a blue/orange mixture where blue dominates. You break the color. However, the same color comes up twice: as a bright and as a broken color. It's a way of overcoming both diametric opposition and gradual transition. It's very intriguing.

And that will be like a… the two elements of the grammar of color: bright and broken colors. According to Gauguin and Van Gogh. But why do I say that that implies the return or brings about the return to portraits? Not out of necessity but out of convenience—it's because broken color does an excellent job of depicting skin. Bluish, reddish hues—they're made with broken colors. And Van Gogh always says that the modern portrait should be done in broken colors.

But now we arrive at… You'll have the Gauguin formula, as well as the Van Gogh formula: the great modern portrait on the field, the field done in a bright color—skin, figures done in broken color. Once it represents someone, whether or not it's a portrait is irrelevant. Because the same bright/broken color interaction—and the extraordinary freedom that gives you, since once again, in my opinion you've surpassed both the limitations of diametric opposition and the limitation of gradual transition. They conquered a new space of color as spatializing energy that I spoke about, and at the same time, weighable energy. I'd say almost the weight of the broken color and the spatiality of the bright color.

So, you have this formula, portrait on the field, broken/bright color with, as Van Gogh says, the repetition of the bright color through the broken color; that's what is going to become the formula for Van Gogh and Gauguin. And then, you can leave out what you want, the figure, etc. At the end of the day, we have two colors whose problems are no longer decided by complementary relationships or what have you. This is what Gauguin means when he says he's a colorist, yes! – and there, he says this directly against Cézanne – to be a colorist, yes! But an arbitrary colorist, what does that mean? It means to have conquered the space in which the relations between colors are no longer limited by contrast or transition.[168] So here, in fact, that creates distances, really infinite spaces of color. So, based on this, you can suppress everything, all figuration, all motifs, all you like. You are left with your two elements of modern color, in my opinion, namely, color-structure and color weight, or what can be called color-force.[169]

Once again, if I adopt some truly formal terms, color-structure, culminating in the monochrome, with the monochrome field, and the structure of the field-ribbon or field-section, and on the other hand, broken color which precisely reaches its height with skin and flesh – but one can do without flesh, so the interplay between color-force and color-structure is what at once defines this colorist space and creates a new form of modulation. Cézanne thought that this approach meant eliminating modulation. One finds a whole new modulation basically defined, but only basically defined by repeating bright color via broken color. That's what this kind of modulation will be like. Notice in any case that there are quite a lot of these color modulations.

Well then, there you have it! Have a great break! [*End of the session*] [2:18:00]

Notes

---

[1] *Théorie de l'art moderne* (Paris: Folio, coll. Essais, 1998) ; *On Modern Art* (New York : Faber and Faber, 1966).

[2] Deleuze famously discusses Lucretius and Klossowski, and the simulacrum, respectively, in the appendices II and III of *Logic of Sense*; see also by Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle,* trans. Daniel W. Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[3] The discussion on the cliché and the pre-pictorial phase is situated in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (New York and London: Continuum, 2003), chapter 11, notably pp. 86-90.

[4] D.H. Lawrence, "Introduction to These Paintings", in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D.H. Lawrence (1936)* (New York: Viking Press, 1972), pp. 569, 576, 577, 579-80.

[5] On the "appley character" in Cézanne as stated by Lawrence, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* pp. 87-88.

[6] Chapter 8 in *Franics Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* is titled "Painting Forces", starting with Klee's statement and pursuing much of the development that follows.

[7] The title of chapter 4 in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* is "Body, Meat and Spirit, Becoming-Animal", where Deleuze considers aspects of the following development.

[8] On the horror-scream distinction and the Pope series, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (Continuum, 2003), chapter 6 "Painting and Sensation", notably pp. 37-39.

[9] On the body's escaping and also this Conrad novel and this scene, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (Continuum, 2003), pp. 14-16.

[10] On this painting and figure, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation, pp. 15-17.*

[11] On this painting and discussion of umbrellas, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* pp. 16-17.

[12] On the bird and "birdness", see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, pp. 156-157.

[13] While this wording may appear clunky in English, the word, "foreign" is preserved in keeping with Worringer's analysis of the Gothic line as a "northern", "barbarian", "foreign" development. Deleuze discusses this foreign will or power in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (New York and London: Continuum, 2003), p. 127, 137.

[14] In *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* Daniel Smith opts for "trait" or "stroke" depending on the context for the French "trait". The discussion in the rest of the session largely corresponds to the development in chapter 12, "The Diagram".

[15] There are several possible translations for *tache*; no one option sounds natural in every context. I settled on "blot" in this context—as in ink blot, etc.—and "stain" when talking about Morris Louis's work. Note that the Daniel Smith translation in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* adopts "patch" or "color-patch" for "tache".

[16] *Agencement* is often translated as "assemblage." The reader may also understand it to mean "arrangement" or "set up."

[17] Deleuze misspeaks here. The title of Virilio's 1981 interview in *Cahiers du cinéma* is "La Troisième fenêtre." See Paul Virilio, "The Third Window: An Interview with Paul Virilio," trans. Yvonne Shafir, with preface by Jonathan

---

Carry. In *Global Television*, eds. Cynthia Schneider and Brian Wells (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), pp. 185-197.

[18] Henri Focillon, "In Praise of Hands," trans. Charles Beecher Hogan. In *The Life of Forms in Art* (New Haven: Yale, 1942), 157-184. On this work, see Deleuze, *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (New York and London: Continuum, 2003), pp. 154-155.

[19] On the easel and painting, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, pp. 104-109.

[20] As with Deleuze's other etymological accounts, his explanation here may have been more authoritative at the time. However, the German word, *Makel*, was a loanword from Latin *macula*. *Mal*, in the sense of "mark" or "sign," has older Germanic roots and is likely a cognate with *macula* (but is not derived from it).

[21] Deleuze seems to be glossing several moments in Klee's *Bildnerische Denken*. To see how Klee introduces his understanding of chaos, the gray point, and the "cosmogenic egg," see especially Paul Klee, "Contributions to a theory of pictorial form," in *Paul Klee Notebooks, Volume 1: The Thinking Eye,* trans. Ralph Manheim, ed. Jürg Spiller (London: Lund Humphries, 1961), pp. 3-5.

[22] Deleuze attributes this quote to Cézanne, but it likely comes from Van Gogh. In a 1888 letter to his sister (Letter 626), Van Gogh writes, "And you see—this is what Impressionism has—to my mind—over the rest, it isn't banal, and *one seeks a deeper likeness than that of the photographer*" (emphasis translator's). http://www.vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let626/letter.html

[23] See Klee, pp. 3-5.

[24] See David Sylvester, *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon 1962-1979*, 3rd edn. (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1987), p. 94.

[25] In this context, *plan* corresponds to different "grounds" in English, i.e., the background, foreground. Because *plan* is a pervasive term in Deleuze's career—in both solo- and jointly-written work — the original French is included when it appears for the sake of readers interested in tracking it.

[26] Deleuze is likely referring to Herbert Franke's 1972 *Elektronischer Einstein*, which used early processing techniques to interpret and manipulate aspects of a scanned photograph of Einstein.

[27] The reference is to a work from 1912 published in the 1954 French translation; in *Francis Bacon. Logic of sensation*, the reference provided is *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, trans M.T.H. Sadler (New York: Dover Publications, 1977).

[28] This reference to Fried is presented in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, pp. 185-186 note 14. The discussion of Pollock and this section is situated in chapter 12, "The Diagram".

[29] "Shape" is often a translation for *figure*, which is particularly important in Deleuze's book on Francis Bacon (and comes up often any time he discusses painting). "Shapeless" seems more natural and less cumbersome than "with no contour." Thus, *ligne sans contour* and *tache sans contour* is rendered as being "shapeless," etc., with *contour* or *figure* included in brackets where the translation might mislead the reader.

[30] In addition to Mandelbrot, the reader might recall a similar idea in Paul Klee's writings, another of Deleuze's sources. In his lecture notes, Klee describes the "linear-medial," which is "neither line nor plane, but some sort of middle thing between the two. At the beginning it is linear, the movement of a point; it ends up looking like a plane." Paul Klee, p. 109.

[31] Deleuze returns to Mandelbrot only in the final seminar, on Leibniz and the Baroque, in session 2, November 4 1986, and session 8, January 27, 1987.

[32] Deleuze provides partial bibliographical information in *Francis Bacon. Logic of the Sensation,* pp. 189-190 (p. 81 in the French), note 5; Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, trans. Michael Bullock (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963) and *Form in Gothic* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1927).

[33] *Ligne sans couleur*. However, given the prior discussion, Deleuze might have meant *ligne sans contour*—shapeless line, or line with no contour.

[34] Deleuze is taking liberties with Faure's quote. In Godard's *Pierre le fou*, the following line is read from Élie Faure: "Velázquez, after the age of fifty, never again painted sharply defined things, he wandered around the objects with the air and the twilight; in the shadow and transparence of the backgrounds he surprised the colored palpitations which he used as the invisible center of his silent symphony." Translation from Élie Faure, *History of Art IV – Modern Art,* trans. Walter Pach (New York: Harper, 1924), p. 124.

[35] The translation for *tache* is a "patch" of color. See Daniel Smith's note on the translation in Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 184 note 1. In this case, however, it is rendered as "stain" in keeping with Morris Louis's "stain painting."

[36] In order to distinguish between *ligne* and *trait*, I will typically translate the former as "line" and the latter as "stroke."

---

[37] The French reads *l'œil a peine à suivre*. Understood literally, the line is such that following it hurts one's eyes.

[38] A line attributed to Sérusier by Maurice Denis. See Denis, "Excerpt from the *Journal* (1906)," in *Conversations with Cézanne*, ed. Michael Doran, trans. Julie Lawrence Cochran (Berkeley: UCLA, 2001), 178. I have used Cochran's translation above.

[39] The French *figure* is translated as "figure" consistently throughout. At this point in the discussion regarding Kandinsky, however, there is a brief switch to referring to *figures* as "shapes" in keeping with Cochran's translation of Kandinsky. The reader can assume that all mentions of "shape" and "figure" refer to *figure* in French, and that there is no intentional distinction between "concrete shapes" and "concrete figures," for example.

[40] Translation modified to conform to Kandinsky's definition of synthesis, cited above. On the diagram and the code, see *Francis Bacon. Logic of Sensation*, chapter 12, notably pp. 104-108.

[41] The French has *vent* (wind), *dent* (tooth), and *ment* (lie). To preserve Deleuze's point about phonemes, similarly spelled English words are used for these three French words: "vent," "dent," and "meant." For the French *fend*, the choice is "bent."

[42] Deleuze is describing what is better known in English as a "binary search algorithm" or "bisection search." The translation preserves the language of "choice" or "selection".

[43] While this could refer to a number of texts by Leroi-Gourhan, it most likely refers to *Le geste et la parole, technique et langage* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1964), *Gesture and Speech*, trans. Anna Bostock Berger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993). See also references in *A Thousand Plateaus*, notably pp. 496-498 and p. 574 note 33.

[44] On this famous critic, Deleuze refers to Georg Schmidt, *Mondrian* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, n.d.), in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 185 note 10.

[45] See *Tout l'oeuvre peint de Piet Mondrian* (Paris: Flammarion, 1976).

[46] As the audit returns in mid-syllable, the word preceding "and code" is unclear.

[47] This is no doubt a reference to Lyotard's *Discours, figure* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971), *Discourse, Figure*, trans. Antony Hudek and Mary Lydon (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

[48] The shift toward the "third path" and the analogical roughly corresponds to the shift to chapter 14, "Analogy", in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*.

[49] The reference to Peirce as well as the entire discussion on analogy corresponds to chapter 13 of *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, notably pp. 116-120 and p. 188 note 5.

[50] Gregory Bateson, "Problems in Cetacean and Other Mammalian Communication," *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (Northvale: Jason Aronson, 1972), 260-9. On Bateson, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 188 note 7.

[51] Deleuze is loosely paraphrasing passages from Bateson, 261-2. His paraphrase includes broad references to Bateson's overall body of work.

[52] On this reference, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 554-555 note 26, Deleuze and Guattari already have referred to Querrien's work, *Devenir fonctionnaire ou le travail de l'État* (Paris: CERFI, no date), a reference seemingly without any bibliographical trace.

[53] André Scobeltzine, *L'Art feudal et son enjeu social* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973).

[54] In this context, the translation follows linguistic parlance with *trait* as "feature."

[55] "[I]l n'y eut point d'abord d'autre Musique que la mélodie, ni d'autre mélodie ; que le son varie de la parole… (408). See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Essai sur l'origine des langues," in *Collection complète des œuvres 1780-1789* vol. 8, no. 4. Online edition (27 June 2022): *http://rousseauonline.ch/Text/essai-sur-l-origine-des-langues.php*

[56] "Si l'on croit suppléer à l'accent par les accens on se trompe: on n'invente les accens que quand l'accent est déjà perdu. […] Il y a plus; nous croyons avoir des accens dans notre langue, & nous n'en avons point." 378-9. While the translation elsewhere renders *accent* as "stress" (when Deleuze is talking about contemporary linguistics), I have deferred to Rousseau's translators whenever possible. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Origin of Language*, trans. John H. Moran and Alexander Code (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

[57] "On n'invente les accents que quand l'accent est déjà perdu", 378. Translation distinguishes "accents" and "accent" by referring the former to accent marks and to the latter as "intonation."

[58] On the "aesthetic analogy", see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (New York and London: Continuum, 2003), pp. 115-116. On molding, see pp. 134-136.

[59] Deleuze refers here to considering Buffon and molds in session 11 of the Spinoza seminar, 17 February 1981.

[60] Deleuze refers to Buffon on this concept in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 134 and 192 note 20. The reference is to Buffon's *Histoire naturelle des animaux* in his *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: 1885).

---

[61] In the seminar, Deleuze quotes Simondon as saying they're "*deux extremes d'une chaîne.*" The closest equivalent in *L'Individu et sa genèse physico-biologique* (Paris : Presses universitaires de France, 1964), p. 45, is when Simondon writes: "Moulage *et* modulation *sont les deux cas limites dont le* modelage *est le cas moyen*," (*Molding* and *modulation* are limit cases, modeling being the average case). However, in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 192 note 20, he quotes Simondon as follows: in modulation "il n'y a jamais arrêt pour démoulage parce que la circulation du support d'énergie équivaut à un démoulage permanent ; un modulateur est un moule temporel continu … Mouler est moduler de manière définitive, moduler est mouler de manière continue et perpétuellement variable", Simondon, pp. 41-42 (Smith translation: in modulation, "there is never time to turn something out, to remove it from the mold [*démoulage*], because the circulation of the support of energy is the equivalent to a permanent turning out; a modulator is a continuous, temporal mold. . . . To mold is to modulate in a definitive manner, to modulate is to mold in a continuous and perpetually variable manner", *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 192 note 20).

[62] See the preceding note.

[63] As a gesture toward the difference between *langue* and *langage*—a difference with no comfortable English equivalent— *langue* is translated as "spoken language," with *langage* as "language."

[64] In *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* Deleuze states, in chapter 13 on "Analogy", that he borrows the analysis on pp. 116-117 "from Richard Pinhas, *Synthèse analogique, synthèse digitale* (unpublished)", p. 188 note 6, to which Daniel Smith adds "A revised portion of this text has since appeared in Richard Pinhas, *Les Larmes de Nietzsche* (Paris: Flammarion, 2001)".

[65] For the most part, *analogique* remains as "analog." This makes sense when Deleuze is more clearly referring to technology, the difference between digital and analog synthesizers for example. Let us note, however, that in other contexts (such as when Comtesse brings up Bateson and Watzlawick below), there's good reason to have *analogique* as "analogic." In fact, Watzlawick himself discusses the difference between so-called "digital" and "analogic" language.

[66] A note on the phrase, "to plan." A "modulation to plan" sounds too much like a "planned (future) modulation." In some contexts *sur plan* might be translated as "to spec," as when something is manufactured according to specifications. Deleuze's wordplay is very difficult to preserve, however. *Plan*'s double meaning as "plan" or "plane" allows him to move from talking about modulating "to plan" to talking about modulating the surface ("plane") of a canvas.

[67] The text reads, "*Avec une seule goutte d'huile Titien peignait un bras d'un bout à l'autre; Cézanne a voulu au contraire que tous ses passages soient des tons conscients.*" From Pierre Bonnard's comment to Tériade, published in *Verve* 5 (1942) pp. 17-18. I did not get my hands on the original, but I found it quoted in Henri Maldiney's *Regard, parole, espace* (Lausanne: Editions l'Age d'Homme, 1994), p. 169 note 31.

[68] Deleuze's brief comment on the literal translation of part of Riegl's title: *Kunstindustrie,* is omitted The French title is "*Arts et métiers*," and Deleuze notes that a more literal translation of *Kunstindustrie* would be "*art industriel*." This comment doesn't translate well into English because the wording of the English translation's title already has *Kunstindustrie* as "Art Industry." In *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* Daniel Smith provides this reference to Riegl's book, *Late Roman Art Industry,* trans. Rolf Winkes (2nd edition; Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 1985).

[69] What Riegl calls *Kunstwollen*.

[70] For Deleuze's *corriger*—to fix, correct, adjust --, the translation keeps with Jung's translation of Riegl, with "improve", which is retained in keeping with Jung's translation of Riegl.

[71] *Sur le plan* can also be interpreted to mean "in the plan," "according to plan."

[72] Given the end of the preceding paragraph, it is likely Deleuze means "Egyptian", both for the clothing and bodies.

[73] "Organism" in Jacqueline Jung's translation of Riegl. See Jung's preface to Aloïs Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts,* trans. Jacqueline Jung, ed. Benjamin Binstock (New York: Zone, 2004), 45.

[74] See David Sylvster, *The Brutality of Fact: with Francis Bacon Interviews* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987), p. 83, 114.

[75] No passage *exactly* like this is in David Sylvester's Bacon interviews (pp. 83, 108) —presumably where these comments come from—though an equivalent from various lines has been hobbled together. The passages here are stitched together to convey the sense that Deleuze is reciting from memory—accurately, but not *verbatim*.

[76] Also noteworthy is that Bacon mentions "images" seeming to rise from pools of flesh. The word "figure" is nevertheless preserved in this passage, in keeping with the use Deleuze makes of the term (see the previous notes for source).

---

[77] To make sense of the “three isosceles triangles” that Deleuze mentions here is the reference to a relevant passage from Riegl: “The architectural ideal of the ancient Egyptians is best expressed through the tomb-type of the pyramid. Any of the four sides permits the beholder’s eye to observe an always unified plane of an isosceles triangle, the sharply rising sides of which by no means reveal the connecting space behind.” Alois Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, trans. Rolf Winkes (Rome: Girgio Bretschneider, 1985), 27.

[78] This reference is from *Conversations with Cézanne,* ed. Michael Doran, trans. Julie Lawrence Cochran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 178.

[79] The text reads “form and plane are on the same plane,” but this is likely an error. It should probably read, “form and *ground* are on the same plane.”

[80] We should note that in contrast to Deleuze’s detailed consideration of Goethe’s color theory here, he only makes passing references to Goethe in his brief presentation of color theory in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (New York and London: Continuum, 2003), pp. 132-134, 139-140, and 191 note 14.

[81] Goethe’s *Purpur* (which Deleuze calls here *pourpre*) predates the introduction of the word “magenta.” There’s precedent for retrofitting Goethe’s color wheel to include magenta instead of “pure red.” I’m putting words in both Goethe’s and Deleuze’s mouths, making them say “magenta” or “red” for *Purpur/pourpre* and “purple” for *violet,* for the sake of clarity.

[82] Let us note that *primitive* is rendered as as “primary” when it appears alone; here, however, “primitive” is retained because it appears alongside *primaire.* This is to avoid misleading the reader into thinking Deleuze has special plans for this term or is drawing a meaningful distinction between the two terms.

[83] Deleuze is working through an illustration. No dotted line in any available sources, but presumably the color wheel he’s drawn or is looking at has dotted lines running along the different chords (as Deleuze describes them below).

[84] Cf. §§816-7 of Goethe’s *Zur Farbenlehre*.

[85] *Ibid.,* §§826-9.

[86] In *Francis Bacon. Logic of Sensation,* Deleuze pays considerable attention to “colorism” and color: see pp. 139-143 as well as chapter 16, “Note on Color”.

[87] While we are unable to locate this exact quote, the closest is a line often featured in books on painting, color and optics from the early 20th century: *“Donnez-moi de la boue, j’en ferai la peau d’une Vénus”* (Give me some mud and I’ll make of it the skin of Venus). This may actually do a better job of serving Deleuze’s point. While some painters despaired over gray, muddy colors (Delacroix calls gray the enemy of the painter), he boasts that he can bring out beautiful colors from even the muddiest gray.

[88] “Flatness” is far and away the most common translation for *planéité*. “Planarity” is much less common and a bit clunkier in English, although it preserves “plan,” for the sake of readers tracking plan/plane in Deleuze’s career. The term “flatness” is chosen here because it is Greenberg’s term: “The irreducible essence of pictorial art consists in but two constitutive conventions or norms: flatness and the delimitation of flatness.” Clement Greenberg, “After Abstract Expressionism,” *Art International* 6.8 (October 1962), 30.

[89] Supports/Surfaces congealed as a group in the French political turmoil of the late ‘60s. It was patched together out of loosely connected painters from Southern France (André-Pierre Arnal, Vincent Bioules, Noël Dolla, Toni Grand, Bernard Pages, Patrick Saytour, Viallat,) and from Paris (Louis Cane, Marc Devade, Jean-Pierre Pincemin, Valensi and Daniel Dezeuze) who all shared a common interest in rejecting the status quo of the second School of Paris. Beyond their geographical differences, they all agreed on the fact that practice (painting) should go hand in hand with theory (writing, or critical thinking), but the southerners foregrounded practice where the Parisians emphasized theory and political activism. Even before the group’s name was coined, their work had developed into a critique of Paris’s centralized art system and comfortable esthetics. It is worth noting that before they briefly made it on the Parisian art scene as a group, most of the artists were “provinciaux”-- mainly from the southeastern cities of Montpellier and Nice -- a term used more or less derogatorily in French to designate someone who is not up to speed with the latest trends. This conflictual dynamic between Parisians and Provincials was very much at the forefront of the members’ relationships, and when the group eventually fell apart in 1972, it did so along that particular fault line.

[90] For consistency: “flattening” of space, if *planéité* is “flatness.” “Planification” is an option, but its only justification would be that it highlights the *plan* common to *planéité* and *planification.* The same effect is attempted by italicizing the word “planning,” and “planning” is the strongest choice by cluing the reader into the relationship between *plan* terms, and it also communicates something happening in the French: the simultaneous use of different meanings of *plan*—as both “plane” and “plan.”

[91] Word missing in transcript.

---

[92] https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/artworks/la-belle-angele-286.

[93] Here "field" is used for *aplat*, for lack of a better term. As above, an ideal translation would communicate the "flat" in *à plat/aplat,* in association with *planéité* and *planification.* "Flat area of color," "flattened color," and other similar phrases are sometimes used for *aplat*, but these weigh Deleuze's analysis down in other parts of the seminar.

[94] Deleuze cites Merleau-Ponty in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 178 note 1, from *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), pp. 207-42.

[95] While there are several references to flesh and skin in Goethe's text, a precise match for Deleuze's quote is not present. However, *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, the discussion of Gaugin's "La Belle Angèle" and Van Gogh's postman paintings precedes consideration of flesh in different artists' work, notably Bacon, pp. 140-143.

[96] The French term is often preserved in English. "Partitioning" might also work.

[97] This might be an error. The reference earlier was to "flatness [*planéité*] and the determination of flatness," but here he says "linearity." The context here increases the doubt: if we're talking about how, for the Egyptians, form and ground occupy the same plane, that seems to be a question of "flatness" rather than "linearity."

[98] The translator notes that as he was unable to pin down the appropriate context for this discussion, much of the translation here is uninformed.

[99] On haptic and the following distinctions, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* pp. 154-156 and 195 note 2. The reference is to the second edition of Riegl's *Late Roman Art History,* trans. Rolf Winkes (1901; 2nd ed., Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 1985).

[100] Deleuze ends *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* with these words: "But the fact itself, this pictorial fact that has come from the hand, is the formation of a third eye, a haptic eye, a haptic vision of the eye, this new clarity. It is as if the duality of the tactile and the optical were surpassed visually in this haptic function born of the diagram" (p. 161).

[101] Deleuze cites Gauguin (without specific reference) in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* p. 55, as "The eye, insatiable and in heat".

[102] The original has *les blancs se disjoignent*, interpreted here as a typo.

[103] Henri Maldiney, *Espace, parole, regard* (Lausanne: Éditions l'Age d'homme, 1973).

[104] Let us note the effort here to avoid translating *ton* as "tone." In most contexts in English, tone specifically refers to a shade of color—you obtain different tones by adding black to a color (as opposed to adding white in order to obtain different tints). So far, this sentence makes the best case against using "tone." Doing so would render these two different scales/ranges synonymous: a range of different "tones" would be none other than a range of different "values" in color. In nearly all cases, "color" or "hue" is a better equivalent for Deleuze's *ton*.

[105] "The boundaries of bodies are the least of all things […] Wherefore O painter! *do not surround your bodies with lines*, and above all when representing objects smaller than nature..." From *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci,* ed. Jean Paul Richter, vol 1 of 2 (New York: Dover, 2012), 49. Manuscript pagination. Emphasis added.

[106] These terms are treated in a more general way, but one could alternatively understand them as references to titles of paintings.

[107] See *The Eye Listens,* trans. Elsie Pell (Port Washington, NY: Philosophical Library, 1950), 42, a reference to a curtain "raised for an instant[,] ready to fall again" that makes its way into the book on Francis Bacon.

[108] Deleuze may not be quoting Claudel *verbatim,* but here he comes closer. In *L'oeil écoute,* Claudel calls Dutch still-life *un arrangement en train de se défaire.* For reference, see the 1950 translation by Elsie Pell: "Dutch still-life is an arrangement in imminent danger of disintegration", p. 48.

[109] See *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* p. 182 note 5.

[110] We should note that in contrast to Deleuze's detailed consideration of Goethe's color theory here, he only makes passing references to Goethe in his brief presentation of color theory in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* (New York and London: Continuum, 2003), pp. 132-134, 139-140, and 191 note 14.

[111] Goethe's *Purpur* (which Deleuze calls here *pourpre*) predates the introduction of the word "magenta." There's precedent for retrofitting Goethe's color wheel to include magenta instead of "pure red." I'm putting words in both Goethe's and Deleuze's mouths, making them say "magenta" or "red" for *Purpur/pourpre* and "purple" for *violet,* for the sake of clarity.

[112] Let us note that *primitive* is rendered as as "primary" when it appears alone; here, however, "primitive" is retained because it appears alongside *primaire.* This is to avoid misleading the reader into thinking Deleuze has special plans for this term or is drawing a meaningful distinction between the two terms.

[113] Deleuze is working through an illustration. No dotted line in any available sources, but presumably the color wheel he's drawn or is looking at has dotted lines running along the different chords (as Deleuze describes them below).

---

[114] Cf. §§816-7 of Goethe's *Zur Farbenlehre*.
[115] *Ibid.*, §§826-9.
[116] In *Francis Bacon. Logic of Sensation,* Deleuze pays considerable attention to "colorism" and color: see pp. 139-143 as well as chapter 16, "Note on Color".
[117] While we are unable to locate this exact quote, the closest is a line often featured in books on painting, color and optics from the early 20th century: *"Donnez-moi de la boue, j'en ferai la peau d'une Vénus"* (Give me some mud and I'll make of it the skin of Venus). This may actually do a better job of serving Deleuze's point. While some painters despaired over gray, muddy colors (Delacroix calls gray the enemy of the painter), he boasts that he can bring out beautiful colors from even the muddiest gray.
[118] "Flatness" is far and away the most common translation for *planéité*. "Planarity" is much less common and a bit clunkier in English, although it preserves "plan," for the sake of readers tracking plan/plane in Deleuze's career. The term "flatness" is chosen here because it is Greenberg's term: "The irreducible essence of pictorial art consists in but two constitutive conventions or norms: flatness and the delimitation of flatness." Clement Greenberg, "After Abstract Expressionism," *Art International* 6.8 (October 1962), 30.
[119] Supports/Surfaces congealed as a group in the French political turmoil of the late '60s. It was patched together out of loosely connected painters from Southern France (André-Pierre Arnal, Vincent Bioules, Noël Dolla, Toni Grand, Bernard Pages, Patrick Saytour, Viallat,) and from Paris (Louis Cane, Marc Devade, Jean-Pierre Pincemin, Valensi and Daniel Dezeuze) who all shared a common interest in rejecting the status quo of the second School of Paris. Beyond their geographical differences, they all agreed on the fact that practice (painting) should go hand in hand with theory (writing, or critical thinking), but the southerners foregrounded practice where the Parisians emphasized theory and political activism. Even before the group's name was coined, their work had developed into a critique of Paris's centralized art system and comfortable esthetics. It is worth noting that before they briefly made it on the Parisian art scene as a group, most of the artists were "provinciaux"-- mainly from the southeastern cities of Montpellier and Nice -- a term used more or less derogatorily in French to designate someone who is not up to speed with the latest trends. This conflictual dynamic between Parisians and Provincials was very much at the forefront of the members' relationships, and when the group eventually fell apart in 1972, it did so along that particular fault line.
[120] For consistency: "flattening" of space, if *planéité* is "flatness." "Planification" is an option, but its only justification would be that it highlights the *plan* common to *planéité* and *planification.* The same effect is attempted by italicizing the word "planning," and "planning" is the strongest choice by cluing the reader into the relationship between *plan* terms, and it also communicates something happening in the French: the simultaneous use of different meanings of *plan*—as both "plane" and "plan."
[121] Word missing in transcript.
[122] https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/artworks/la-belle-angele-286.
[123] Here "field" is used for *aplat*, for lack of a better term. As above, an ideal translation would communicate the "flat" in *à plat/aplat,* in association with *planéité* and *planification.* "Flat area of color," "flattened color," and other similar phrases are sometimes used for *aplat,* but these weigh Deleuze's analysis down in other parts of the seminar.
[124] Deleuze cites Merleau-Ponty in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 178 note 1, from *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), pp. 207-42.
[125] While there are several references to flesh and skin in Goethe's text, a precise match for Deleuze's quote is not present. However, *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, the discussion of Gaugin's "La Belle Angèle" and Van Gogh's postman paintings precedes consideration of flesh in different artists' work, notably Bacon, pp. 140-143.
[126] The French term is often preserved in English. "Partitioning" might also work.
[127] This might be an error. The reference earlier was to "flatness [*planéité*] and the determination of flatness," but here he says "linearity." The context here increases the doubt: if we're talking about how, for the Egyptians, form and ground occupy the same plane, that seems to be a question of "flatness" rather than "linearity."
[128] The translator notes that as he was unable to pin down the appropriate context for this discussion, much of the translation here is uninformed.
[129] On haptic and the following distinctions, see *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, pp. 154-156 and 195 note 2. The reference is to the second edition of Riegl's *Late Roman Art History,* trans. Rolf Winkes (1901; 2nd ed., Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 1985).
[130] Deleuze ends *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation* with these words: "But the fact itself, this pictorial fact that has come from the hand, is the formation of a third eye, a haptic eye, a haptic vision of the eye, this new clarity. It is as if the duality of the tactile and the optical were surpassed visually in this haptic function born of the diagram" (p. 161).

---

[131] Deleuze cites Gauguin (without specific reference) in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 55, as "The eye, insatiable and in heat".
[132] The original has *les blancs se disjoignent*, interpreted here as a typo.
[133] Henri Maldiney, *Espace, parole, regard* (Lausanne: Éditions l'Age d'homme, 1973).
[134] Let us note the effort here to avoid translating *ton* as "tone." In most contexts in English, tone specifically refers to a shade of color—you obtain different tones by adding black to a color (as opposed to adding white in order to obtain different tints). So far, this sentence makes the best case against using "tone." Doing so would render these two different scales/ranges synonymous: a range of different "tones" would be none other than a range of different "values" in color. In nearly all cases, "color" or "hue" is a better equivalent for Deleuze's *ton*.
[135] "The boundaries of bodies are the least of all things […] Wherefore O painter! *do not surround your bodies with lines*, and above all when representing objects smaller than nature..." From *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, ed. Jean Paul Richter, vol 1 of 2 (New York: Dover, 2012), 49. Manuscript pagination. Emphasis added.
[136] These terms are treated in a more general way, but one could alternatively understand them as references to titles of paintings.
[137] See *The Eye Listens*, trans. Elsie Pell (Port Washington, NY: Philosophical Library, 1950), 42, a reference to a curtain "raised for an instant[,] ready to fall again" that makes its way into the book on Francis Bacon.
[138] Deleuze may not be quoting Claudel *verbatim*, but here he comes closer. In *L'oeil écoute*, Claudel calls Dutch still-life *un arrangement en train de se défaire*. For reference, see the 1950 translation by Elsie Pell: "Dutch still-life is an arrangement in imminent danger of disintegration", p. 48.
[139] See *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 182 note 5.
[140] The translation option is for "regime of color" as it appears in Daniel W. Smith's translation of *Francis Bacon. Logique de la sensation* (*The Logic of Sensation* [New York and London: Continuum, 2002)] and also in order to echo Deleuze and Guattari's "regime of signs," found elsewhere, notably in *A Thousand Plateaus*.
[141] This is "gesso".
[142] The transcript has "echoes immédiates" in quotes to indicate Deleuze's emphasis which we retain, although it is unclear if Deleuze was indeed citing a specific term.
[143] This is "gesso sottile".
[144] The terminology around color in both French and English can be ambiguous or inconsistent across different related fields—e.g., in art, colorimetry, etc. For example, *teinte* may be translated as "shade" or "tint," terms with opposite meanings in English: an artist obtains different "shades" of red by adding black and different "tints" of red by adding white. Based on the four-part model Deleuze is working with, it's a safe bet that he means *teinte* according to another of its possible translations: "hue", the "pure" color of a pigment without any added white or black (i.e., *not* a tint or shade of the color). According to this latter usage, *teinte* is opposed to *ton* (the modification of a hue, e.g., tint or shade). *Ton*, in turn, has multiple translations. The practice here aims for consistency in translating *ton*, *teinte*, and so on. The only exceptions are when a particular translation might mislead the reader; in such cases, the safe recourse is to use "color", when differences in value, etc., do not figure into Deleuze's analysis.
[145] While "schema" is arguably less natural, it is best to avoid "diagram" due to the latter's place in Deleuze's work.
[146] This was a model specified by the Association Française de Normalisation (AFNOR)—the standards have since changed. It's been pointed out that some of these terms—*rabattu* and *lavé*, for example—do not square easily with more conventional ways of talking about color. Here the choice is for "muted" and "washed-out," respectively. See Christian Molinier, "Les adjectifs de couleur en français. Eléments pour une classification," in *Revue Romane* (36.2, 2001), pp. 193-206, specific reference, p. 204n8.
[147] It is unclear what colorimetric formula Deleuze is discussing here as it doesn't quite line up with Grassman's laws in optics, nor with any other evident account of the dominant wavelength method of describing perceived colors. However, taking Deleuze at his word, perhaps he is only describing a basic premise or principle of such analysis rather than the analysis itself. Color science does assume that spectral colors have complex profiles, and the dominant and complementary wavelengths of the hues reflected by any given object share a so-called "white point" in common. Color science aside, the choice here is to preserve the formulas in the session as they appear, reformatted in the notes to parse more easily as formulas, $fTfd+fw$.
[148] Probably: $fl = fw + fld$.
[149] $fr + fg + fb$ or $fr + fg + fb$.
[150] Deleuze may have meant *gesso* in general, but he also may mean the practice of applying a second layer of slaked plaster—*gesso sottile*—atop a first layer of "rough," unslaked plaster—*gesso grosso*.
[151] Xavier de Langlais, *La Technique de la peinture à l'huile* (Paris : Flammarion, 1959).

---

[152] When Deleuze says *en respectant les lignes de l'ébauche*, it is possible that he is talking about "underdrawing" rather than "underpainting." Along the same lines, "sketch" is a viable candidate. Van Eyck did use both underpaintings and underdrawings in his work. However, the translation remains "underpainting" as it is a frequent translation for *ébauche* vis-à-vis painting.

[153] The typical translation for *repentir* in English is the Italian term, *pentimento*. One could make the case for breaking the word down into inaccurate but perhaps informative segments: to "re-paint," which gets across the method of working with the oils, wet-on-wet, directly on the canvas. How this would lose the perspective of *pentimento* as an actual technical term—for example, the "fifth leg" discussed below is a classic example of *pentimento,* but is not as easily connected to "repainting."

[154] The *cinquième pâte* ("fifth paste") should no doubt be *cinquième patte* ("fifth leg"). It should be noted, however, that a horse's legs are not typically referred to as *pattes.* See, for example, the description of x-ray and microscopic evidence of just such a *pentimento* present in Rembrandt's *Portrait of Frederik Rihel on Horseback*, in David Bomford, Ashok Roy, and Axel Rüger, "Works by Rembrandt," in *Rembrandt,* eds. David Bomford, Jo Kirby, Ashok Roy, Axel Rüger, and Raymond White (London: National Gallery Company, 2006), 184ff.

[155] One finds a good account of Caravaggio's innovative use of ground and drawing in Phoebe Dent Weil's "Technical Art History and Archeometry II: Exploration of Caravaggio's Painting Techniques," in *Revista Brasileira de Arqueometria, Restauração e Conservação* 1.3 (2015), 106-10, in particular, p. 107.

[156] See *https://www.artbible.info/art/large/44.html* (accessed July 16, 2022).

[157] "Susannah and the Elder", 1647; see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susanna_and_the_Elders_%28Rembrandt%29.

[158] See Cézanne's *Correspondance,* ed. John Rewald (Paris: Grasset, 1978), and Deleuze, *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, p. 187 note 2.

[159] This is probably a reference to Balzac's *Le Chef d'oeuvre inconnu* (The Unknown Masterpiece), 1831.

[160] While an exact source for this Sam Francis quote, especially for the claims that Comtesse suggests, is not easily found, there is an interview where Francis claims that he uses "all kinds of 'colors' to make the 'form' white," and another where he claims that red "contains every other color," and another where he calls blue "the most primitive color." For some of Francis's comments on color, see Debra Burchett-Lere and Aneta Zebala, *Sam Francis: The Artist's Materials* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2019), pp. 64-65.

[161] See session 6 of this seminar in which Deleuze develops this chromatic circle at great length.

[162] Gowing, see note 25.

[163] Deleuze cites—roughly, since it's likely from memory—a moment from Ambroise Vollard, *Paul Cézanne* (Paris: Editions G. Crès, 1914), 129. While Cézanne was working on Vollard's portrait, the latter comments on a few blank spots in the painting. As it appears in Vollard's original text: "Si ma séance […] est bonne, […] peut-être demain trouverai-je le ton juste pour boucher ces blancs. Comprenez un peu, monsieur Vollard, si je mettais là quelque chose au hasard, je serais force de reprendre tout mon tableau en partant de cet endroit!" Deleuze swaps out *quelque chose au hazard* for *mélange* and improvises the rest of the quote.

[164] Lawrence Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensation", in *Conversations with Cézanne,* ed. Michel Doran, trans. Julie Lawrence Cochran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 180-212. See also Deleuze, *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation,* pp. 117-121.

[165] The translation choice her, for *aplat,* is "field," in keeping with Daniel Smith's translation of *Logique de la sensation.* If not for Deleuze and Guattari's extensive use of *bloc,* "block" might be recommended as a possible translation for *aplat*—some English discussion of Van Gogh's interest in Japanese prints, for example, refers to his uninterrupted fields of color as "blocks," so there is some precedence.

[166] This text was probably Schopenhauer's 1816 *On Vision and Colors*, trans. E.F.J. Payne, ed. David E. Cartwright (Berg; London: Bloomsbury, 1994).

[167] See Josef Albers, *Interaction of Color* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 44. Albers's account of Schopenhauer is found on pp. 43-44.

[168] It appears that Deleuze is calling Gauguin an "arbitrary colorist," but it may be that it is *Van Gogh* who describes his approach to color as "arbitrary" (as opposed to faithfully coloring his subject "as it appears"). See Van Gogh's letter 520 to Theo (in *Complete Letters of Vincent Van Gogh,* trans. C. de Dood [London: Thames & Hudson, 1958] vol. 3, p. 6).

[169] On these distinctions regarding color, see the chapter 16, "Note on Color" in *Francis Bacon. The Logic of Sensation*, notably pp. 149-150.