

Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on Cinema and Thought, 1984-1985

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Part 1

Close the door, okay? So, today we're going to go easy this session because, with the cold penetrating here, first of all I can't speak, and then we've got a small point to finish with, not much, really... before tackling a new part that interests me a great deal. So, what I mean is... once we're done with the last little points left over from the previous part, I'll tell you what this new part is that we're going to focus on next time... so that you'll have time to reflect and see, as we've done up to now, what you might be able to contribute.

In our next part – and you should already feel how this naturally follows the part we're dealing with now – in the next part we're going to group together a set of things that we've always – and here I'm speaking for myself – that in our own work we've always tried to avoid, at least until now. I can't clearly define the topic, as it is multiple. This new part will bring together a first topic... in trying to bring some order or clarity to the problem that is as old as cinema itself: the relation between cinema, language and language system.

I note that this problem is by rights completely independent of the advent of talking pictures. Even if I take a modern thesis on cinema-language relations such as that of Christian Metz, the whole relation he proposes between cinema and language is independent of the question of talking pictures. Even more so, the first great filmmakers who proposed a relation not between cinema and language but between cinema and language system, did so from the perspective of the silent era. So, we have a group, cinema-language-language-system, which is independent of the talkies.

We have a second major group of research topics: that cinema becomes a talking cinema. Can we believe that this doesn't react upon the previous problem, which we've already seen? It is in any case no longer a question of the relation between cinema and language or language system, it's the relation between cinema and what I'll call, even if I will have to qualify this, *speech acts*. This will give us a nice juicy problem: are there any *specifically cinematographic acts of speech* or, more simply, though I'm not sure it's the same thing, are there any *properly cinematographic statements*? What does a cinematographic speech act consist of? In what way is it cinematographic? Is it enough for cinema to become talking for it to become audio-visual? It's not a given, it's not certain. I mean, we would also have to settle the question of what we can call *audio-visual*.

Let's imagine the following situation: talking cinema exists in the form of speech acts, but speech acts and talkies are themselves particular dimensions of the visual image. They are grasped – of course, they are heard – but they are grasped as part of the visual image. If this were the case, cinema would not yet be audio-visual. We would simply have to speak of a sound component of the visual image. There wouldn't be an audio-visual image, there would be a visual image with a sound component. So, to what extent is a cinematographic speech act – assuming such a thing exists – sufficient to produce an audio-visual image? Already we have a whole slew of questions.

And then there's a third problem: speech acts are just one sound element among many: noises, vocal expressions, music. Finally, we'll discover music in this sense. This is something that interests me because it's difficult... this question of film music, the status of music in cinema. And then there are specific musical problems. We need to know how these different sound elements relate to one another, and how they relate to the visual image, whether all together or each separately.

In this respect, something is already troubling us and there are a lot of problems to assimilate. It's that the break we proposed – sometimes asserting that it was an absolute break, sometimes asserting that it was a relative break – well, it doesn't matter, sometimes it's relative, sometimes it's absolute, it all depends on the point of view, well... the break we proposed between what for the sake of convenience we called a classical image and a modern image, doesn't coincide with the reality of talking cinema. It doesn't coincide at all, because the break seemed to us to be marked by something quite different from the emergence of the talkies. The break always seemed to us to be marked by the collapse of the sensory-motor schema, and it coincided with the post-war period.

So that, in the end, we might have to conceive of three relative stages: silent cinema or so-called silent cinema; the first phase of talking pictures, where the image is not yet audio-visual, but where sound is a component of the visual image; and then, a second phase of the talkies, which alone would deserve the name... with which cinema would become audio-visual. And this is no surprise since, after all, the fact that cinema could only become audio-visual insofar as there was television, and cinema realized that television fulfilled nothing of the vocation of an audio-visual art, meant that from that point on cinema was given a new opportunity to become the true realization of the audio-visual power that eluded television. Well, that's a lot of assumptions.

There's something that interests me in this respect. I mean – I'm not going to commit myself yet, it's just to give us some material, what I hope will be some material for reflection... – there's something that interests me a lot in this respect. If you take so-called silent cinema – well, I'll leave all that aside, it wasn't silent, and we'll see in detail how it wasn't silent, these are well-known things, you know... – but so-called silent cinema, what is the visual image composed of in so-called silent cinema? Well, it's made up of two elements, a seen image... the visual image is made up of a *seen* image and a *read* image. It's composed of a seen image and a read image, and that's very interesting. Why? Because seeing and reading are not the same thing. They're the two fundamental functions of the eye. Seeing and reading. In silent cinema, what does this problem consist in? The image read in its most rudimentary form, the intertitle. The problem of silent or so-called silent cinema will already be that of interweaving as much as possible... of ensuring the interweaving of seen and read images. Ultimately it will be a question of transforming the two separate images of seen image and read image into a single visual bloc.

In this sense, we had said all this to try, to already plunge you into... and because it's freezing cold here. [Dziga] Vertov had a stroke of genius. Vertov's stroke of genius was to create visual blocs of seen and read images. And this is a difficult thing to do, it already requires a whole art form. In silent cinema the intertitle is no small matter, it requires a great deal of work. But there's an even more clever solution for ensuring the visual bloc of seen and read: this would be to put structural elements, to make structural elements pass into the visual image itself, into the seen image. And this is what often happens in cinema, you might have a letter, for example, or a monument with an inscription as part of the visual image.

I'll take just one very, very clever example, in Buster Keaton's *Our Hospitality* [1923]. You know, it's the story of a family, a revenge, a terrible revenge between two families... well, in the end, everything will be reconciled through a wedding between two representatives of the two enemy families. It's when Buster Keaton, or rather when the father of the other vengeful family, enters and sees Buster Keaton, the representative of the first family, in his daughter's arms, you get the impression that it will all end very badly... but in the depth of field the father sees the couple who in his eyes are dealing him a blow, since the couple comprises his own daughter and Buster Keaton, and in the background he sees an inscription on the wall, a small sign saying "Love thy neighbor as thyself". So, you can see that in the seen image there's an inscription of a written element that will ensure the "seen-read" bloc.

How can we define – you can see that we're making progress... it doesn't seem that way but we're already getting somewhere – how can we define the talkies then? I can't say that the talkies summon forth speech itself. Their advent simply means that speech is no longer read. For once, true cinema is the reunion in visual images of the two elements of the eye, the two functions of the eye, the seen and the read. To say that cinema becomes talking pictures is to say that *the spoken word will no longer be read*. It will be heard. Okay. The problem with the talkies, it's inevitable, the problem with the talkies is that when the spoken word is no longer read but heard in its own right... well, what are the consequences of this? A boon for the seen image.

And it's interesting, when the spoken word is no longer read but heard, what happens to the visual image? It seems to me that something astonishing happens. The visual image as visual becomes, in a way, *legible in its own right*. Speech is no longer read, it is heard. As a result, the seen image becomes legible. What does this mean? It doesn't mean that I read it in the same way I read a book. It remains visual. It's insofar as it is visual that it becomes legible. It's an odd business, assuming it's true. What does it mean to say that a visual image in its being visual becomes legible, *to read the visual image as such*? But what makes it so? What makes the visual image itself?

I'm thinking about this because [Sergei] Eisenstein in a text says something astonishing in this regard. He launches the idea of the read image. Well, he launches the idea of the read image, but in what sense? Now, this is very curious. If it were in relation to silent films, we wouldn't be interested. We've just seen that the read image in silent cinema is the intertitle or else the written element introduced into the visual image. But that's not what Eisenstein is speaking about at all.

Eisenstein speaks about music in cinema, and about [Sergei] Prokofiev's music in his own film, *Alexander Nevsky* [1938].¹ So he's speaking about a cinema that has become sound. He's not talking about the speech act, he's talking about the act of music. And he tells us that *the act of music forces us to read the visual image*. How odd. It's a highly paradoxical notion that

Eisenstein introduces. As far as I know, it hasn't been noticed except by someone who was so indignant about it that it became paradoxical. Jean Mitry couldn't tolerate this, and he went out of his way *contra* Eisenstein, claiming that the idea of a *read* visual image made absolutely no sense.

What does Eisenstein mean? He means that music imposes an order, an order of apprehension in the visual image, that in a sense the image would be read as if, visually speaking, it was the *score* of the musical sound image. As you can see, this is a very odd idea, when the speech act or music – here I come back to the speech act – when the speech act is heard in its own right, that is, when it ceases to be read, it is the seen image that becomes legible. In other words, the speech act would have the immediate effect of changing the nature of the visual image. Okay. But what would that imply?

That's why, for my part, I can't separate this business from the problems I've just mentioned, and I don't see the possibility of posing the question of cinema-language-language system relations without taking into account the existence of speech acts in cinema, whether these speech acts are read, as is the case in silent film, or whether they are heard, even if the visual image in turn becomes legible, as in the first period of the talkies, or something even more mysterious, in what I call the second phase of the talkies, when perhaps the image becomes truly *audio-visual*.

So, it's this whole group, you see... and I'd like those of you who feel up to it to think about the question of film music, the relationship between speech acts and acts of music, the question of the sound continuum in cinema and its relationship with the visual and so on, in both classical and so-called modern cinema. And this will be our task concerning this next part.

In the meantime, let's finish up, because it's getting really chilly now, isn't it? You don't think? Let's finish where I left off last time, that business, if you remember, that business which consisted of a making an arbitrary comparison in terms of the image of thought. I took two random examples, Eisenstein and [Jean-Luc] Godard. This allows me, these two examples allow me a triple comparison. I'm saying this very quickly, because these are things we've already looked at and gone over several times, and I hope that... I still want to go back to them again, as I have the impression that we're not yet done with them.

I would say that classical cinema, taking my example of Eisenstein, this so-called classical cinema, first of all, it's *tonal*. What do I mean by tonal? Well, it means it links images together by means of rational cuts. And I insist, I insist for the last time on this point: it's Eisenstein's obsession with commensurability, an obsession that manifests itself in his constant return to and invocation of the theory of the "golden ratio", and to tie in with what I've just said, we'll see this reoccurring in Eisenstein's talkie period, as he insists on the necessity that there be something in common between the visual image and the film music, that there be something in common, that there be a common movement... we always have this question of something common to the part and the whole, in the visual and in sound, a veritable cult of the commensurable, which we saw to be the rational cut par excellence. So, all I would say is that this cinema, what I call tonal cinema, is a cinema that links images together according to rational cuts.

Secondly, it's a cinema of truth. Why is it a cinema of truth? Because, at the same time as the images are linked together in this way, they are interiorized in a whole, which whole is

exteriorized in the images. According to the grand Hegelian conception, the true is the movement of the whole to the point where the false can be said to be a simple moment of the true. So, it's a cinema of truth. Note that to say that this is a cinema of truth, because the movement of truth is the movement by which images are interiorized in the whole and the whole is exteriorized in the images – which is the very Hegelian definition of truth – to say this is not without its consequences.

I mean, the real struggle isn't between the real and the fictional. The real struggle isn't there at all. The real... the break doesn't happen within classic cinema. There are many disputes. Take Vertov-Eisenstein. Vertov wants the real and nothing but the real, and he treats Eisenstein very badly, saying that Eisenstein's cinema is still just a subdomain of History (with a capital H), it's still history with a small h, it's fictional, stories. He hasn't at all understood the vocation of cinema, which is only realized through reality as such, reality in its totality, and nothing but reality. Okay. I don't mean that there aren't... He recounts stories. That's Vertov's sole aim, not to tell stories, because real cinema doesn't tell stories. The others, [Vsevolod] Pudovkin, [Alexander] Dovzhenko, Eisenstein... they are still telling stories. All right, then. So, there's an ongoing battle between those who favor reality as such and those who favor – in quotation marks – a kind of “fiction”.

But what I want you to understand is that the problem of truth must not be confused at all with the problem of the opposition between the real and the fictional, or the real and the imaginary. There's no connection. Why not? Because *the real and the fictional correspond to exactly the same model of truth*. This, once again – as we've seen in other years – is what makes [Friedrich] Nietzsche so powerful when he says, you can go on believing in truth all you want, because truth is fiction. It's not truth that opposes fiction or fiction that opposes truth. It's that the model of truth is fundamentally fictional.

So, even if we don't go that far, it's quite clear that the same model of truth weighs down or disciplines both the real and the fictional. We can never distinguish between the real and the fictional by saying that one is false and the other is true. And why is this? By virtue of what we've just said: truth is the movement by which images are internalized in the whole, and the whole is externalized in images. Okay. Whether we're talking about reality or fiction, in this system the real and the fictional are subject to the same model of truth, so there's no less truth in fiction than there is in reality. It's the same model. That's why I could say that *classical cinema, whether cinema of the real or cinema of fiction, is a cinema of truth*. It's the same model that is in operation: the model of truth remains absolutely indifferent to the question of whether it is real or fiction. There is a truth to fiction, and the work of art claims to reach the truth of fiction.

Do you understand? I insist on this because it seems to me that we very often confuse these two pairs, which have nothing to do with one another: the real-imaginary on one hand, and the true-false on the other. But these two couples have nothing to do with one another. I say that classical cinema, insofar as *it maintains the model of truth* in both reality and fiction, is a cinema of truth. For convenience's sake, let's call the cinema of truth “structural”, and in calling it structural I would say it's precisely because structure – or rather structuring – implies the activity of structure, which is to say the movement of internalization and externalization.

So, the classical image is, firstly, tonal insofar as it links images through rational cuts. And, secondly, structural or truth-driven, insofar as these images linked by rational cuts never

cease to be internalized in the whole, while the whole never ceases to be externalized in the images: this is the movement of truth. And finally, thirdly – which refers back to things we've done in previous years, but which we're going to need a little bit today, for the last time, I hope – it's a cinema of the indirect presentation of time. What's fundamental is, in fact, the movement-image.

We've just given the movement-image two determinations: first determination, it's the image that links up with other images through rational cuts; secondly, it's the set of images that is internalized in the whole insofar as the whole is externalized in this set. This is the movement-image. The movement-image is such that the image of time that emerges from it can only ever be an indirect representation, since the image of time emerges from the movement-image. In what way? In two ways: it derives from the movement-image, and it depends on the type of montage that relates to movement-images. Why are there these two ways? It goes without saying. It stems from the movement-image, which refers to... firstly, the images link up with one another, movement-images link up with one another. It depends on the montage that is applied to the movement-images. Montage is the movement of the true. Montage is the whole, the whole of the film. It has to be said that the indirect presentation of time in classical cinema derives from movement-images insofar as they are linked together, and depends on montage insofar as it constitutes the whole in which the images are internalized and which is externalized in the images. So, a tonal cinema of linking, a structural cinema of truth, cinema of the indirect presentation of time or montage. Okay.

I jump to my other random comparison. Let's jump to the Godardian image. First point – which is opposed to... – this is a serial and no longer a tonal cinema. What do I mean by serial cinema? The images are delinked. You need to feel how the two are opposed point by point. In fact, I'd say, not for the pleasure of going back over it but it seems to me, that it stands up better with everything we've done on... it stands up better... Well, it's the regime of delinking from all this, and the regime of delinking... it's a negative term, but one that conceals a positive term. In other words, the images no longer link up but... but what? They are perpetually *re-linked*. If they are re-linked, it's precisely because they don't link up. And what does it mean to re-link? If you like, it means linking upon, or over, irrational cuts. Do you remember? I won't go back over this, but it gave us a definition of the series. A series is a sequence of images that tends towards an irrational cut. We called this irrational cut a genre or category, given that the categories were perfectly individuated.

And in the case of Godard... Ah, it's not by chance that we come back to this. You must feel there is a burning question. You can only say to me – and of course, this is what you think – you can only tell me, But wait, your second type of cinema, don't you see that you'd be quite incapable of defining it independently of the talkie? Can't you see that this second cinema, that the regime of de-linkage, of re-linking across irrational cuts... that if there were no speech acts, we'd never be able to define it? Why not? Undoubtedly because irrational cuts can't appear... There is necessarily false continuity in silent cinema... there will of course be false continuity but for it to serve as a limit to a sequence of images, to a sequence of visual images, the genre, the cut, the category *must be expressed by speech acts*. Why, you may ask? I don't know, I just... we sense it, we sense it, that already there, where we haven't yet said a word, when we haven't yet even raised the problem of the talkie, the talkie is fully implicated.

But in any case, we're in no risk of... With Godard we saw the construction of series. I won't go into that again, except to remind you that, in the first case, a sequence of images tends

towards a series... no, sorry, a sequence of images becomes a series insofar as it tends towards an irrational cut, meaning towards a category or genre. And as we've seen, there's what we call a horizontal construction of series, but we've also seen that there's a vertical construction of series. It's enough for the irrational cut or genre to be presented as a series superimposed upon the previous one. If, instead of being the limit of a sequence of images, it develops into a sequence of images superimposed upon the first sequence, then you have a vertical series construction.

Let's think of an example – I don't know if I was clear when I gave this one – let's take an example so that everything becomes clear again, let's take an example from two Godard films. In *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* [1980]... in both cases, the genre is music. In both cases, the genre is music. In *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, the horizontal construction of the series, meaning – and here I'll keep to the essential – the sequence of images tends towards a genre that functions as a cut, namely music. And the film is punctuated... *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* is punctuated by the phrase “What's that music?”... “What's that music?” And what's more, there's always someone who doesn't hear it. And in the end, in the end, it's in the last sequence of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* that the music is played, in typically horizontal fashion, as the camera tracks across the musicians and this is the end of the film. So, here you have music playing the role of category in the horizontal construction of series, in the mode: “What's that music?”... “Which music?”

Let's jump to *Prénom, Carmen* [1983]. The genre is still music, string quartets. As before, the image sequences tend towards the quartet as a genre, functioning as an irrational cut. But this time, the music, the string quartets, develop as a high series that stands for itself and is superimposed on the first, and so you have the assault on the bank and the attack of the quartet, here with a vertical series construction.

Is everything okay? All this is very clear. Well, I'm hoping... I say it like that since you've nothing to add so I assume for you it's all quite clear. We have to change roles from time to time. Oh yes, now it's me who doesn't understand.

So, this is serial rather than tonal cinema. Second point. The second point will be opposed to... – we're really going for the major opposition here – second point: What's there to say about the cinema we were talking about earlier, which was the cinema of truth, both in terms of its realities and its fictions? Well, as we saw, in the first point, the question of de-linking and re-linking and so on. I considered series from a formal point of view. But I explained last time that there was another aspect, series from the *material* point of view, from the point of view of their content. [*Recording interrupted*; 45:52]

Part 2

... Right. Let's not overdo it. I mean... But then, what is it? It's no longer the cinema of truth. We've seen that from a formal point of view, as I was saying, a series is a sequence of visual images that tends towards a genre, a category and so on. From the point of view of content, as we've seen, a series is a sequence of bodily attitudes that tends towards a *gestus*.

And I'm not going back over that now, because I think I've shown that the two definitions correspond perfectly. In fact, *gestus* is the very content of genre. The *gestus* is the very content of the category. The *gestus* is the coherent discourse... hahaha, I said discourse! Once more I need to refer to a speech act. All the better, it makes it more urgent for us to move on

to what we're going to do next week... So, a sequence of attitudes that forms a *gestus*, that's what a series is from the point of view of content: a sequence of bodily attitudes that forms a *gestus*, the *gestus* constituting their coherent discourse, in other words, bodily attitudes insofar as they are reflected in the *gestus*, or in the *gest*. And music was a *gest*. And Godardian discourse was a *gest*. Everything that functioned as genre, category and so on. Green and blue, that's green and I don't know what else, yes, no green, well, was the *gest* of Lausanne and so on, in the examples we've analyzed. Okay.²

A sequence of bodily attitudes reflected in the *gestus*. What should this tell us? It should tell us that we're on a tightrope, because attitude mustn't be confused either with reality or with lived experience, meaning neither with real behavior nor with a lived state. *Gestus* is not to be confused with history – as we've seen a thousand times, thanks to [Bertolt] Brecht and [Roland] Barthes – it is not to be confused with history. Mother Courage's *gestus* is not the same as the Thirty Years' War. It is neither history with a capital "H", nor story in the sense of fiction.

So, we're on a ridge, and it's undoubtedly because attitudes are linked together according to a *gestus* that they can break with reality and with lived experience. And it's because the *gestus* reflects attitudes that it breaks with history and stories. We're on a ridge where attitudes and *gestus* are linked. And we can say that attitudes and *gestus* are neither this, nor that, nor the other. So, what are they? What are they? You can feel that this is what's going on in modern cinema. It's not real, it's not lived experience, even if, in a way, it begins from lived experience, it has an aspect of lived experience, but only in order to tear itself away from it, and it's the *gestus* that tears the attitude away from lived experience. So, it verges on the lived, it verges on fiction, it verges on reality, it verges on history, it verges on anything you like. But that's not what it is. Deeper than that, there's a specific attitude-*gestus* linkage that owes nothing to, or that constantly frees itself from, reality, lived experience, history, stories, from both the real and fiction, from both experience and history. Okay.

So what does all this imply? Well, I'll give you very quickly... because we had started to fill in this whole aspect in the first term of our program, but now I'm looking for confirmation that we've filled in this part of the program. So I'll give one, two, three... one, two, three, four, five, no... one, two, three, four, that's it, four examples, four examples: how are attitudes reflected in *gestus*?

First example, or first answer, insofar as cinema makes us witness a strange passing of bodies through ceremony... Has the light gone? No more heat, no more light... what will become of us? Ah, ha, ha! So, a slow passing of bodies through ceremony, okay, and after all, well, we've seen it too, we've looked very briefly at the two great poles of the cinema of bodies. Oh, shit... Everyday attitudes, ceremonial *gestus*, ceremonial *gestus*, these are even two poles of the cinema of bodies. As the Americans say, *underground*... *underground*, and why *underground*? Oh, it's no laughing matter, it's not the first time I've mispronounced it. It's always the same. Well, because the *underground* is good for that. It's good for that. Think of the life – I want to stir up some emotion – think of the moving, dark, sad, though not always, life of a male prostitute. That slow preparation. The life of the *underground* is a daily life that never stops mounting ceremonies. They spend their time mounting ceremonies. Drag queens, male prostitutes... and why do I say male? It's not my fault, it's the *underground*, ultimately also drug addicts. That slow preparation...³

Now, I'm talking about the older generation, right? Now it's all about speed. But there was a time when it was a long ceremony. One gets ready, one gets ready. In cinema, I find the first theme that's important to me, that of a passage from the attitude of everyday life to a ceremonial *gestus*. And already the attitude is taken up by the *gestus*, which reflects it, and the *gestus* refers back to the attitude. And that's why attitude is neither of the real, nor of... it's only part of everyday life because it's already been torn from everyday life. You can see why I invoke... what will I invoke first of all? *Flesh* [1968], the famous film, among others, the famous film by [Paul] Morrissey and [Andy] Warhol, the slow preparation of the male prostitute. And it's a very, very powerful film, because it's really the passage from the body of attitudes to the body of *gestus*. Anyone who remembers *Flesh*... anyone who's seen this type of film has...

But quite independently, I'd like to insist, very quickly because I haven't yet mentioned him, on a man who has passed through cinema like a meteor, namely Carmelo Bene.⁴ Carmelo Bene's cinema has a deeper relationship with Artaud than the one I'm recounting. He has at least one obvious relationship with Artaud, which is that, like Artaud, he is a man who believed deeply in cinema, and he did so only for three years. Then it was over. He stopped believing in it, and stopped making it. And yet, in three or four years, he made a series of very, very interesting films. But what kind of films? I think this is the cinema that has gone furthest in putting the body through ceremonies.

And in his own way, in his own way, Carmelo Bene was already launching a kind of process by which the body ceremony passed from attitude to *gestus*. And it was already like a problem of three bodies. First, if I may say so, there was the grotesque body, the parodic body, and these are the incredible old men, in Bene's films, the incredible old men, very, very handsome old men, old men caked in make-up, which you'll also find in the German school, in Alexander Kluge, but I'll stick to the example of Carmelo Bene. So, this is the first kind of body, the grotesque attitude that already tends towards a *gestus*.

Linked to the grotesque body is the second body, which is the graceful body. This time it's the female body that Carmelo Bene portrays either through a dancing body... One of Bene's most beautiful films is *Salomé* [1972]. Salomé's dance is extremely beautiful, always using veils in line with Bene's sense of color. Salomé's dance. Or else... But see how it links up, it's always a dance before the old men. It's linked with the grotesque bodies of old men. The women's graceful bodies link up with the grotesque bodies of the old men who circle around the women. And they release something, either as dancing bodies or in terms of their superior mechanics. These are the poses, the discontinuous poses, which are always fundamentally graceful in Bene's work, and which stand in opposition to the old men's postures. The female body as superior mechanism. Or even the female body in terms of ecstasy. In *Salomé*, there's the whole series of grotesque bodies of the old men, and above all, the grandiose John the Baptist, who is presented as a kind of decrepit old man, absolutely vile, and it will all end badly, because... But we won't see the decapitation, and there's a very beautiful scene where you have the woman in ecstasy, a beautiful scene. Anyway, I don't know...

And the third body. What's so beautiful about this cinema is the way in which the three bodies link up, and you have to understand that the linkage of the three bodies is the linkage of attitudes in terms of *gestus*, without me being able to say where this *gestus* begins. *Gestus* is everywhere, attitudes are everywhere. But there's a very astonishing transformation in Bene's cinema, which finally arrives at what Bene calls the supreme body, meaning the body that dissolves, a role he obviously reserves for himself, and which he calls the point of non-

desire, reaching the point of non-desire, the point of Hamlet, or the point of Macbeth. The point of Hamlet in one of Bene's films, *Un Amleto di Meno* [*One Hamlet Less*, 1973], where the protagonist's body dissolves. For Bene, the protagonist is fundamentally the one who dissolves. And that's why they are not the same thing as the actor. They dissolve. In *Capricci* [1969] – I think that it's *Capricci*, isn't it? – the dissolution of the protagonist... or again in *Salomé*, the protagonist, played by Bene, is covered in a kind of... it's Herod who's not one of the old men, the old man is Saint John the Baptist. But Herod Antipas becomes covered in a kind of leprosy, and as he is covered in a kind of leprosy, he launches into a fantastic speech, a speech of variable modulation, as Bene does so well, and what does this mean? It means that *the body must dissolve for the voice to be born*. We go back to the talkies. The body must dissolve for the voice to be born. What does this mean? It means that it's the vocal modes that must become the real characters. So, the body must cede its place to the modalities of the voice. The body-character must cede to the vocal modes, which are the only useful characters of a dissolved body.

Which, of course, explains why Bene believed in cinema for three years and only three years. That was already a lot. He realized that if the real problem was vocal modes, then the theater or a renewal of the theater was just as well equipped as the cinema to deal with this and serve as a medium. And if the real problem was the use, the creative use, of electronic tools, then the theatrical medium, provided it was completely revolutionized, would be much better than the cinematographic medium, which was still too committed to the visual image. But finally, if we stay with Carmelo Bene's cinematographic period, you can see in what sense I'm including it as a first example, since it really shows this passage from attitude to *gestus*. This linkage of attitudes in accordance with a *gestus* in which they are reflected.

Second example: the Nouvelle Vague and the post-Nouvelle Vague era. And I keep repeating the same thing over and over. It's not lived experience, it's not reality, it's not history, it's not stories. What is it? It's a linkage of attitudes in terms of a *gestus* in which they are reflected. And that's what we learned in the first term, speaking of the cinema of the body. And this exploded with Godard and with [Jacques] Rivette. And each obviously has his own solution. The Godard solution, as we've seen, so I won't come back to it, is the construction of series. Rivette's solution is of a completely different nature. But I think I've already said that. Does anyone remember whether I said it or not? I seem to remember... anyway, I'll tell you quickly, I'll give you a summary.

What do we find here? How does he set up these sequences of attitudes? For those who want to start with an example, the most beautiful case of a linkage of attitudes in terms of a *gestus* is in Rivette's *L'amour fou* [1969], when the couple cloister themselves. It's the whole theme of claustrophobia, which is also very frequent in modern cinema, because it's in conditions of claustrophobia that the body is reduced to a series of attitudes that link up in a *gestus*. Afterwards, the couple cloister themselves, and they go through all the attitudes of the body, all the bodily attitudes of what constitutes mad love, which will constitute the *gestus* of love.

So what's so special about Rivette's cinema? It's the way he creates this kind of dream we're talking about. Neither real nor fiction, it's an automaton. How does he do it? It's his famous device. He gives himself characters who are rehearsing for a play, with a thousand variations, but basically, they're characters rehearsing for a play. So, they're not actually in the theater. You can see the theater scenes, you can see them, but that's not what's interesting. They're not in the theater. To put it simply, they're not in fiction. Nor are they just being themselves, they're not in the real world. They're in the in-between. They are caught up in the attitudinal

relations they have with one another as they rehearse, or fail to rehearse, a play. In other words, it's a theatricalization of the body, distinct from the theatricality of theater.

Here, we can directly confront cinema-theater with Rivette, since cinema is responsible for proposing a theatricalization of bodies that is completely different from theatricality. And it is in this linkage of attitudes in terms of a *gestus*... Think of his most recent film, *L'amour par terre* [1984]. *L'amour par terre* is also typical Rivette: it's neither theater, nor real, nor lived experience; it occupies a kind of ridge between the two, where the attitudes of the characters are generated not by their role, but by their reaction to their role and the conditions of that role, forming a *gestus* that is completely different from that of the play. The *gestus* becomes a highly cinematographic determination, and what does Rivette base it upon? On the idea that the *gestus*, insofar as it links attitudes, will in an obscure way reveal the fragments of a global conspiracy. Therein lies the unity, if you will, of Rivette's work. The attitudes of the body, the *gestus* by which they are linked. A whole para-theatricality and the global conspiracy to which they bear witness. Not very reassuring, is it?

Good. Then we could continue with the post-Nouvelle Vague period. But I think I've already explained that, so I won't go into it again. Let me remind you that what was fundamental in the post-Nouvelle Vague period in France were [Jean] Eustache and [Philippe] Garrel. I don't think they're just imitating Godard. I'm a great believer in their own inventiveness. But they push to the limit this kind of cinema, the cinema of the body, where the bodily attitudes secrete a *gestus*. And this is the case of *La maman et la putain* [1973], and here too, you can see that it's inseparable from the talkies. The *gestus* is conveyed by discourse. The attitudes of Jean-Pierre Léaud and the speeches of Jean-Pierre Léaud are inseparable from speech itself, it's the *gestus* that corresponds to the attitudes. And with Garrel, it seems to me, you have a type of *gestus* that we've talked about, thanks to his full use of irrational cuts in the form of white screen, black screen or snowy screen. You have a *gestus* that really becomes a way of constituting the body and its attitudes. How do you create bodies through dancing particles? You see the snow on the screen, how do you create bodies through dancing particles? If we create bodies through dancing particles, it goes without saying that the attitudes of these bodies will compose the *gestus*, just as the *gestus* will be the act of constitution of these bodies.

I'd like to expand on this, but it's really not necessary. You can tell me later, if you like, but I think I've already done so, I seem to recall, with Garrel, I'd like to remind you or point out that here you again find, though in completely different terms from those of Carmelo Bene, the question of the three bodies. In his case, it's the man, the woman and the child. Man, woman and child, a perpetual theme that refers to what? To a *gestus*, a biblical *gestus*, a biblical *gestus*: Joseph, Mary and the Child.

So to balance things up, it seems obvious to me that in the case of Garrel, who was greatly influenced by Godard, matters have been reversed at least on one occasion. *Je vous salue, Marie* [1985] is highly influenced by Garrel's cinema. But as with all art, if you start with Garrel's attitudes and *gestus*, it changes things. If you start from the *gestus*, you have a process of constitution of the body from the black screen, the white screen and screen flashes. Process of constitution of bodies. If you start with the attitudes, you have some very special camera movements, such as circular tracking shots, or attitudes that plunge into the *gestus*. What form does this take? In many of Garrel's films, if you look at the movements – and the camera movements in Garrel's work are very skillful, they're very skillful... sometimes – I'm not saying this is a constant formula – sometimes the woman is a point, a fixed point. The

child is circular, he turns around the woman, he turns around the mother's bed, he turns around, and the man, as a figure of the semicircle, semicircles that allow him to keep in touch with the supposed child and the woman. So, on the one hand, you have the camera movements that link attitudes to *gestus*, and on the other, the genetic values of the black, white, snowy, or flashing screen, which engender the body and its attitudes. This is the problem of the three bodies, which inevitably leads back to the three primordial bodies: Joseph, Mary and the Child.

Third example: women's cinema, a "female" cinema. You could also say feminist, but well, maybe it's even more important that it's by women than feminist... Let's take the question: What have women brought to cinema? What did they necessarily bring? Well, once that has been done, you can say it was necessary. What was their vocation, their cinematographic vocation? Well, to highlight states of body that would help us decipher the history of mankind. In other words, to create a female *gestus* that distinguishes itself from the history of men, that presents itself in its specificity, and in relation to which the history of men is no more than something secondary and terrible and derivative, above-all evil-doing, narrow-minded, stupid – in other words, to draw up a *gestus* of feminine states of body, that would enable us to evaluate the history of men, either to send men back to their history, or to help them get out of it.

So that's what female or feminist cinema is. I'm not saying it can be reduced to that. It seems to me that up until now, this is what it has fundamentally been, and that's what it is. You'll tell me that this doesn't concern only women, since I've just been speaking about a whole cinema of the body made by male filmmakers. Yes, but this undoubtedly takes on a very particular dimension with women. In France, or at least in French-language cinema, there are two particularly obvious cases: Agnès Varda and Chantal Akerman. Agnès Varda and Chantal Akerman.⁵

Chantal Akerman. Anyone who's seen one of her films can see how it's constructed, not that it's not varied, but if I try to extract a recurrent pattern, what would it be? She's a woman who goes through all the basic attitudes and postures, of anorexia in particular, anorexia as the secret of female body states. Why not? It's preferable to hysteria. Then, in *Je, tu, il, elle* [1974], this linkage of body states will form a veritable *gestus*. It will not be closed, but will communicate with the mother. In the beginning, it will start from the mother and return to the mother. And she will be like a detector compared to the cloistered woman who goes through all these attitudes, who does this kind of – what can I call it? – a retreat where she gathers her attitudes and turns them into a *gestus*. It's the whole environment that is only seen or captured in a very astute way in Akerman's work, which is only seen or captured through off-screen noises or seen through a window. And it's the men who no longer exist except in their lamentable self-confidence. Men's history is measured by women's *gestus*, measured, evaluated and judged by this *gestus*. And here again, the female *gestus* and the history of men are irreducible. Even if the woman is complacent, even if she's very attentive to the men and so on. It's not the same world. She proposes a *gestus* where there was no longer history.

Agnès Varda, I think could be compared... with quite different means... As a reminder, let me mention Agnès Varda's last film, or rather her last diptych, *Mur murs* [1981] and *Documenteur* [1981]. What is *Mur murs* about? It's a woman walking, a lonely woman, a lonely woman taking a stroll in, I don't remember which city...

Hideobu Suzuki: Los Angeles.

Deleuze: Los Angeles. Amidst what? Amidst the graffiti, amidst the Chicano murals.

Hello Jamilla! Okay break time... [*Recording interrupted*; 1:22:41]

... I think it's very striking that the stroller's attitudes are composed through the graffiti, composed through the Chicano graffiti. Now, the Chicano graffiti is already the theme of a minor group or people, and will constitute the *gestus* of the woman's stroll. And it seems to me that, in women's cinema, there's something extremely, extremely powerful, in both Chantal Akerman's and Agnès Varda's cinema, where the sequence of attitudes really is reflected in a *gestus*, and you see that the *gestus* is clearly a minority *gestus*, referring, for example, to a minority people. And this is precisely the kind of linkage or relinkage that perpetually tears itself away from reality, male history and fiction.

Fourth example. Well, this is just to finish what we started to look at last time, and which I'll simply summarize here. What is wrongly called – and it's obvious now, why we can say it's wrongly called – what is wrongly called “direct cinema”. And no doubt there is a direct cinema that is justly called direct, but it turns out that it's not particularly interesting. So, what is this cinema wrongly labelled “direct”? Take [John] Cassavetes' early films... in Cassavetes' statements about his early films, there's one that strikes me as very interesting. He says this in an interview: to create, to create, it's not enough to live, that would be too beautiful. You need a show. And that's it. To create, it's not enough to live, in other words, you can't create from experience. You need a spectacle. Quite simply, he claims to have a special spectacle. What is this spectacle? It is a spectacle where the story must, he says, emanate from the characters, and not the characters from a prior story.⁶

Hey, say, are there many more who...? Oh well. What worries me is that I see lots of papers just sitting there, so they haven't been filled in... That's a pain, cause it means no more break, no more! Ah, there won't be any more.

So, from what must the show emerge? What must come out of lived experience, and how? It's always... it'll will be possible to the extent that we organize, that we know how to organize passages, passages that always consist of this: a movement from bodily attitudes to a *gestus* that connects them. Passing from bodily attitudes to a *gestus* that connects them is the great theme of the first... [*Noises*] I'm really going to lose it, I can feel it. Passing from bodily attitudes to a *gestus* that connects them. And as we saw last time, we're making progress compared to all our previous examples, but I think we're going to get to the bottom of it. What does it resemble? What does it resemble? It's... [*More noises*] No, really, I can't... you're going too far. Either leave, or come back another time. I've done it four times now, and every time, there's a new guy who... Well, listen, I'm very surprised! I'm astonished... [*Recording interrupted*; 1:27:59]

... This kind of constitution of a *gestus* in terms of attitudes is, once again, very special, because you never fall back into a story, nor do you fall back into lived experience. It seems to me that there's something here that is a pure cinematographic act. It's the passage from attitudes to *gestus*. It's a passage. And the whole of this cinema of the body takes as its object the passage from attitude to *gestus*, or what amounts to the same thing, the passage from attitude to the discourse it presupposes, to the living discourse it presupposes, which is not a return to lived experience. In Cassavetes, it could be the discourse of the white Negro. In Agnès Varda, it could be the mute discourse of the Chicanos. If you like, attitudes will serve as the revealer of *gestus*, while *gestus* will serve as the genetic principle, the constitutive

principle of attitudes. It's literally a bloc of passage. And what do you call this? Well, we go back to the big question I was telling you about last time, in relation to one of the most important filmmakers in direct cinema, Pierre Perrault... or also Jean Rouch. Take the two, let's say the two greatest, Perrault and Rouch. What's it all about? This passage is *the power of fabulation*. This is where discourse is implicated, where the order of discourse is implicated, where the act of cinematic speech is implicated.

Power of fabulation in what sense? This will be true for all the previous cases. In all previous cases, there was always a passage from attitudes to a *gestus* that linked them. And what was that *gestus*? It was either an act of storytelling, or an act of fabulation, or an act of legend. But why? Why is fabulation necessary? The *fabulation function*. The passage from attitude to *gestus* is the fabulation function. And it's this function that is irreducible to history, and it's this function that makes this cinema not a cinema of truth, but one that has overturned the model of truth. And that was our second point. Not only is it a serial cinema rather than a tonal one, but it's no longer a cinema that takes as its model... it's not a structural cinema that takes as its model a model of truth. It's a cinema that takes as its act the act of fabulation...⁷ [Recording interrupted; 1:31:55]

Part 3

First interpretation: linguistics is of primary importance, but it can only develop insofar as it identifies certain processes that apply to language, and not only to language but also to things other than languages. We'll call these things other than languages, *language systems*. So there are language systems without languages.

To say that linguistics is a special case of semiology is to say: linguistics is part of semiology, the discipline that deals with language and all the processes that depend on language. It's only a special case of semiology... this means that certain processes that apply to language also concern things other than languages. What would these be? Music, painting, fashion, cooking – all things we'd call *language systems without language*. Ultimately, what is the relation between linguistics and semiology based on? It's based on the notion of signifier and signifying chain. It has no need, in principle, even if it sometimes makes use of it, it has no need in principle to appeal to the notion of signs or even images. It's a semiology without images, without signs. It's a semiology of the signifier. We'll reserve the word *semiology* for this first case.

Another possible interpretation of the formula. Linguistics is only a special case, this time only a special case of semiotics, since we'll reserve the word *semiotics* for this second case. This time, it's important to understand that semiotics is the theory of images and signs. It doesn't refer back to language. It simply shows how languages and language systems are necessarily shaped by certain relations between images and signs. This time, this semiotics will radically dispense with the notion of signifier, will know only the notions of images and signs, which will give it a delightfully old-fashioned air. It will call itself semiotics, of which linguistics will be no more than a special case, and as you will see, in a completely different sense.

So now, I'll use the two words, semiology and semiotics, with the following proviso: semiotics is inspired by language – I'm not saying it's linguistics, since linguistics is no longer part of it – semiotics is inspired by language... No, sorry... *semiology* is inspired by language systems, whereas semiotics finds its inspiration in images and signs and doesn't refer back to

language in any way. In my personal opinion, of course, the first part suits me, the second part interests me enormously, and the third, as it flows from the first and second, goes without saying. So today, today and next time, I'll need... I think around a session and a half to cover a number of commonplaces, a series of commonplace notions regarding linguistics.

So, I'll start with the first question, and right away I need to find something that interests me. I wonder if this first question hasn't already been posed once, in a completely different field... obviously, in philosophy. Because I'm going to make a first point, and you'll tell me it doesn't help you to understand, but I'd like it to help you understand. Christian Metz is a Kantian, and my God, I can't think of a better compliment to pay him. What surprises me is that he doesn't seem to know it, but he is profoundly Kantian. What does it mean to be Kantian when you're dealing with cinema?

When Kant invented... created a philosophy that he called critical philosophy, giving the word *critical* a rather special meaning, the upheaval that the Kantian attempt brought to philosophy enabled many authors to divide the history of philosophy into a pre-critical period, before Kant, and a critical and post-critical period, after Kant. But, simply speaking, how can the two periods be distinguished? In the old pre-critical period, if we read retroactively – and a retroactive reading is only legitimate under conditions of great caution – but once we have Kant, we can say, well, what was Plato? What was Plato doing then? Plato was pre-critical. It was the great moment of a pre-critical philosophy. How did we recognize this great moment of pre-critical philosophy? Plato was asking, “What is...?”, and he even thought that to do philosophy was to ask “What is...?”, “What is this?”, “What is that?”

Well, in this sense, you'll tell me that this is weak, this “What is”... well, yes, it took a lot of people because there are a lot of people who don't agree with the question “What is...?” Is it the right question? It's not enough to ask questions in life, it has to be the right question, you understand? How do you know it's the right question to ask? Isn't that what you should be asking? These were important moments in the history of philosophy, the ruptures with the question “What is it”... Leibniz, for example, once said: You mustn't ask “What is it”, you have to ask “Why”... and it's not the same question.

So, Socrates finds himself in a world where people don't ask “What is...?” but they ask “Who...?”, Who's who... Who in the City is just? Socrates comes along, laughs and says, Who in the city is just? That doesn't mean anything, it's not a question. Above all, you'll never know who in the city is righteous if you haven't first asked: What is justice? You may say it's self-evident but it's not, it's not self-evident. And what were called Sophists were people who said: Not at all. What is justice? But these are abstract questions! You can never answer a question like that, they're unanswerable questions. They're false questions. You have to keep to the question, “Who is just?” And it's in terms of “Who is just?” that everything occurs and that all tests and reflection must pass. Socrates continues: If you don't tell me what... what justice is... Well, that's original. In what sense is it original? The pre-critical question “What is...?” is defined by the distinction between appearance and essence. Okay. Essence is the universal and the necessary. Appearance is the variable.

Back to cinema. Cinematographic images are appearance. You're there, and you're looking at cinema, that's appearance. What is cinema? And the answer is... it's what you've always been looking for. It's what you've always been looking for: universal language, the universal and necessary language. What defines this essence? Something has to define this essence, otherwise it won't work. The images that flash before you are appearance. The essence is the

universal language. These images refer to a universal language. What is this universal language? The Soviet answer seems quite Platonic: it's *montage*. It's montage that defines cinema as a universal language embodied in the appearance of movement-images. You see, the movement-movement is the appearance whose essence is the universal language. Now, I'd like you to grasp the following proposition: cinema is a language, meaning a universal language. This proposition only makes sense from a point of view that I'd call pre-critical, where in fact the question that arises is "What is...?", which implies the distinction between appearance and essence, and that everything passes through this distinction.

Let's leap over the centuries to Kant's arrival: what is critical philosophy, how do we define it? As you can see, nothing can any longer be defined by appearance and essence. What's more, Kant will embark on a path where he will show that there is neither appearance nor essence. Then there's no longer any need to invoke a question that passes... or that presupposes. So what's his question going to be? It's extremely powerful, feel that it's... it looks like nothing once it's been said, but you still have to think about it. There are *facts*. So, when they say, for those who know a little philosophy, that Kant was influenced to some extent by empiricism, it's obvious. From whom did he learn that there are facts? That's a basic empiricist proposition. There are no appearances, only facts.

It was already a very original position... you see, nothing is given. As soon as you think "nothing is given", you mustn't say to yourself: facts, appearances, all that, it's all stuff borrowed from common sense, it's not true, it's not true. It's already a philosophical act that makes certain philosophers say... there are facts, and it's from the facts that you have to start. If you look for an equivalent in Platonic philosophy, you'll find nothing, absolutely nothing in Platonism to situate a notion like "fact". It's a notion... You have to think of philosophies as things that support certain things like grafts and don't support others. The notion of "fact" is a foreign body to the whole of Platonism. On the other hand, it's not at all foreign to what we'll call empiricism. This is what Kant retained, even if it meant transforming the notion of fact, but that's his business. There are facts.

So, what can we ask about a fact? What are we entitled to ask regarding a fact? Well, I'll tell you, because Kant himself said so. He said that what you can ask regarding a fact is "under what conditions is it possible?" And that's it. You see what a fantastic revolution this represents: the "appearance-essence" couple is replaced by the "fact-condition of possibility" couple. A fact is a fact, fine, but what are the conditions that make it possible?

Let me take an example: geometry is a fact, geometry is a fact. I can even date this fact: Euclid. Suppose Euclid organizes geometry into an existing discipline, geometry has become a fact. Physics is a fact: Newton. Let's suppose that – it's too simplistic, but it doesn't matter, it's just to help you understand – Newton makes physics a fact. Kant says, it's true, geometry is a fact, physics is a fact. Under what conditions is geometry possible? What are the conditions of possibility of this fact? Under what conditions is physics possible? It's a beautiful...

So you might ask, what's the difference between "condition of possibility" and "fact"... sorry, I mean "essence"? Why is it that seeking the conditions of possibility of geometry has nothing to do with seeking the essence of geometry? If you ask Kant "What is the essence of geometry?", he'll say that the question doesn't make sense. I'm not asking what the essence of geometry is, because geometry has no essence. I'm asking, "Under what conditions is geometry possible, given that it is a fact?" What's the difference? It's that what we'll call

conditions of possibility are *rules of usage*. Rules for the use of what? Not geometry. Rules for the use of some of our faculties which, under these rules, make geometry possible. The same goes for physics.

If conditions of possibility are rules for the use of something that makes the fact under consideration possible, you can see that there is nothing in common between an essence and a condition of possibility. And why is that? If only because an essence or – how shall I put it? – an objective idea is what in philosophy we call an "objectivity", whereas a condition of possibility is the rule of a subjective act. So, we go from the notion of fact to the notion of rule of usage or condition of possibility. So, let's admit that from this point of view, we can say that there is indeed a philosophical rupture between a metaphysics based on essence-appearance and a critical philosophy based on fact-condition of possibility.

How is Christian Metz a Kantian? Christian Metz is very cautious. And here I'd like to pay tribute to his prudence: he's very careful with his wording. He tells us... and if I were to try and sum up his thesis in the most general way, it would be this: to ask whether and in what way cinema is a language is a false problem. The pioneers of cinema got bogged down in this. They hastily replied that it's a universal language, and this answer doesn't hold water. This answer doesn't hold water because the question is badly posed. You shouldn't have asked in what way cinema is a language. You should have asked in what way and under what conditions, or rather not in what way, but *under what conditions can cinema be considered a language-system?* Well, that's funny, because what does it imply? What does it imply? If you feel he is Kantian, then he has to be really Kantian. He's really Kantian. This implies identifying a fact, and it also implies analyzing the conditions of its possibility. Finally, it implies that these conditions of possibility can be expressed in the form of rules of usage.

You see how all philosophy from this point of view, all philosophy will depend on Kant, starting with linguistics, because linguistics will attach fundamental importance, both in Peirce and Wittgenstein, to the idea of the rule of usage, to the point that meaning itself, the meaning of a proposition, will be defined through the notion of the rule of usage. You have to see how Kantian all this is. I can't say that there isn't something new about it. After all, Kant wasn't concerned with linguistics. But it is clear that this has Kantian roots.

So, I repeat, Metz is very cautious. And being cautious, he has to start from a fact. That is, under what conditions can cinema – and I'd just like you to feel how – if I pose the question not as "in what way is cinema a language?" but as "under what conditions can and should cinema be considered a language-system?" I cannot ask it innocently. I have to be able to identify a fact, a fact regarding which I ask what are its conditions of possibility. And indeed, if Metz is as Kantian as I say he is, because that's exactly what he's doing, he's starting from a fact.

In the previous case, the fact was Euclid and Newton. What should the fact be in cinema? The fact is Hollywood. Hollywood is to cinema what Euclid is to geometry. What does "the fact of Hollywood" mean? He doesn't hide it... but, while this poses a lot of problems, it's not really that difficult... but it poses many problems. He wants to start from a fact, you understand, he has no choice. If he wants to understand the conditions of possibility, he has to find a fact. But at what price? At what price? That's the question... It can only be Hollywood, the fact, the only fact of cinema. Why? The fact is that cinema has historically constituted

itself, just as I could say the fact of geometry is that Euclid constituted geometry, he constituted it as a science and therefore as a fact.

Well, Hollywood established cinema as a fact. Why? In what form? It created, it imposed *the fact of narrative cinema*, and Metz has never... I don't want to hear the objection that his ideas have evolved. On this point, Metz will never evolve. Namely, the semiology of which he dreams must begin from an unassailable fact, namely the constitution of a narrative cinema that has been imposed as a standard by Hollywood, the fact of a cinematographic narrative. And he continues to be very cautious. He says, let's see, that cinema wasn't obliged to... but in the same way, I could say, geometry wasn't obliged to.... He says that cinema wasn't obliged to... at its very beginnings, we can't say that the cinema of the Lumière brothers or the cinema of Méliès, we can't say that this was a narrative cinema. But the fact is, when we start talking about cinema as something other than a technique of reproduction or a process of poetic enchantment, it's under the guise of a narrative cinema that Hollywood was formed. So, the fact is: cinema is narration.

But it shouldn't come as a surprise – in my opinion, there's no contradiction here – that a reflection that claims to be very new, like Metz's, is applied to the most common fact, the most old-fashioned, if you like, to the point that even though none of you take Metz for a fool, it's better to lay aside the objections that immediately come to mind, namely: there's a non-narrative cinema, and one that's gaining importance. Because these kinds of objections probably won't be of much concern to Metz. We'll see. In any case, he says: there were other possible directions, such as documentaries that aren't exactly narrative, or abstract cinema, which isn't narrative at all. He says that none of this prevents Hollywood having constituted the fact of narrative cinema and, by the same token, marginalizing the other potentialities of cinema... because they've been completely marginalized. And if we now say to him, but cinema is no longer narration, we have to distinguish between two things – I'll say this in advance – his own response... either he'll deny it, he'll say it's not true, it's an illusion for weak minds, it's not true that cinema has ceased to be narration. Or some of his disciples will say: yes, to a certain extent, cinema has ceased to be narration, but that doesn't change the pattern. So, we leave that aside.

So off he goes – do you want the texts or do you trust me? I'd like to... but I've brought the texts because it's a very odd matter. You see how odd this all? It may seem unimportant, but it's huge, it's enormous, to take the idea of narration as fact, because at that point, the cinematographic image is no longer the movement-image. We have to do this now. My concern is not that there have been directions other than narrative cinema. He easily gets away with that. But I ask, at what price does he tell us that the *fact* is the constitution of a narrative cinema? At what price? It's that there is no longer anything, there is no longer anything to remind us that the cinematographic image *moves*.

And indeed, for Metz, the cinematic image doesn't move. It is not an *automaton*, which is what we based our first part on in the first term. It is not an *automaton*, it is not automatic. It's not automotive. Ah, that's... as a proof... How does Metz distinguish between photography and the cinematographic image? I was just telling you something quite simple, and it wasn't a very strong idea. It wasn't very original, but it interested me because it allowed me to remind you that the cinematographic image was the movement-image. It wasn't the image of a movement, it was automaton, in other words, it was the movement-image.

When Metz asks what the difference is between the cinematographic image and the photograph, here's his answer, and it's in *Sur la signification au cinema*:⁸ "It is as if" – I ask you to listen carefully – "It is as if a kind of induction current were linking images among themselves, whatever one did" – *whatever one did*, what does this mean? That the images don't move of their own accord – "were linking images among themselves, whatever one did, as if the human mind (the spectator's as well as the film-maker's) were incapable of not making a connection between two successive images" – in other words, they follow one another not because they move, but because we are *incapable of not making a connection*. Ah well! – "Still photography – a close relative to film, or else some very old and very distant second cousin – was never intended to tell stories" – when it does, it's because it's has taken the form of a photo novel. I'll read it again, because it seems very odd. If there's a difference between the cinematographic image and photography, it's because photography "was never intended to tell stories". In other words: he completely short-circuits the mobile nature of the cinematographic image. The cinematic image is not defined as a movement-image, it is defined as a narrative image. Narrative is the fact of cinema, just as the postulate of parallels is the fact of Euclid.

And in the same text... you see how we couldn't confirm, because it's a sentence that leaves me so much in a dream. Can you see what he's getting at? But once again, my question is, At what cost? "Going from one image to two images, is to go from image to language-system" [*translation modified*]. There's nothing more to say, there's nothing left to say, there's absolutely nothing left to say. To go from one image to another, from one image to another, is not because there is movement, it's "to go from image to language-system". Do you see what I mean? Once he has established *the fact of narrative and not of movement*, if the cinematographic image is narrative, if this is what distinguishes it from photography, then it goes without saying that to go from one image to another is to go from one narrative statement to another narrative statement. It's passing from narrative to language-system, it's passing from the image to language-system, since the image was already a language-system, it was narration.

So it should come as no surprise to us, when many years later... Metz's disciples invented and claimed a new gaze, which they explicitly opposed to the "cinophilic gaze". They will attack and harshly criticize what they ironically call and denounce as the "cinophilic gaze".⁹ And no doubt it's because they're settling scores with the idea of a conception of cinema, and the very nature of the semio-critical gaze, as opposed to the cinephilic gaze, is that, they say explicitly, for example Raymond Bellour: it suspends movement, it suspends movement. It's unavoidable, I don't see how he could do otherwise, how he could do otherwise, once he's committed himself to this path: the fact of narration. If it's narration that distinguishes, once again, the cinematographic image from photography, then it's not movement. So there's every reason to develop a new gaze, an acute gaze, the semio-critical gaze par excellence, anti-cinephilic since the cinephilic gaze is apprehension of movement in the image.

So where do we stand? What does this all mean? What does *suspending movement* mean? Does it mean they're going to watch the film photogram by photogram? It's interesting, because here we fall back into our history, and indeed, the famous textual analyses of films are most often centered on photograms. We're back where we started with Barthes, and with Raymonde Carasco's contribution: extracting the photogram as an extra-cinematographic filmic condition.

I'll try to summarize. I'd say that from the outset Metz's approach – and this is a point which, once again, whatever variations and developments Metz may bring to his theory, it's a point which will remain invariable – comprises three linkages, three notions. First: a fact. Second: an approximation. Third: an assignment of conditions. But I'm afraid it's all up in the air if we grant it the fact... because, well, back to my story of Kant. Kant says: Euclidean geometry is a fact, and I ask myself what are its conditions of possibility? What he calls a fact is something very particular, since its character is universal and necessary. From then on, he operates around two questions: *Quid facti*, to use the Latin term, since he and the Kantians speak Latin, *Quid facti, quid juris?* *Quid facti* means what would the fact be, what is the fact? *Quid juris*, that is, by what right? Meaning, what are the conditions of possibility? And you can see that when Kant throughout his philosophy invokes the notion of a tribunal, this is what he means. The tribunal is the... [End of the recording; 2:18:00]

[Tape ends]

Notes

¹ See *The Time-Image*, pp. 237-239, especially note 27 p. 323.

² See sessions 11 and 12.

³ On the underground, see *The Time-Image*, pp. 191-192.

⁴ On Carmelo Bene, see *The Time-Image*, pp. 190-191.

⁵ On Chantal Akerman and Agnès Varda, see *The Time-Image*, pp. 196-197.

⁶ Deleuze refers to this statement by Cassavetes, in *The Time-Image*, p. 315, note 6. The reference appears to be to issue 205 of "Cahiers du cinema" (October 1968).

⁷ On the cinema of lived experience and the function of fabulation, see *The Time-Image*, pp. 150-153.

⁸ Cf. *Essais sur la signification du cinéma* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1968). Deleuze refers to it in *The Time-Image*, p. 39, note 1. An English translation of the first volume was published as *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema* Oxford: OUP, 1974. See p. 46. We have modified this translation in line with Deleuze's interpretation of Metz's use of 'langage' as 'language-system'.

⁹ Deleuze comments on this detail in *The Time-Image*, p. 286, note 5.