

## **Gilles Deleuze**

### **Seminar on Cinema and Thought, 1984-1985**

#### **Lecture 10, 22 January 1985 (Cinema Course 76)**

**Transcription: La voix de Deleuze, Charles J. Stivale (part 1) and Nadia Ouis (parts 2 and 3); additional revisions to transcription and time-stamping, Charles J. Stivale**

**English translation: Graeme Thomson & Silvia Maglioni**

*[This session is, for the most part, a series of responses by Pascale Criton to questions posed by Deleuze. Following the method he proposed in a previous session, it takes the form of a dialogue between Deleuze and the students, and in particular with an interviewee (here Criton) who has expertise in a given subject (in this case music). The transcription is problematic since Deleuze chose to place himself among the students, with Pascale Criton sitting close to the microphone in Deleuze's usual place. As a result, much of what Deleuze says and answers during the discussion is, on the whole, audible only in snatches, or can be deduced from Criton's responses. At the end of the dialogue between them (around minute 100), they return to their seats, and Deleuze's words become audible again].*

#### **Part 1**

... I insist on a very particular aspect of what constitutes an idea. What really strikes me is the extent to which ideas... when you say "I have an idea"... the extent to which ideas are actually creatures. They're living beings. They're living beings. So... the experience I have, which happens to me more and more intensely, is that as living beings, ideas... Sometimes I say, "I have a good idea", and it literally doesn't stand up. It's very rare that... for me, that's the fundamental experience of ideas. Or else, it doesn't sit up, or it won't lie down, which are not the same thing. You really have to... So, if an idea doesn't stand up, it's not that it's not good, it's that it's not yet fully developed, as if it were missing a piece. It's like that in sculpture too. An unbalanced figure is missing something, it's missing something that would change its relations... that would make it stand upright. It's like a man when he doesn't have... when he doesn't have the necessary level of stability. So, while it's all very well to say, "Long live instability!", when we say, "Long live instability!", we mean a kind of instability that strangely stands up, that holds up in a way that... well, in any case, it stands up.

I'm saying this with regard to your own work too, because I suppose you must have had the experience when you said to yourself, "Ah, well, that's not a bad idea!" and then you can spend hours on it, feeling that you can't get anything out of it, and it's only afterwards that... So that's why I insist on what a course is. In fact, a course should be about trying things out, experimenting with ideas that don't yet stand up. That's why you mustn't... that's why I always tell you, and I really think it's true, that you mustn't believe me. Don't believe me, because it's up to you, it's up to you to make them stand up. Well, this year, I've got a lot of ideas, but they're not holding up very well. So, they're hobbled, you know, they're ideas with club feet, or no feet at all. You see how tragic all this is.

And so, regarding the general theme we've been working on since the start of this term, to complete our program, you can now see what it ultimately consists in: a comparison, a comparison between two arbitrary but somehow privileged conceptions, a comparison between image-thought relations in Eisenstein, taken as a privileged example, and image-thought relations in Godard taken as another privileged example. And we were beginning to see in what sense the image-thought relation in Eisenstein could be said to be structural, and how, in Godard, it could be said to be serial, since last time we had begun to analyze the way in which Godard constitutes sequences of images in series. I already emphasized, and now I'll will do so again, that I don't use the word "structural" in the sense that this word has recently taken on in structuralism. I mean "structural" in the most ordinary sense of the term, in the sense in which Eisenstein speaks of the structure of a film. So, you might ask, in what sense? That was our question.

And my question was: Can music, among other things, be of help to us, in terms of its structural or tonal pole, and on the other hand, in terms of the serial pole, or the serial form, it took? And I'll try to explain why these two notions are, in a sense, both implicated. It's a complex question, because it doesn't mean, for example, that seriality in sound images and seriality in visual images take the same form. But despite the complexities of the question, it may enable us to move forward and to form a certain conception of the role of music in cinema itself, and of how this role varies in relation to cinematographic images. So, there's a whole tangle of problems here.

And now I'd like to go back a little to the things we looked at last time, when Richard Pinhas intervened, lending us his musical competence, and for the first time I'd like to try what I had proposed, which is not to ask someone to give a presentation but to accept to be interviewed, meaning to respond to questions according to the following rules: I ask the questions and he or she says if he thinks this is a good path to follow, and if so in what direction it can lead, or what changes need to be made for it to stand up, and in this sense he or she will be the one who makes it stand up. Or, conversely, in a hypothesis I don't dare contemplate, it will be he or she who comes to the conclusion that the whole thing doesn't stand up. Obviously, this will be where we stop and burst into tears, that's all we can do. Or else we'll figure out that we can make it stand up in another way, that we just need to change certain things. So, it's this first point that I'd like to look at now, and in a way that will be both... that won't take too long but will be enriching for everyone. That's why I've asked Pascale Criton, who has a great knowledge of music, to kindly answer some questions I'd like to pose to her.<sup>1</sup>

So, we come back to this: What difference could we establish between "structural" and "serial" in terms of images or... it's up to you... This is a major topic: What difference could we establish between the structural and the serial, both in terms of sound images in their own right and in terms of visual images in their own right? And then, following on from this, a more complicated problem: Can we conclude that there are certain variable relations between sound images and visual images? You see this is the first problem, the first problem I'd like to tackle with the help of Pascale Criton. And so, I'm asking her... Where are you? Where is she? She's disappeared. There are two possibilities: either I ask all my questions at once, or we divide the questions.

Pascale Criton: Yes...

Deleuze: Is it better to ask them separately? I think so too. Second question, I would like... I think we have to be at some distance from one another so that everyone can hear. If we're too

close, it would just be a conversation between us and no one would hear anything. Personally, I'd prefer you to come here, but if it bothers you... You can have my seat, yes, we'll swap places! But if you'd rather stay there, it's up to you.

Criton: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Will that bother you? No, I don't think it should, because you may need the blackboard. I mean, we can change again later, if you like. What do you prefer?

Criton: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: So, we swap... it won't bother me... Do you have a sheet of paper? A sheet of paper? Thanks. Do you have a pencil? There must be some pencils... Do you have two?

Student: Yes.<sup>2</sup>

Deleuze: Ah... so today I'm going to say what I'd like to say... I sometimes say to myself that it's not possible, but it is possible. We're going to consider two series, the first series of questions on structure, the second series on music. So, we won't be dealing with... we won't deal with cinema. What I'd like to do is define the structural in terms of three aspects, three aspects that coexist: the sonic structural or the faculty of hearing. I'd need three axes... [*Inaudible*] I would say that the first aspect would concern tonality strictly speaking. From there... [*Inaudible*] I'd say that a structure has either what we'd call... [*Inaudible*] or what we'd call tonic centers. That is regarding the first aspect of tonality. You... sorry, you... Tonic centers can be recognized by their power of attraction in relation to other images, sometimes... [*Inaudible*] and sometimes... [*Inaudible*], in other words, which would constitute sequences, sequences of linked images, linkages measured by their power of attraction. And that's the first point. So that's the tonality aspect.

The second aspect is resonance. We can already understand that this succession is logical, because in fact... [*Inaudible*] tonality presupposes resonance. In terms of resonance, what would I have in a structure? [*Inaudible*]... but includes resonance. How can I define resonance, or what does resonance imply? It would involve image harmonics. Image harmonics constitute relations that are commensurable. Let me remind you that... [*Inaudible*] This would give us... [*Inaudible*] commensurable relationships between the sequences, a tonic generation of sequences, that's the first point... [*Inaudible*] Second point... [*Inaudible*] second point: the intermediary of harmonics or resonances, the sequences of linked images are in commensurable relation in such a way that the cuts, the cuts between two sequences, are rational cuts or points... [*Inaudible*]

The third point, the third dimension, would be chords between... [*Inaudible*] not harmonics, but chords. The chords could be in terms of a consonant or dissonant structure, depending on whether the harmonics are near or far. Dissonant chords calling for a solution or resolution... [*Inaudible*] so that the chords... [*Inaudible*] are linkages between... through rational cuts.

Let me summarize my three points. If we go back to the first dimension, then... [*Inaudible*] the tone determines a sequence... [*Recording interrupted*] [19:43]

... a series of centered images, or a series of cuts... [*Inaudible*] We've seen that, now I can say it's a given, we may come back to it in another, in another year... We've seen that it's the

status of the movement-image... *[Inaudible]* My question is, my first question is: Can... *[Inaudible]* can we apply this schema from a musical perspective *[Inaudible]*? Can we maintain that... *[Inaudible]*?

Criton: Yes, I don't think there's anything wrong with that, a priori. There is little...

Deleuze: *[Inaudible]* ... so there's no contradiction in the case of harmonics...

Criton: No, no...

Deleuze: So, what's your reaction?

Criton: There are a few things, there are certain terms you used that I'd like to... which are a little bit...

Deleuze: Yes, yes, absolutely.

Criton: ... that I'd like to situate. When you say... Well, in the first point regarding tonality, when we have a dominant note in music, it doesn't mean that it dominates. The dominant is a function that is secondary to the tonic, and that... it's the tonic that dominates the dominant, you see? It's because of the word... yes?

Deleuze: The important thing is... *[Inaudible]*

Criton: The tonic is what establishes the distribution of the scale, meaning that the tonic has different modes. In the old modes, starting from a sound, if we take the mode for example... what corresponds, on a piano, what corresponds to the white keys. The sounds in the scale are not all the same distance from one another. There are what we call tones and semitones, and so starting from a sound in a mode... we start with a sound and then follow the order of tones and semitones as it is. Whereas when we build a scale from a tone, we redistribute the scale according to a minor or major key, rebalancing it from the center. In other words, in a mode, the first sound is not a tonal center, because this would contradict the fact that there is no tonality.

Deleuze: Yes, yes, that's perfect. Now you've just said that there would be minor and major...

Criton: I don't know because it's not...

Deleuze: This applies especially to the major, doesn't it?

Criton: No, no, because the structures of a major scale and a minor scale are not the same. In the major scale, the first third, the third sound, is further away, whereas in a minor scale, the third sound from the tonic is closer in a minor third. That's what defines a major scale and a minor scale.

Deleuze: Yes, but why... *[Inaudible]*

Criton: It's because the minor third is not, is not completely justifiable according to the acoustic physics of consonance. It introduces, it introduces... it goes against stability.

Deleuze: So... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Ah yes...

Deleuze: In other words, the minor can be induced... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, in any case, there are... yes, there are ways of using minors that are... there are sometimes ways of using minors that are to majorize them as much as possible, that is, to make them as major as possible, and when the minor is a minor, it goes by its own rules.

Deleuze: And so, if we stay... [*Inaudible*] different centers of attractive power?

Criton: Yes, the centers... but there aren't several. Well, yes, the different functions in tonality, well, there are different centers of attraction. But I think what you said one of the previous times, about the centers being more or less stable aggregates... and that the more stability and the more temperament, the greater the tonality... I think it was quite...

Deleuze: So, that was the first point... The second point... actually, what I'm trying to... [*Inaudible*] The second point would be more about harmonics than about commensurable relations and rational cuts...

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: Is that right?

Criton: Yes, that's fine. It works within the framework, you could say it works within the framework of tonality. Yes, really, because resonance, let's say, is something that reveals, among other things, the harmonics... and also many other things that concern us, for example, this morning. I think we'll need it in the future.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Well, it brings into play, in any case, all the constituent elements of sound, that is to say, the harmonics... it's the relation of whole numbers but it doesn't...

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, yes... that is, whole numbers, because harmonies are specifically periodic relations...

Deleuze: Relations...?

Criton: Well, vibrations. So, that's why it's... this equidistance and this way of producing and reproducing itself. For example, we can very well have sounds, the same sounds as harmonics, that is, the partials which...

Deleuze: Sorry, the...?

Criton: ... they're called partials, which can have the same relations but are not produced in the same way. Meaning that at certain moments, they can be almost confused, that is they can

be agents of consonance... but they are not produced by the same type of vibration, nor are they calculated in terms of periodicity. They're quite different but they enter into resonance. There are many things that enter into resonance. What we now call spectral analysis, sound analysis... the sound spectrum involves many components, the thirty-three, which are...

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]... serialism is the break with harmonics but precisely... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, but it's the break with the *tonal function* of harmonics, because after all, we can't... we can no longer say goodbye to harmonics either, we'll say that they have another sense. To say farewell to harmonics is...

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*] ... so my question is, from the moment we establish that there is no difference... [*Inaudible*] the function of harmonics... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Maybe, I don't know, that's a subjective answer. But yes, they do exist. For me, for example, if someone writes a piece of music and they compose while thinking in terms of harmonics, it's not at all the same as when they make the same sounds but produced by partials. This means that there really is a physical difference.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, perfect.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]... so, our second point, you're saying it works?

Criton: Yes, but I wanted to add something about the second point. It makes me think that, for example – how can I explain this quickly? – resonance is something that... it's like a quality, a bowl, I don't know, a mouth, which according to its position, that is to say its degree of depth, quality, pressure and opening predisposes, predisposes a certain band... what we call a frequency band. And when a sound passes through or enters into vibration with this medium, depending on the shape of the resonator, the resonance reveals the vibration. But there has to be a coincidence. For example, certain vibrations won't take shape insofar as the resonance masks them. So, resonance is really a phenomenon of passage, of continuity.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: No, because there are harmonics that appear stronger or weaker, thanks to what we call the resonance formant. Resonance formants might appear, for example... in certain types of singing, you can make – if you know the resonators well – like with faces and masks, you can make sounds appear. Why is this? Because these qualities will make them exist where they pre-exist.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*] ... but they can also be suppressed.

Criton: Oh, yes... well, that depends. We can suppress them if we... if we have the power of synthesis, if we control them.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: ... if we have the power of continuum.

Deleuze: So we manage to develop a continuity... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, you can always... it's possible to filter, to bring out what you want in the sound.

Deleuze: Very good, very good... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: Can we say that... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: To make?

Deleuze: To make the continuum.

Criton: The continuum of harmonic components? Yes. We go from one harmonic to many things. That is, it's something, if you like, that is currently reflected, for example, more in music that comes from sound decomposition made with a computer: we can heighten or reinvent sounds through spectral combinations, and we can very well play them back with an orchestra. I mean, it's not necessarily... just because you synthesize the constituents of sound doesn't mean that you're obliged to work with synthetic sound material, you can equally play it back with the orchestra.

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: I'm not familiar with that.

Deleuze: Okay, so the second point... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, they are. That's where...

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Right. Now you're moving to the second point?

Deleuze: The second point... I've gone from commensurable relations to rational, linked cuts... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, because as long as we, as long as we remain in the system of equidistant harmonics, the harmonics of whole numbers, it's clear that we're in the domain of

commensurables. We can't transform – at least I see it that way – we can't transform matter in a way that there are no rational cuts.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*] ... so the third point is this question of chords...

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*] ... and the harmonics... [*Inaudible*] and the linkages pass through two aspects... [*Inaudible*] So how do you see it? There are consonant chords, there are dissonant chords... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: You have to... Well, consonant chords are chords in which several sounds are in accord, several sounds will have intervals that have no beats, that is to say that the first harmonics of a sound, the first six harmonics of a sound... the harmonics are in the vibration of a string, a very short vibration, and what we hear, what unfolds in the octave, the fifth, the doubling of the octave, the third and the minor third, so, for the first six. So, it's the intervals I've just named, beginning from any sound, when we combine them, that constitute the consonant chords and not what we call beats. When we have chords, the relation between two sounds has no beat. The period, the phase is right. The sounds that come after this always have beats. So, there's one explanation that says it's because the spacing is smaller, and you need an interval greater than a minor third for the beat phenomenon to disappear. So certain intervals lead to what we call dissonance, meaning the presence of beats. But in tonal music, as soon as they appear, these beats – since it's the function of the non-beat relation that forms the basis of the construction – as soon as there's a beat, we have to return to the non-beat. And besides, very often, chords that have beats lead to chords that are all the more consonant, they almost amplify...

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*] ... Can we say that the beats would be like isolated irrational cuts, which must be immediately, which must be followed, if possible, as if warded off by a return to rational cuts, that is to say to chords...

Criton: Yes, because afterwards, we need to define a rational cut-off point which will mark the use of the constituents of these beats, yes.

Deleuze: [*Inaudible remarks*] ... Nothing to add there?

Criton: No... The tonal system, the intervals that have beats, are hard, tense, they are rebellious, shall we say...

Deleuze: They are what?

Criton: They are rebellious, they have... they have a degree of what we call inharmonicity, they are inharmonic. They don't fuse.

Deleuze: Can we say inharmonic?

Criton: Yes, yes, it's the degree of inharmonicity, a lack of harmony.

Deleuze: Well, all that remains is to ask whether the same is true for cinema. And precisely, there's a series, a series of sound and visual images according to... [*Inaudible*] that contrast



with one another at every point, to the point that... [Inaudible] a series of images that stand for themselves, meaning there is no... [Inaudible] In fact, you could say that it stands for itself in relation to both that which precedes and that which follows... [Inaudible] and this is the first aspect... [Inaudible] its non-tonality. So, the atonal, an expression explicitly used by Pierce... [Inaudible] That's the first characteristic. It's like saying straight off... [Inaudible]

The second aspect was the cut between a sequence or, under certain conditions, between two elements of... [Inaudible] the cut belongs to neither of the two sequences... it is distributed... [Inaudible] and they are irrational because they pertain neither to the one nor the other, and two sequences are distributed...<sup>3</sup>

Another example... [Inaudible] the visual images are interrupted not by a black screen but by visual and sound scenes... [Inaudible] and have a consistency of their own, and yet they operate a distribution of the series of images... [Inaudible]

That was the second point, namely... [Inaudible] there is no longer any commensurable relation between Eisenstein's great golden rule, there is no longer any commensurable relation. From this point on, there are only irrational cuts that pertain to neither of the two series... [Inaudible] And here we come to our question: in a way, this amounts to saying that there are no more harmonics... [Inaudible] there is no way to distinguish between close and distant harmonics.

Third aspect: the question of chords. The... [Inaudible] series this time... [Inaudible] there is no longer any privilege of concordant chords over dissonant chords... [Inaudible] there is no privilege of concordant chords over dissonant chords. Hence the practical position, this is the principal position, that there is no privileging of concordant chords over dissonant chords. [Arnold] Schoenberg's advice is, therefore, to avoid consonant chords as much as possible... [Inaudible] So, how could a chord exist? However, if it were possible to create it in the same way as false continuity... [Inaudible] serial cinema would be a cinema of false continuity... [Inaudible] in line with [Alain] Resnais's statement in *L'Année dernière à Marienbad*...<sup>4</sup>

In other words, the third characteristic of the serial image would be that it produces false continuity, or a dissonant chord... [Inaudible] a dissonant chord through relinking across an irrational cut, whereas the structural formation... [Inaudible] produced linkages by rational cut. We should consider structure as a system of linkages by rational cuts, whereas the series relinks through irrational cuts... [Inaudible] Under the conditions of the irrational cut, there is a relinkage. There's no more linkage... [Inaudible] And this is the third point. So, if we want to make... [Inaudible] what's your reaction to all this?

Criton: If I go back to... what I can give you is what it makes me think of in terms of music.

Deleuze: Absolutely, absolutely... how does it make you think in terms of music, and also... [Inaudible]

Criton: Yes, okay. So, in the formation of series, it is like that. And I'd like to point out that it really was a very rigorous effort that Schoenberg made, and for that reason too much emphasis was placed on the three tests that he needed in order to achieve this rigor, whereas he was really someone who – when you read what he wrote carefully – who had a very broad view of their application. And so later on he clearly spoke about having to work with all the constituents of sound, to get away from... from the system of harmonic relations, not to

negate harmonics, but to be able to reinsert them into something more complex. And this is what people have been working on ever since, both in their ways of thinking and writing music, and in the directions taken in research in the field of musical acoustics.

The resulting effect is to consider sound for itself, and to take it as an object in itself. That's why I was talking earlier about working on the sound spectrum. I think that from there, we can no longer, we can't... we're obliged to take into account this way of thinking about the physics of sound. Schoenberg also explained that the fact of taking sound for itself was, in an extreme way... could also mean that each sound was a tonality, that is in a vertical sense, and as a consequence, each sound might establish its own tonality, its own cadence, its own resolution, and its own internal contradictions.

Deleuze: It seems to me that this would confirm our first point... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, yes... it's a question of... I think that the fact of making series where there's no longer a hierarchy of functions is really to make the tonal center itself disappear.

Deleuze: That's right, it's a function of... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, in fact afterwards, there's really... everything that's happened... I think that since then, we haven't stopped going in this direction, and even among Schoenberg's own contemporaries, someone like [Anton] Webern really established this kind of life of sound, of each sound for itself, and of the relation... the effect of the organic relations between them, and to make what he called series of timbres, and no longer series of pitches, to make, let's say the color, the luminosity, the density of a sound stand for itself. [*Recording interrupted*] [1:01:04]

## Part 2

Deleuze: ... and yet you're not... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Absolutely, because once a sound becomes an orchestral mass, the series doesn't just apply to the... to the treatment of pitches.

Deleuze: It can be applied to timbre...

Criton: It can be applied to timbre, to rhythm, to... and it can apply to... to ways of circulating compositional rules that aren't necessarily about pitch. So, for me, this is really a crucial moment for music, and not in a restrictive sense like... not at all.

Deleuze: So, to go back to the second point can we say that there are no more... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: Which almost follows from the first point... [*Inaudible*] not only from the series or between two modifications of the series, but within the series... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: ... except in cases where you have to look at the irrational side... [*Inaudible*]

Criton: Yes, it opens up other positive centers, they're not the same. And I insist. This has a consequence, a formal consequence, since Schoenberg clearly explained that tonal movement was completely linked to the form of tonal music, that it was a necessary consequence, and so there's a visible change in form. But there's also what I'm trying to talk about here, which is the overall change, the change in the way of analyzing sound, and that's... the fact, the fact of taking all... of not worrying anymore from that point... there's a great, there's a very strong focus on the consequences of the different constituents of sounds. If we no longer have this sort of line represented by harmonic laws, something else happens, something else is constituted. So, what we need to understand is that if we replace, if we substitute or, let's say, add the concept of partials to harmonics, we enter a new world. But we also need to take into account what constitutes the spectral analysis of sound we have today. I think that this is something that would help us to avoid saying that there are harmonics in this case, and no harmonics in another, but to say what is actually there.

Deleuze: In the end, what you're criticizing me for is focusing solely on resonance... [Inaudible] and rather than speak of seriality, it would be better to describe what there is. So, I'd like you to tell us... [Inaudible] I'm very interested... [Recording interrupted] [1:05:44]

Criton: ... a fundamental case: that is, a struck note, a struck sound, gave the pitch of a sound, meaning if there are series of harmonics which are also constituents of this sound, or which unfold in its duration, the fundamental sound defined the frequency. Nowadays, we know that you can remove the fundamental sound from the pitch of a sound, or you can remove entire slices of harmonics. All that's needed is the ratio, the distance between two, between three harmonics to establish the pitch. We're not... there's no longer the sensation, first of all, of the logical or what we could call progressive staging of the fundamental, of the emanations of the fundamental, but of a constituent that is produced in terms of simultaneous relations. I don't know if that's clear...

Deleuze: [Inaudible]

Criton: No, because it's actually quite hard to conceive. And so, because of this, sounds are made up of things that are no longer necessarily major, well, it's not something we think... It's a multitude of things that make up a sound and not one dominant datum, a single datum... We didn't realize that we could dispense with these dominant ideas and retain the feeling, the sensation of the result.

Deleuze: ... you're talking about sound as a concept.

Criton: Yes, yes, yes.

Deleuze: [Inaudible] ... proposition.

Criton: So, a partial – the partials being what constitute, for example, the same pitch, the same frequency – will change color, timbre... will pass to something that might be sharp, reedy or round. For example, in a sound from a piano, what makes the piano sound well-rounded when it's properly tuned are the partials. So, these are frequencies like harmonics, but not in terms of the relation of whole numbers of the period, of the vibration. But they're also constituents of...

Deleuze: [Inaudible]... just as important, but in the end, you could say they're not harmonics.

Criton: For example, if we divide the vibration of a string into aliquot sections... *[inaudible]* we have partials. This division of the vibration gives what are called partials.

Deleuze: Does that fit in with the components of temperament?

Criton: No, no, not temperament, it's a component of the instruments. For example, certain instruments like, like a... which are percussed, have no pitch, that is to say they have no unified or unique pitch. The partials sometimes refuse to merge, to blend, and we hear... if the ear isn't used to it, it hears alternately one pitch, another, another, another, X, well three, but because there's no consonance it can't make a synthesis of the pitch. So, partials, for example, can produce that in the case of a gong, or in the case of bells, which are really partial instruments that have multiple pitches that don't resonate with one another, but remain present and independent.

Deleuze: That's great, yes.

Criton: Because it distances us from...

Deleuze: And.... *[Inaudible]* could you tell us again what you said about the subject of simultaneous relations?

Criton: Yes, but I don't remember how I introduced it.

Deleuze: Does it have anything to do with partials?

Criton: Yes. In other words, having to consider sound as having multiple constituents, *[that]* changes, the... the... *[that]* changes a lot of things, it changes everything! So, for us, at present, I think it's something... when Schoenberg says that we take sound for itself, we move towards an understanding of all the constituents of sound and not sound governed by a function, meaning the function of harmonics. We gradually enter into this... this way of considering sound on its own terms. That's where we were. And as for the cuts, there's one thing, if you say that in terms of the screen, we have the rise of the black screen and white screen, in terms of harmonics I'd say there's a rise in inharmonicity in the midst of sounds.

Deleuze: In-har-mo-ni-ci-ty... being the equivalent of the irrational cut... *[Inaudible]* in the field of music, yes? Yes or no?

Criton: Yes.

Deleuze: So, listen, thanks for that. Last point: can we say that a series is susceptible to – *[Inaudible]* let's forget about Schoenberg's supposed dryness – a series is very susceptible to numerous variations... *[Inaudible]* and this recurrence of programming... *[Inaudible]* Is it possible that, between these variations of series, there can only be what has been called relinking? Every linkage operates a relinkage, in a way that the relinkage... *[Inaudible]*

Criton: Yes, yes.

Deleuze: Can we say that, musically speaking?

Criton: Yes, definitely... it works by...

Deleuze: Indeed, the series is repeated here. From two variations, from one variation to the next, the series is repeated, even if the sounds are different. There's still a relinkage, perhaps even an irrational cut that would permit a relinkage... *[Inaudible]* Would that be the case, would it fit?

Criton: Yes, yes, and I would associate with that, I would associate with that the fact... the fact of working... I construct my line with the constituents of the sound spectrum. There's a possibility there too, because something that's been present in the approach of post-serial music, for example, in the post-serial approach to working on modes of attack, to working on modes... to working much more on the way in which the sound arises and which, in fact produce material textures, produce... It's not just about formal articulation. It's... It's not just through formal articulation. It's... And this is why we increasingly arrive at combinations and fabrications of sound that are almost paradoxical in relation to the logic... Well, not almost! Which are completely paradoxical: to make something rise while it's going down... to make things go faster when they're actually slowing down, I mean things that are completely irrational.

Deleuze: For me, it's exactly what we've been trying to define as the process of relinkage. If you compare processes of relinkage with processes of linkage, processes of relinkage are fundamentally abnormal, they are fundamentally abnormal. In the case of... *[Inaudible]* you don't relink in the same way as you linked, you can only relink. This is a very good case where, as a test... *[Inaudible]* something completely different. A relinkage is *[Inaudible]* completely different, so no linkage can *[Inaudible]*.

Student: May I ask a question?

Deleuze: A question? To her or me?

Student: To her!

Deleuze: *[Inaudible]*

Student: It was a question about partials. She said that partials become independent. But my question is this: when they become independent, do they still maintain relations with each other, or do they arise in a domain that itself becomes independent? You said that partials are instruments.

Criton: No, it's that some instruments produce partials.

Student: Yes.

Criton: All instruments, more or less, if you like, in the... in what's called consonance, which isn't just specific to tonality. Consonance exists in a lot of music, and it's not necessarily tonal. So, in consonance, the principle is that sounds enter into sympathy with one another, and in fact have a degree of kinship, of similarity that makes them merge. When they merge, it means that they begin to form a synthesis that our ear translates in the way we perceive things, as a unity. Partials don't have this quality of attraction and fusion of sound. That's why they can remain independent and simultaneous.

Student: *[Inaudible]*

Criton: So, what I'm saying is that partials have no degree of harmonicity, they don't merge the way harmonics do.

Student: So, they would just be there without orienting themselves towards something?

Criton: Exactly.

Student: And so we come back to the question of relinkage.

Deleuze: When a sound dies... *[Inaudible]* how does a sound die, as opposed to the way it is born? Is that... *[Inaudible]*?

Criton: Yes, throughout the duration of a sound, that's what we call the attack transients and the decay transients, that's the word we use, decay, there's an unfolding of the sound with certain components appearing or disappearing, and so towards the end of a sound... however this depends completely on...

Deleuze: So it depends?

Criton: It depends, it depends on the sound. However, there are partials that replace harmonics, where there is an increasingly irregular exchange. Both the beginning and end of a sound have a high degree of irregularity.

Deleuze: Yes! For me, that would be really good, because it would explain... We could say that... *[Inaudible]* the irrational cut is no longer part of the end... *[Inaudible]* so that the way in which the first series ends... and the way in which the second series begins... *[Inaudible]* necessarily assume paradoxical figures... *[Inaudible]*

Student: It's hard to grasp...

Deleuze: No! Whether it's difficult to grasp, whether it's difficult to grasp or not all depends on having the ear... *[Inaudible]* It's like in painting, it's not easy to see... to see a painting.

Student: ... paradoxical in relation to the other, okay... but paradoxical in relation to the center?

Deleuze: Both! Both, in my view, we can say both things apply because... *[Inaudible]* There's no reason why serial analysis shouldn't be... *[Inaudible]* It will be defined from this or that point of view, simply each time... *[Inaudible]*

Student: ... and the series are determined by montage... *[Inaudible]*

Deleuze: Not only. You're right, well, in principle... *[Inaudible]* not simple formulas... *[Inaudible]* That's why I'm only reacting to your remark about indeterminacy. It's not at all indeterminacy, it's a type of determination that's very, very... *[Inaudible]* there are some who proceed with great... *[Inaudible]* Another example... *[Inaudible]* I think, in a way, if we take the example of... *[Inaudible]* on the other hand... *[Inaudible]*

The same goes for Godard's pedagogical approach though his formula: lessons in things and lessons in words... *[Inaudible]* Lessons in things would be natural sciences... *[Inaudible]*

And now words, A e i o u... [Inaudible] things and sounds... [Inaudible] But in my view that's not where Godard's genius lies... [Inaudible] It's very difficult to say, in most of Godard's films, a cut that would be more important than... [Inaudible] within the sound image itself... [Inaudible]

Georges Comtesse: Godard seems to want to give birth to a cinema that is neither entirely structural nor entirely material, because it seems to me that, for example, what you very aptly call an irrational cut, an irrational image cut... You speak, for example, about the rehearsal, the rehearsal of the string quartet in *Prénom Carmen* [1983]. And it's precisely this image that, at a certain point, through the return, the repetition of this cut... well, at a certain point, the image itself, this image becomes an image of an irrational cut, a kind of point of emergence of a filmic space, of translation, but of a cut that would actually be in the image itself. That is, it would no longer be an irrational cut between a sequence of images that it would relink. It is in the irrational image-cut itself, and this image would precisely translate a cut that would be inexpressive, senseless, non-signifying, unspeakable. For example, in the famous scene of the string quartet, at some point someone says – in this image-cut, there isn't simply the musical image, meaning... [Inaudible] which is almost in close-up, there's the musical image and a kind of impudent humor in the phrase, when the voice says: "Show yourself!" and "Power of destiny". But in the senseless, non-signifying cut, the cut in the image would precisely be between the musical image and this voice, because the voice doesn't hold. First of all, it doesn't show the power of destiny, and neither does it show the music. The relinkage is made and the irrational cuts return again and again. So, it seems to me that Godard is in the process of inventing a cinema a little like [Iannis] Xenakis did with music at a certain period of serial music. Godard is in the process of inventing a cinema that is neither entirely structural nor entirely serial, but which could in some way make a translation of both structural and serial cinema.

Deleuze: Well, I think you're absolutely right, because as far as I'm concerned... [Inaudible]

Comtesse: He even makes use of a reflective category of thought, for example, from an old *Cahiers du cinéma*, where in 1959 Godard was talking about *A bout de souffle* [1960], and he was speaking about [Georges] Franju... he made a rereading of Franju where he said that the film is divided into three categories: reality-madness-realism. And he said that Franju is the one who, the closer you get to realism, the more you feel that realism, or the real in its being realism, is theater. The more, in other words, the real explodes, in the second part, the more you go towards madness. And he discovers, he says that Franju discovers the madness behind realism... [Inaudible] shown by Godard, he adds, but at the same time he rediscovers the realism behind madness in the third part. But he also said, and here's the important thing, already at the level of... as a kind of virtual prefiguration of the idea of the cut, he said that what's important is not the categories, it's not the linking or unlinking of categories, it's not simply to pass from reality to madness and from madness to show reality again in terms of another aspect. That's not what counts. What's important, he said, is what lies *between* the categories. He called it "the obscure law" that lies between... which is neither in madness, nor in reality, nor in reality seen through madness... and Franju said that this obscure law is what his cinema tries to translate but fails to do so... [Inaudible] it's already like a kind of prefiguration of what he calls a non-signifying cut that is made within the image itself, an irrational cut...

A student: [Inaudible] ... precisely regarding the role of... [Inaudible] in *Prénom Carmen*, I wanted to ask last time if... [Inaudible]

Deleuze: I can't answer that, not this time, but the next... [*Inaudible*]

Student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes... [*Inaudible*]

Student [*perhaps Hidenobu Suzuki*]: Exhausted!

Student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: [*Inaudible*] Well, many thanks, Pascale, for your responses... [*Deleuze and Criton exchange places*]

Deleuze: Well, listen, I think that was good. Well, it was good for me. So, we'll do it again, we'll do it again the next time I need to, and it won't be long before I'll need to do this again. Good! So now we've confirmed that point. You see what I called this method of speaking about things, filling in the blanks... and here we've confirmed something we discussed last time. So now we can link all this up. Pascale, I'd like you to tell me, but there's no hurry, if you can find an article or a book on partials that I would need... if there is one, if you know of one, could you give me the reference?

Criton: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Is there a specific book published in France? Will you tell me? Okay. Why don't we have a pause now? I'm exhausted, swapping roles was exhausting. It's more tiring on your side. Now I understand you better! I find it very tiring to talk, but it's even more tiring to listen. It's exhausting! I'm ready to drop, it's a real killer. So, let's have a break! [*Recording interrupted*] [1:42:16]

... How does Godard, if we take him as a prime example, how does Godard constitute his serial images, or series of images? Last time I proposed a response. A series is a series of images insofar as they are reflected in a genre or category that acts as a limit.

We need to clarify this right away. It should be relatively clear, after the examples I gave. Yes? No? First of all, let's go back to the example I gave last time: *a series of images that will be reflected in a genre or category that acts as their limit*. I think we have to stress the importance of each word. Let me remind you of the examples... anyway, how indeed... it's almost a Godard signature, this way of working. I would say that to understand this, we first have to see what we mean by a genre or category. And I think that with Godard, it can be anything. It therefore designates a function more than the nature of things.

It can be anything that plays the role of category. And, as I said, it can be aesthetic genres... an aesthetic genre, in the sense that we say that *Une femme est une femme* [1961] is a musical comedy, the genre of musical comedy. It can be the genre of theatre, and in fact scenes of theater, of improvised theater – undoubtedly this is very important – occur very often in Godard's films. An example is *Pierrot le fou* [1965]. It can be more classical and highbrow genres like the epic, in the sense that the Homeric epic is clearly involved in *Le Mépris* [1963]. It can be that kind of genre. Or it can be, as I was saying, graphic inscription, hence the importance of graphic slogans, sometimes even with electronic effects on the graphics that introduce a further change of category through this interplay of electronics. Obviously,



none of these elements are mutually exclusive. It can be an aesthetic genre and a form of graphic inscription at the same time.

And, as I said, in a third case it can be people. In which case the category is personalized. The genre is personalized. And I pointed out that people can be of three kinds: people interviewed because of their knowledge. A typical example is *Vivre sa vie*. But other times it's no longer people by virtue of their knowledge, it's burlesque figures. It's the burlesque figure that plays the role of category, which Godard introduces. *Pierrot le fou*, as I was saying, includes a large number of theatrical scenes, a theatricalization which also includes burlesque figures, two great burlesque figures: the interventions of [Raymond] Devos and the Queen of Lebanon. And finally, and this is very interesting, there can be secondary or anonymous characters, simple extras who suddenly present themselves on screen and declare who they are.

Or else it could be colors. And I ended there, with an analysis of the wonderful *Lettre à Freddy Buache* [1982], which is not a letter but a film, a film by Godard, a little film by Godard on Lausanne, in which the very definition I gave of the series is entirely justified, since the sequence of images – it's a commission – which was supposed to be, which should have been *about* Lausanne... and which Godard will transform, but how? He will transform it in a serial manner. In other words, he will reflect the sequence of images of Lausanne in terms of two colors, two individual colors, not two general colors, the blue of high Lausanne and the green of terrestrial and aquatic Lausanne. So, we have celestial Lausanne, and terrestrial and aquatic Lausanne. And it's through this reflection of images in terms of color, with the added problem of a third dimension, which will be gray, that the problem of urban planning emerges from the series.

I won't go into that again but I'd like to add a few... I'd like to add a few necessary follow-up remarks. If you agree with my definition of the series, there are a few things, or even several, that we must be wary about. The first thing is: What's the point of this? What is gained by it? I'll tell you what is gained. It's this: all art, by definition, *has always struggled against its subject*. And this may be the first time we've come across this question, but it's one that will be very important for us, and at the same time it fits well with the subject it's dealing with. And no doubt all art, I believe, feels the need to be about something, anything, and at the same time to detach itself in some way, or to prevent the thing that it deals with from becoming its subject. One doesn't write, one doesn't paint, one doesn't make films *about* a subject.

How do we break with the subject? Let's take this seriously: Godard was literally commissioned – he's a specialist in unfulfilled commissions... his life, I believe, is full of unfulfilled commissions – not because he doesn't complete them, on the contrary he completes them, but in such a way that the guys don't recognize what they've commissioned. Which, of course, makes Godard happy, but with a kind of wicked joy. Godard was commissioned to make a film *about* Lausanne. They ordered a film *about* Lausanne. And he said, I can't make a film *about* something. So, what did he do? He didn't make a film about Lausanne, that was too much for him. He *reflected* Lausanne in blue and green, in blue and green... [Recording interrupted] [1:51:37]

### Part 3

... And he criticizes a certain number of the critics' judgments of *Les carabiniers* [1963]. And he laughs and says, well, yes, what he's saying is... it's funny, but he's saying that he thinks *Les carabiniers* is a film *about* war. So, I'll read it to you anyway, as it suits us almost too well, you might even be suspicious.<sup>5</sup>

For example, one critic who shall remain nameless: “As for the horrors of war, we find the way they are evoked not only awkward but embarrassing and hurtful; the caricature doesn't become satire as he'd hoped, our laughter freezes...” and so on. And he [Godard] says: No, that's not it. I'll read his text... He says: “I assumed that children had to be told not only what war is, but what all wars were, from the invasions to Korea or Algeria” – there's no better way to put it – “so I form a category”, a category. For example: the first shots of war [in *Les carabiniers*] are, in order: a battleship, Ulysses and Michelangelo, the two heroes, an airplane. Why is this? Well, because there's the army of the sea, the army of the land, and the army of the air. Why in that order? To give the idea that Ulysses and Michelangelo, the two foot-soldier heroes of the regular army, are already framed, framed by the air force and the navy. Each shot, each sequence, therefore corresponded to a precise “idea”. I hardly change anything by calling it a category. So, two points, he gives examples, we've seen the first series... so we have a first series: land... no, sorry, sea, land, air.

Second series: the ideas of war. He doesn't put them in the proper order, he hasn't thought his text through very well, we could... the Occupation, the Russian campaign, the regular army, the Partisans. So here you have these Godard-style categories.

Or a specific feeling: violence, rout, the absence of passion – in fact, here we have men who do their job of killing, like a daily job that's a bit boring – the absence of passion, derision, disorder, surprise, void, but all this is grouped under feelings – here his thinking is rather base but it doesn't matter. Or a fact – you see, we already have a first series, which I'll summarize – or a fact, a specific phenomenon, noise, silence, and so on. In other words, what is he trying to tell us? He's saying: I didn't make a film *about* war. I didn't make a film about war, but – something quite different – I filmed the *categories* of war. And this is exactly it: I filmed the categories of war. And each sequence of images will form a series, insofar as it is reflected in a category.

If I go back to Godard's text – and I've hardened it a little here – but if I go back to it, what are the categories of war according to this text?

First category: the nature of the armies involved: air-sea-land.

Second category of war: actions, actions undertaken. I'd say, correcting him slightly: invasion, occupation, resistance – these are the categories of war. I mean, what he wanted to do in cinema was what [Carl von] Clausewitz did in philosophy. Clausewitz came up with and invented astonishing categories of war, by which war was to be understood in a certain way. Godard claims to be doing something similar. So, you see the second category: the operations of war.

Third category: the feelings of war. Right. We could add many more categories. Each sequence of images will be reflected in a category, and so you'll have a serial cinema that has warded off the danger of being either a war film or a film about war. It's neither a war film nor a film about war, which brings us back to our definition: a sequence of images that reflect themselves in a genre or category, which will act as their limit, which will act as their limit,

we know it's very important to specify, but now I don't even feel the need to do so. In the case of a series, this limit is an irrational cut.

And what does this mean? It means something quite simple: *the images don't belong to the category in which they are reflected*. The images do not belong to the category or genre in which they are reflected; the category or genre are the *limits* of these images, from which another sequence or series of images will be launched, tending towards another category that will in turn function as a limit. What does this mean? It means that when we say, *Une femme est une femme* is a musical comedy, we're talking out of turn. In a certain sense, it's absolutely not a musical. Musical comedy will be the genre in which the sequence of images is reflected. But the sequence of images does not belong to the musical. In other words – we're making progress now – *the genre or category is not constitutive*.

Indeed, the heroine carries out a daily activity, and it is as if at the end of quotidian series that she begins to dance for herself. She begins to dance for herself at the limit, at the extreme limit of a quotidian sequence, *she embodies the condition of dance*. The category of the musical acts as an irrational cut, as the limit of the sequence of images. In a musical, the genre is constitutive of the images, the genre and category are constitutive of the images they subsume.

In Godard's serial method, the images tend towards a limit, but the category... they don't belong to the category, the category is not constitutive. What can we say of a category that is not constitutive? We will say that it's *reflective*. So, in the definition I was proposing, a series of images that are reflected in a genre that will act as their limit, we must attach the utmost importance to the term "reflected". The genre is not constitutive, the category is not constitutive, it is reflexive.

Comtesse: I'd like to make a very brief comment. In *Une femme est une femme*, there's this passage of the limit, this *mise en scène*, either of dance or... [*Inaudible remark*] theatricality, where it's not simply a series of attitudes... [*Inaudible remark*] In *Une femme est une femme*, she constructs her own *mise en scène* through dance... [*Inaudible remark*] she sings the way they do in American musicals at the very moment when she reaches an almost irreversible point of disappointment in her compulsive desire to have a child.

Deleuze: Yes, absolutely.

Comtesse: Likewise, the young woman in the stroll/ballad scene in *Pierrot le fou*, it's when she reaches a state of boredom...

Deleuze: Absolutely.

Comtesse: And these are very precise affects of Godard's cinema, and that's what provokes the *mise en scène*.

Deleuze: Right, which is to say – in the operation of theatricalization, densification/dancification and so on... it's a kind of theatricalization that takes place. Like the continuation of a series, which itself is oriented by a major question: I want a child, or in another case, I'm bored, I don't know what to do, and so on.

So, if I try to analyze a typical example in the same vein, in *Vivre sa vie*, if I go back to the Brice Parain episode, which is a typical case, though it's the only case where Godard brings in a philosopher, what happens? There's the great scene where the heroine Nana meets this strange guy who's reading, and who is Brice Parain. Brice Parain is a philosopher who has devoted his entire body of work to the problem of the relation between life and language. If I try to summarize very briefly – and you'll always learn something, if you don't know – but if I try to summarize Brice Parain's theses, they consist in telling us this, philosophically speaking: you know, speaking isn't living. Those who believe that speaking and living are one and the same don't understand anything about language, and what's more, they're very dangerous. They are the dialecticians. One of Brice Parain's most beautiful books is a hundred or so pages called *Sur la dialectique*<sup>6</sup> in which he attacks dialectics quite violently, because he says that dialectics is defined by the following – obviously, he's referring to Hegelian dialectics – it believes that it's life that speaks. But it's never life that speaks. Life is a silent, obstinate, stubborn power that cannot bear speech.

So, in a way *to speak is to break with life*. It's breaking with life, you see, it's very simple; and he gives us the proof, namely that *to speak is always to make a supposition*. It's always to suppose. For him, an enunciation is a supposition. I'd say there are many things in modern logic that would prove him right, but he doesn't rely on them. He's a moralist, Brice Parain, he relies very little on logic.

So, he calls upon the peasants, and the peasants say, they say to Brice Parain... I'm not sure he's right about this, but he says that when you tell a peasant, when you tell them: "It's hot", they answer you with "Maybe so". And he says that this isn't simply a way of reserving their opinion, it's because they've understood the essence of language. Language in its essence is a supposition about life. It's a supposition about life, but a supposition about life that consists in breaking with the order of life. Why is this? His answer is quite simple: so that one can *commit oneself*. To commit oneself. What does commitment mean? To make a promise. For Brice Parain, there's no such thing as innocent language. You think you're just making statements of fact, but there are no statements of fact. There are only suppositions that imply promises. You're committing yourself to something. So, he gives some obvious examples. If you say "I love you", you're not stating a fact. You're making a promise. Of course, you can lie, that's perhaps the very foundation of language, the possibility of lying.

And in a way, he's the first to say that to speak is to lie. You're not speaking a state of life or a state of feeling when you say: "I love you". And even if at the same time you say: "Oh yes, but I love you is too big a word, it's enough to say, I like you", it's actually the same in the case of "I like you"... although it's not the same as "I love you", it's not the same supposition. It's not a state of things or a state of life, certainly not. It's a promise. Supposition is what we call a *proposition*. By speaking, I *propose something to life*. I never enunciate – to speak is not to enunciate, it's to propose – so it's also to suppose. So, this is breaking with life. It's a very beautiful idea, and he obstinately repeated this conception in all its forms. He even sees it as a proof of God's existence, it's a proof of God's existence, it's the only proof of God's existence through language that I know of, and which is very beautiful. If to speak is not to live, then language must come from a God. Well... it's a nice proof, but well, I don't know... but why not?

Why, why commit, why make promises? Here, his answer is very strong: *so that life is no longer terrible*. In other texts, he qualifies this somewhat by saying: so that life itself is not "terrified". To speak is to break with life, and thus to return to life, so that life itself will not

be terrifying or terrified. When I say “I'm hungry, I'm hungry”, I'm speaking as a man. When a man says: “I'm hungry”, he's not stating a fact, he's stating a basic claim, namely: I as a man, have the *right* to eat. It's a *right to life*. In a sense, you could just as well say this for all these words, whether I say: “I like you, I love you or I'm hungry”, all words express both a demand and a commitment to life. And if we didn't speak, life would be terrible. We'd be in a perpetual state of emergency, but what does it mean to speak? It means making a demand, expressing a need. As a human being, as a being who speaks, I have needs to assert. Or, to put it another way, I have demands to make.

Hence this very beautiful lines, which Godard doesn't have Brice Parain say, because Brice Parain completely improvises his meeting with Nana, the heroine of *Vivre sa vie*.

Nana: “And why do we need to express ourselves” – that is, why do we need to speak – “to understand one another?”

The philosopher: “We have to think. To think, you have to speak. We don't think any other way, and to communicate, we have to speak. That's human life.”

Nana: “Yes, but at the same time it's very difficult” – it's very difficult to speak and it's very difficult to think – and all that precedes this, which is what I wanted to get to, I wanted to get to the film, all that comes before is this, which is Nana's fundamental difficulty in rising above the states of her life, as she suffers them, poor thing. She is subjected to life's conditions, and when you're subjected to life's conditions – she is fatally prostituted by pimps and so on – it's very difficult to talk, and it's very difficult to think.

Nana: “Yes, but at the same time, it's very difficult. Whereas I think life should be simple” – meaning that everyone should eat, everyone should be free, with no need to say anything.

“You see the story of the Three Musketeers” – well, I'll skip that part because I think it goes back to what I said before.

The philosopher: “It's terrible, it's terrible, yes, but... I think you can only speak well when you've renounced life for a while. It's almost in this that... – three little dots, he hesitates and turns it into “the price” – “it's the price you have to pay to speak and to think”. This will obviously remind you of something we looked at in the first term, regarding the death from which we return, the thinker as someone who has passed through a death. That's completely in accordance with Brice Parain. If I'd thought of it at the time, I'd have availed myself of his thought, but encounters after the fact suit me too.

The philosopher: “I think you can only speak well when you've renounced life for a while. That's almost the price.”

And Nana, who shows she's very intelligent: “But then isn't talking deadly?”

The philosopher: “Yes, but it's a...” – three little dots – “to speak is almost a resurrection in relation to life.” – He doesn't say, it's almost a resurrection in relation to death, but *it's almost a resurrection in relation to life*, he knows very well what he means, although he's improvising, it's *coming back* to life, it's almost a resurrection in relation to life. In the sense that when one speaks, it's another life to that when one doesn't speak. Do you understand? “And then to live by speaking, you have to have passed through a death that is life without

speech". What a beautiful speech. And then to live by speaking, you have to have passed through a death that is life without speech. You see, if this... I don't know, if I'm explaining myself correctly... "There's a kind of asceticism, in short, that means you can't speak well if you don't look at life with detachment."

And Nana: "But everyday life, you can't live it with, I don't know, with..."

The philosopher: "With detachment? Yes, but then we're just balancing, that's why we go from silence to speech. We balance between the two. But life with thought presupposes that we've killed off life that's too everyday, life that's too elementary. In this sense, there's an asceticism."

What does the film show? It shows something in a very odd way. If I take this example – actually, there are multiple cuts – you have all these images of Nana stuck in unbearable states of life, which are at the same time quite cheerful and funny. But she is ultimately bogged down in her life. You have, let's say, a whole sequence of images, and if there were no other cuts, I'd only retain this moment. This whole sequence of images tends towards a limit, which is her meeting with the philosopher Brice Parain in the café. And this is the encounter that I could call... this is the "categorical" limit. Please bear with me, this is all about categories, and here the category is speaking-living, life-language. Nana arrives at it, and thanks to the philosopher, she thinks she now understands something she's been searching for since the beginning of the film: Is it possible to speak when you're living? So, she reaches this limit, and the guy tells her, No. To speak, you have to have stopped living for a certain time. *To speak is to come back from the dead*. And this is the cut. And all the images, all the preceding images, are reflected in this category of language, as proposed and enunciated by Brice Parain.

This category of language in its relation with life will signal a new series: this time, Nana will move towards death, towards her inevitable death, that is... that he recounts to her. In terms of the first category, Brice Parain spoke of this death from which we return so as to, as he puts it, "give orders to life", meaning to promise or to demand something of life. And she, from this point, descends a new sequence of images that will plunge her into another category, namely the death that prevents us from speaking, the death towards which we are heading and in which there is no longer any language, there is no longer any speech. Each time, a sequence of images is reflected in a given category. I find this very striking. So, it's in this sense that categories have a purely reflective use.

And when I oppose... in classical cinema, I would say, there are indeed genres or categories, but they have a constitutive role, meaning that the images they subsume belong to them. In what, for the sake of convenience, I shall call modern cinema, or at least in the case of Godard, the genres and categories have remained, or we could say that genres remain completely untouched. You could say that, in other respects, modern cinema has transmuted the genres, but here let's assume that genres remain untouched. However, *they completely change function*. There are no longer any constitutive uses, meaning they don't constitute, they don't pertain to the images they subsume. They serve as a limit or irrational cut-point for images that don't belong to them. So much so that all the images are completely vectorized, and here Comtesse is absolutely right to tell us what this vector will be. In *Une femme est une femme*, the vector is: I want a child. In *Pierrot le fou*, the vector is: I don't know what to do, boredom and so on... the boredom that will push the sequence of images to the great scene of the sung poem that plays the role of category.

In other words, I'm contrasting a constitutive use of the category in classical cinema with a reflective use of the category in serial cinema in the style of Godard. And this term – I always hope you will learn a little philosophy, if possible – this term, as many of you already know, these terms constitutive-reflective are terms I borrow from Kant. I borrow them from Kant.

I don't want to try your patience, but I'd like to digress for a moment, to explain the sense in which Kant proposes this, so that you understand fully. Kant tells us, in two different books... in *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant says: Beware, there is a constitutive use of judgment, and there is a regulative use of judgment. Many years later, in the *Critique of Judgment*, he changes the terminology. And he distinguishes between a determining judgment and a reflective judgment. Why this change in terminology? There is a reason for it that we would look for if we were working on Kant. I'm not attached to the examples Kant gives, because Kant takes examples from the field of science and the laws of nature. I don't need those any more. I want to make a free, very rapid comment on this point, which will end our session today, a very rapid comment on this distinction, by taking examples not from the field of natural sciences, but at my peril, from the field of law, almost at the limit of everyday life.

The definition Kant gives us of constitutive or determining, constitutive or determining use, constitutive or determining judgment, is this: the concept is given, but the particular is not yet in place. We need to know what the particular is. The general, meaning the concept, the general is already certain in itself, it is given. It only requires judgment to effect the subsumption, in which case the particular will necessarily be determined by it. You see, I'm going from the general that is given to the particular that I will determine insofar as I subsume it under the general, meaning under the concept or category. So, we can say yes, the concept and the category are given. And I look for the particular that is determined, that comes under this category.

Let me give you an example: you have a crime, the concept is given to you. You have a legal concept of crime. I'm assuming that you can prove that it's a crime. For my example, this is necessary. It is proven that it is a crime, in other words, you have the concept of crime. What will be the determining or constitutive judgment? You're looking for the particular that fits the concept. In other words, who has committed the crime and how. Given that the concept of crime provides you with all the possible ways. The legal concept of crime is in fact subdivided into different concepts: premeditated crime, unpremeditated crime, involuntary crime, and so on. So, you have the concepts but you don't have the particular, and you will require judgment – that's what judgment is – you will require judgment to find who it is that fits under the concept, that is to say, who the murderer is. And under what level of the concept he is subsumed. That is, did he kill recklessly, did he kill premeditatedly, did he kill unpremeditatedly? So, it's in this sense that you will have a determining or constitutive judgment.

I would say that in medicine, a therapeutic judgment is a determining or constitutive judgment. You're lying in bed and a doctor comes in and says: You've got pneumonia. And then – according to your condition – the concept of pneumonia is given, it's given in the doctor's mind, and the doctor... well, in what sense does he show judgment? He will dose the medication according to all sorts of data, such as the table of symptoms, meaning that you fit into the sub-concept in a certain way, you're given this medication... No, yes, it has to be ... No. More like... Ah, well, yes, but what are his symptoms... there are contraindications and so on. In short, these are constitutive or determining judgments.

Judgment, of course, poses a whole series of different problems when you don't have the concept. Take the opposite case: you have the particular and you don't have the concept. Now that's what pain is! The particular is given, this is how Kant will define "regulative use". We saw before how the general was certain in itself and given, and that it only required judgment to bring about subsumption, the particular being necessarily determined by it. In the other case, the general is admitted only problematically, and is no more than an idea. This time, says Kant, it's the particular which is certain. The particular is certain. But the generality of the rule is still a problem. In a sense, it's just the opposite. This time, the particular is certain, but the concept is missing or problematic.

I'd say that certain symptomatologic judgments in medicine, that is to say diagnostic and not therapeutic judgments, certain diagnostic judgments are of this type. For example, when a doctor walks into a room, usually he looks at you and knows exactly what you have. He doesn't confuse an ear infection with pneumonia. There are cases... for example, is it a heavy flu or septicemia? I suppose that's the only thing that makes this career interesting. I mean, these are not extraordinary cases, but if you have got the flu with a forty-degree fever, you'd better be careful, because we're not sure if what you have isn't septicemia. So, you should immediately take a strong course of antibiotics and see if the fever goes down. If the fever doesn't go down, or if it goes up, you'll need to be hospitalized immediately, because in this case it's septicemia. So, here the particular is given – the guy with the fever, with his... – it's the concept which is problematic. And the doctor thinks, what's the matter with this guy?

I'm not saying that all diagnoses are of this type. Again, there are diagnoses that are constitutive judgments. When I walk into the room and say: Ah, you've got pneumonia! That's not difficult, that's not a reflective judgment. It's a constitutive judgment. No, it's delicate. There the particular is given, in the case I'm considering now, it's just the opposite of crime, you see, but the concept is not given or the concept is at most problematic.

I'll take an example that's dear to me and that I've often used, because it's the same thing: it's in cases of jurisprudence in law. I would define jurisprudence in exactly this way: the particular is given, but the concept is at most problematic. That is, in the determining, or constitutive, legal judgment, the concept is given, it's the law, and you know which law is in question. For example: a crime has been committed. So, you know that the law in question refers to that crime, the law concerning that crime, the general whereby the concept is given. But in law, and this is also the charm of law, the charm of this profession... what do we mean by a case of jurisprudence? A case of jurisprudence is exactly this: the particular is given and, catastrophically in terms of the law, we don't know what concept it refers to. The concept itself can only be given problematically.

Let me give you an example, which has always interested me because it did once exist in jurisprudence. I think this is the only thing interesting about law. This is the real domain of creation in the field of law. What I mean is that true creations of judgment are of course reflective judgments. You see, reflective judgment is that which starts from a particular that is given and that rises towards a concept that is not given, and is only posed in a problematic way.<sup>7</sup>

In the example I'm giving, which is an actual case of jurisprudence, what interests me a lot is, and here I'm going to do... it's going to take us back to the business of series. You see, I'm not specifying any date. At some point you get into a cab and you start to smoke. You're smoking in the cab and the driver tells you to stop smoking, or get out right away. Since



you're in a bad mood that day, you say: No, I'm going to carry on smoking. Okay, so this is the legal situation. What is the given? The given is individual X – I'd like to translate this into formal logic but... – individual X on this day at this time smoked in the cab. The cab sues me. Or vice versa, the cabbie kicks me out, and I sue him. So, there's a problem of jurisprudence. Maybe not now, maybe not anymore. There was a time when this was a problem of jurisprudence.

The concept is not given. The particular case is given, it's not like in the case of crime where you have a body, someone's been murdered but the concept of the crime is given. In the case of someone smoking in a cab, what is the concept? I can say: I have my series of images... no, I have my sequence of images – the cab moving, me smoking in the cab – a sequence of images – and my question is, What is the concept here? That's what it is, that's reflective judgment, it's when you ask yourself given a particular state of affairs, what is the concept? Well, you're making a judgment, and the essence of the judgment, you can feel, *the essence of the judgment is reflective judgment*. It's not constitutive judgment, they are... they are two poles of judgment...

First category – I can try... I need to make my table of categories – Suppose that I'm Godard... or rather that Godard is in this situation of making some of the categories, we have this situation which seems bizarre to us but no more bizarre than any Godardian category. So, at the beginning of my series I write: *apartment*. It's my right to choose the category of apartment, though you'll tell me, a cab... [Recording interrupted] [2:37:36]

So, the category... well, the images don't belong to this category, a cab isn't an apartment, okay? So why did I choose apartment? The question is: Does the cab *tend* towards the category of apartment, towards a limit? But why would the cab tend towards the apartment category? The cab would tend towards the apartment category if it were true that, by taking a cab, I performed an action analogous to that of renting an apartment. It's possible. The cab driver is considered the owner of a mobile room, and when I get into the cab and he lowers his little flag, I am renting the cab exactly the way I would rent an apartment. When I rent an apartment, it's clearly stated that I must behave there according to the terms of the law, as a good upright citizen, I mustn't damage it, I mustn't vandalize it, I mustn't make noise after ten o'clock and so on. But I can... I have the right of use and abuse... meaning I can smoke in my apartment.

If taking a cab tends to border on renting an apartment, then I have the right to smoke in the cab. Like that. Based on what? On the basis that renting an apartment is a *contract*, and that, between the two contractual parties, between the two contractual parties, the landlord and the tenant, it's possible for the tenant to smoke in his apartment. Moreover, the landlord has no right to dictate what the tenant does, as long as there's no degradation of the premises. So, we've moved from apartment to cab to contract.

But contract, contract, be careful! Contract. Aren't there cases where a contract is in fact secondary to something deeper? There are necessarily also cases where a contract is secondary to something deeper – I won't be long, I'm... I'm speeding things up – What would this be? When you take the bus, when you take the bus, there's a contract, or with the metro, there's a contract between you and what? Let's voice the word: *institution*. The metro or the bus are institutions. You have a contract, because if you break your leg in the metro, it's the metro who is responsible. What's more, the contract – and this has often been argued – is legally enforceable from the moment the customer touches the bus with their hand.

Interestingly, if you touch it, there is no contract. But if you touch it while remaining on the outside, the bus is responsible. If you fall and break your leg, the bus is responsible. It's the act of contact that, in this case, defines the contract. Very interesting.

Why did they do away with all of this? It was one of the reasons for the technological progress of buses. In the days when there were open-platform buses, where people would run like mad to catch one, how many, how many galloping old ladies would run after them, and if they touched the bus at the moment it passed... it's a terrible thing. So, they made buses where you can't grab hold of anything, the scoundrels. Okay.

But in any case, here the contract is completely secondary to this. It's not a rental. As I said, it's not the contract that determines anything. In the case of... in the case of the apartment, it is determining. But here it doesn't determine anything other than a question of safety where there are responsibilities. Otherwise, it's an institution, it's not a contractual relation, it's not the same thing. And if it's an institution, what does this mean? An institution is defined by a public service. So, even though it has a dimension of the private contract, it goes completely beyond this dimension, even though it implies it, it's a public service.

Starting with the contract, I move on to something deeper. A bus or public service. In a public service, the institution is perfectly entitled to make internal regulations that will apply to everyone who uses the institution, so in a bus, as it provides a public service, you're not allowed to smoke. Okay, it's as simple as that.

So, what will the jurisprudence be here? How do we proceed? Is the cab the same as an apartment, a mobile apartment, in which case the smoker has the right to smoke? Or is it like a public service, in which case the smoker is not allowed to smoke? Jurisprudence began by assimilating the cab to an apartment, that is under private law. Smoking was permitted, even if he put up a no-smoking sign, he didn't have the right to do it. But under strong pressure from the taxi-drivers' union, they wouldn't let themselves be treated like this, not at all, saying: We're a substitute for a public service and we should be assimilated not to the private law that governs the contractual relation between tenant and owner, but we should be considered like buses and public services. From there, it's no longer possible to assert the right to smoke. Today, the law has proven them right, and it's no longer a matter of jurisprudence.

You see, what did I do? I constructed my reflective series. A first category, and you can consider that there was a sequence of prior images that led me to the category of apartment. For example, being at home and so on. First category: apartment, sequence of cab images. Second category: contract, sequence of cab images... ah, yes. No, actually I should have said: first category apartment, sequence of cab images where you're smoking. Second category: contract, a new sequence of cab images, cab where you're no longer smoking. Third category: public service.

And I'd say that though these categories seem very, very strange, in fact they have their own internal logic. Apartment... What did I do? I reflected my series of images in categories to which they didn't belong, but which, each time, constituted their own limit, so I made a reflective judgment and not a constitutive judgment.

So, though we didn't make much headway today, we did at least enrich ourselves. Once again, this very fine conception of judgment, which goes back to Kant, allows us, I think, to

better understand that a series is precisely a sequence of images that will be reflected in a genre that will function as their limit insofar as they don't belong to this genre, but *tend towards it* under an assignable vector. At that point, you have a series. Okay. We'll continue with this next time. [*End of the session*] [2:47:50]

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<sup>1</sup> Pascale Criton will return and take part in a similar interview during session 22 of May 14th 1985, and also in the final session of the seminar on Leibniz and the Baroque of June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1987 – the last seminar Deleuze gave at Paris 8.

<sup>2</sup> From this point to approximately minute 100, Deleuze is seated away from the microphone, hence numerous missing passages of his comments.

<sup>3</sup> On this subject, see *The Time-Image*, pp. 277-278.

<sup>4</sup> See *The Time-Image*, pp. 182-183 and p. 213.

<sup>5</sup> Deleuze presents these perspectives in *The Time-Image*, pp. 186-187.

<sup>6</sup> Paris: Gallimard, 1953.

<sup>7</sup> Deleuze raises the following example and distinctions on several occasions: session 21 in the Cinema 2 seminar of May 24th, 1983; session 10 in the seminar on Foucault, January 14th, 1986; and session 15 in the seminar on Leibniz and the Baroque of April 28th, 1987. See also *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, “G comme Gauche”.