

Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on Painting, 1981

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Transcriptions: [Voix de Deleuze](#), Part 1, Cécile Lathuillière (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 me 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 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 come up with more identifiers? 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*.¹

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 skin-depth 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.² 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*.³

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.”⁴ 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.”⁵ 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: on one hand, likeness is not what defines analogy and analogical language, it's modulation. Rousseau was absolutely right; analogical language is a language of modulation. On the other hand, 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 distinction they draw, Bateson in particular, in particular his first book, *Naven*,⁶ 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*].⁷ 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. Whereas, they say, 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."

They give an example, a very famous example. They say, analogical language might be, not simply an animal's cry. But in terms of humans, it might be a smile. And they say 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 equivocality 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 voice, only it isn't linguistic. The voice, that is, 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. It's what pragmatic theory does not explain, just how this voice'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; it needs to be added to our work, so we'll add it.

Anne Querrien: I've read the texts that Comtesse mentions, and I believe that we would have to put this differently to have them better correspond to what you are doing. 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, er, the disjunctive synthesis [*she corrects herself*] ...

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 form of legality, which I would 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: Ah yes, completely... yes, you're right; energy is everywhere.

Anne Querrien: ... the first law of thermodynamics; organic legality, is the second law; and modulation is the third law that we are in the process of ... [*inaudible words*]

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

Richard Pinhas:⁸ I just want to cut in here, because I haven't developed it. From a simple practical or scientific point of view [*inaudible word*], whatever language you use -- and you learn it in first year in computer science, and all the way to the most recent developments -- 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].⁹

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 with "or". 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 primary computer, from the very simple early microprocessors to the most complex, the most complicated computers using the most complicated military language, it basically works as grounded in exclusions. And it's impossible for these to work grounded in [*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 woman student: I would like to recall a text by Thom that might be useful for us. There's a recent text by René Thom in which 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 [substantives].

Deleuze: Based on...?

The student: On [substantives], 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 [verb] and would be, for example, dependence.¹⁰

Deleuze: Right, yes, yes.

The student: We can say that the first analogy is responsible, founded in the substantive; 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: I have an objection about your first form of analogy...

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

Parnet: Not permitted!

The student: Because when you speak of conveying likeness, whether a likeness in relation or likeness in quality, what we would normally think of is a semantic analogy, which would be a conveyance of quality, as opposed to what would be relation-based analogy, and thus would be syntactical. 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.

Deleuze: I didn't say that.

The student: What defines them is their internal structure, so that has to change.

Deleuze: No. I don't think so.

Parnet: Well, really, 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. So that would work out without us having to change thing. 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: I find myself in deep disagreement with you:¹¹ 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* – except through a 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, accepting instead an idea that strikes me as total ideology, namely, making symptoms depend on a circular causality of interpersonal interactions.

Anne Querrien: [*Inaudible comments, disagreeing with Comtesse*]

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. [*Pinhas tries to respond*] Yes. But that's actually really helpful for explaining what articulation is.

Pinhas: But it's not a theoretical model. What has to be understood is that the theoretical model results from practical data [*indistinct 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 COBOL [*other indistinct names of 1980s software*] that are used today, are derived from these laws. I mean, at a later moment, 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 a double articulation, which we don't necessarily see with analog.

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

Pinhas: Systematically you find, in every metalanguage, that is, in every operational computer language, whether for medical use or for military 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 some technological applications to see if our concept of modulation is off to a good start. 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 what’s known as *data*. 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 what’s known as *data*. 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 discernible 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 analog¹² 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. It's that digital methods only authorize mathematical, countable, deferred time, while analog methods authorize what is one of their defining characteristics, one of their innate characteristics, in addition to the ones you described: real time.

Deleuze: In a way it's the same as saying, yes, that follows from... It's not the same thing. You're correct, but that follows directly from the idea of a principle of production that's just as discernible as the product. Henceforth, 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 in computer terms, 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 19...¹³ [Interruption of the recording] [1:03:40]

... 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*.¹⁴ 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."¹⁵ 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. And on these displays, 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 [*inaudible words*] by combining red, green... There will be an entirely different image, without black holes.

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: Wouldn't this be like fiction, in Philip K. Dick, who describes advertisements coming from the future, which would be messages grafted onto kind of amoebas, crystals, like some sort of Martian, and that work like that, by coming into your home and constantly repeating their message?

Deleuze: What a time to be alive! *[Laughter]*

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 impulses: 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 networks have been created, 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 Rieg. Because his contribution to aesthetics is indisputable. And, in particular, some of his analyses focused on Egyptian space. I'll list Rieg'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 they move from Egypt into Greece. Another really great book from Rieg: *The Group Portraiture of Holland*. Finally, there's what's thought to be his main work, *Late Roman Art Industry*.¹⁶ 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 Rieg'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 Rieg 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 Rieg. The first characteristic, one of Rieg's basic ideas, is that art is never defined by what one *can* do but by what one *wants* to do. At art's core there is a *will*.¹⁷ 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 Rieg 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? Rieg'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":¹⁸ 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, the formula for Egyptian art is to use the contour that isolates form onto a plane. The contour that isolates form onto a plane—let's take that literally—you sense that it all comes down to space: what is this *planned* or flattened [*planifié*] space? In fact, it is depth; from relations in space come variations, variations emerge, becoming emerges. Here, open spatial relationships are suppressed, giving way to a *planning* or flattening [*planification*] of the surface. There are no more relations; the aesthetic relationship is the one on the plane [*sur le plan*].¹⁹ So, on the plane, the contour isolates the form of 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 is it translated? 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 modeling, 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*]. What would prove this? 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 Riegel 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. Riegel 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 Riegel 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 Riegel—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 [Egyptian] clothing²⁰ 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 [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.²¹ 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 longer 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 Riegel 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 Pernet [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, [it's the halo].²² 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 a thing 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 it modern in Bacon's work? It'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, through these three elements, in 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."²³ 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.²⁴ "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."²⁵

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.²⁶

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 related 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 flattened out. No easy task to flatten the world out, 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.²⁷ 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.”²⁸

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 why 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 ground 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]

Notes

¹ 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.

² Deleuze refers here to considering Buffon and molds in session 11 of the Spinoza seminar, 17 February 1981.

³ 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).

⁴ In the seminar, Deleuze quotes Simondon as saying they're "deux extrêmes 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).

⁵ See the preceding note.

⁶ Gregory Bateson, *Naven: A Survey of the Problems suggested by a Composite Picture of a New Guinea Tribe drawn from Three Points of View* (1936; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965). [Reference furnished with our gratitude by David Lapoujade, *Sur la peinture* (Paris: Minuit, 2023)]

⁷ 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.”

⁸ 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)”.

⁹ According to David Lapoujade, *Sur la peinture*, Deleuze here says "rather than 1 and 0", but the sounds from Deleuze do not at all correspond to these two digits, hence leaving an unclear ending.

¹⁰ We place in brackets these terms which the student has mistakenly transposed, i.e., saying “verbs” first, “substantives” second, whereas the order is reversed, as we have done. [Reference furnished with our gratitude by David Lapoujade, *Sur la peinture* (Paris: Minuit, 2023)]

¹¹ Given the context of this discussion, it is likely that Comtesse's disagreement is addressed to Querrien and not Deleuze.

¹² For the most part, *analogique* remains here 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 earlier), there's good reason to have *analogique* as “analogic.” In fact, Watzlawick himself discusses the difference between so-called “digital” and “analogic” language.

¹³ Possibly the 1930s, with the development of binary code. [Reference furnished with our gratitude by David Lapoujade, *Sur la peinture* (Paris: Minuit, 2023)]

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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 consciens.” 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.

¹⁶ 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).

¹⁷ What Riegl calls *Kunstwollen*.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ *Sur le plan* can also be interpreted to mean “in the plan,” “according to plan.”

²⁰ Given the end of the preceding paragraph, it is likely Deleuze means “Egyptian”, both for the clothing and bodies, instead of “Greek” which he inserts.

²¹ “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.

²² An addition suggested by David Lapoujade's transcription for *Sur la peinture*, based on the context.

²³ See David Sylvester, *The Brutality of Fact: with Francis Bacon Interviews* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987), p. 83, 114.

²⁴ 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*.

²⁵ 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).

²⁶ The reference is to Bacon's 1953 *Man With Dog*.

²⁷ 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.

²⁸ This reference is from *Conversations with Cézanne*, ed. Michael Doran, trans. Julie Lawrence Cochran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 178.