

**Gilles Deleuze**

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

**Lecture 15, 12 March 1985 (Cinema Course 81)**

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### **Part 1**

Deleuze: Ah, a third interview? Well, we do have a specialist on the subject here, though he's a very critical one. But he doesn't want to be interviewed, so I respect that, I can't do otherwise, I respect his wishes. But is there anyone else here who knows something about this field of semiocritique? Is there? Well...

Student: You can phone [André] Martinet...

Deleuze: Phone Martinet? But does Martinet work on cinema? I don't know. Well, then, no takers? Come on. Who knows something about these texts of semiocritique? Listen, there's something you're not telling me, there are certainly people here who know more than I do. All right, then. How's your work going?

Student: Me?

Deleuze: Yes.

Student: Yes, it's going fine.

Deleuze: That's good, but perhaps you'd care to intervene?

Student: Yes, maybe, I'll intervene.

Deleuze: Really?

Student: Ah yes, but not on semiocritique.

Deleuze: Ah, not on that?

Student: No, on the problems of narration, yes, but not on semiocritique.

Deleuze: Ah well, it's the same things, narration is the same thing! So, you'll speak, and I'll interview you, right? No?

Student: Yes, yes, yes.

Deleuze: So, I'm going to finish my thing on semiocritique, and then I'll recount the profound doubts I have, and then I'll interview you.

Student: You mean today?

Deleuze: We'll see how long it takes, won't we? You know, I...

Student: But I... I'd prefer to do this next time, I have to study.

Deleuze: You have to study? But this is your subject. Ah, we'll see... Anyway, if you've got something to say, you stop me, okay? Right away? And that goes for everyone else, that's all I ask.

So, do you remember where we were? In this business of semiocritique as founded by Christian Metz, there are three, three things that come into play, three basic elements that come into play. So, I was saying: a fact, a fact considered as historical. The historical fact is that cinema was constituted as a narrative cinema. This is the fact of Hollywood. Second element, which is no longer a fact, but what I called – if only to better justify it – an approximation. If the fact of cinema is its constitution as a narrative cinema, then the cinematographic image can be likened to a statement.

Clarification, which must be given immediately: is this a statement of language or is it the statement of *a* language? No. Once again, I insist on the caution, or at least the apparent caution, of Metz's approach. It's not about the statement of a language. What is a statement that is not a statement of a language? It's a statement that we would call analogical or iconic, that is, a statement that operates by resemblance rather than by discrete or discontinuous conventional units. A language operates by discrete or discontinuous conventional units that correspond to language statements. Iconic or analogical statements, on the other hand, operate by resemblance. So, it's in this sense that I say there's an approximation. The cinematographic image is a statement by approximation or, if you prefer, it's an analogical or iconic statement.

Third element: since the cinematographic image is a statement, we can apply linguistic procedures to it, even though it is not itself a statement of a language. We can apply to it linguistic procedures that we can apply to any kind of statement. What are these linguistic procedures? As we saw last time, they are the syntagm and the paradigm, or rather the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relation that we've defined... I remind you, the syntagmatic relation being the conjunction of any units which are present, so as to form a statement, while the paradigmatic relation is the disjunction of present units with absent units that are comparable in any respect, or in variable respects. So, I suppose, this is all quite clear. If there's anything that isn't clear, I should just add that if you want to understand the rest, you're going to need to have all this clear in your mind.

Let me add that you can see how Metz developed his thesis: the first great filmmakers and the first great film critics regarded cinema as a language. It was the idea of the universal language. This is a naive stage. In philosophy, as I was saying, it's what we'd call a “dogmatic” or “pre-critical” stage. Why is it not like this? Because a language is defined very

precisely. A language is defined very precisely by the existence of a double articulation, and language is the only thing that fits this definition: the existence of a double articulation, that is to say, two levels of articulation, a first level that concerns so-called meaningful units or monemes, a second level that concerns distinctive units or phonemes. Language exists when you have these two levels and they are fixed and non-interchangeable. Cinema in no way presents us with this phenomenon of double articulation. Cinema is not a language.

On the other hand, cinema is a language system, hence Metz's great formula: cinema, language system without language. Why is cinema a language system? Because, of course, its statements are non-linguistic. They are analogical or iconic statements. But paradigm and syntagm are rules of usage that concern, on one hand, the statements of language, but on the other, they are not confused with these statements of language and may apply to any statement, whether linguistic or not. So, there are rules of language use that apply to the non-linguistic statements of cinema. Which means something very simple: syntagms and paradigms, as Metz is always saying, are notions whose origin is linguistic, that is to say, they are rules of usage that apply first and foremost to the units of language, phonemes and monemes, but which can also apply to all kinds of other expressions, to non-linguistic expressions.

For example, if we can identify syntagmatic and paradigmatic rules that concern not phonemes and monemes, but the parts of a garment, we can say that clothing or fashion is a language system without language, that is, a set of non-linguistic statements, yet one that is subject to the language rules of paradigm and syntagm. You see, paradigm and syntagm are not the same thing as the essential characteristics of language. They are rules of usage of the elements of language, but they have a much greater extension than the elements of language. They apply not only to the elements of language, but to other things too. What else they apply to... we will call a language system without language.

In this sense, fashion is a language system without a language. There can be a language system of flowers. There will be a language system of flowers if you can identify paradigms and syntagms that apply to flowers, which will then be and will then form non-linguistic statements or, what amounts to the same thing, language systems without language. I'd speak in terms of a non-linguistic statement if I'm thinking of the analogical character of the statement; I'd speak of a language system without language if I'm thinking of the rules of syntagmatic and paradigmatic usage that apply to these data. That's what you need to understand. So, we will never be seeking the characteristics of a language in cinema. Contrariwise, what we will be seeking are the syntagmatic and paradigmatic rules to which the iconic images of cinema are subject.

Hence my appeal, my anguished appeal to you: is all this perfectly clear? Everything else depends on that... if you, if you don't, if this isn't very, very clear, you won't be able to understand the rest. You won't be able to understand these profound doubts of mine, you won't be able to understand all that.

Student: I'd like to understand, but I have a very naive question. In the... [*inaudible word*] movement, can't we say... [*inaudible remarks*]?

Deleuze: No, no, that certainly can't be said, it seems to me, because the fact that it moves doesn't indicate any element; double articulation in the linguistic sense isn't just any kind of articulation. For example, when I speak, I articulate. But that's not what double articulation in

the linguistic sense is about. Double articulation in the linguistic sense means that there are two levels involving discrete, that is, discontinuous, units of different natures. Some can be assigned as phonemes, meaning they are distinctive elements, elements that enter into a relation of distinction with one another. For example, /b/ and /p/. And the other articulation implies that with these distinctive elements, we form meaningful elements, for example *billard* [billiard table] and *pillard* [looter]. So, in a very general sense, we can say that movement is an articulation. But we can't say, in the linguistic sense of the word "articulation", that movement is an articulation.

Student: Does this mean that movement is the prerequisite for articulation, as in the very relationship of... [*inaudible word*]?

Deleuze: Oh, yes, but you're ahead of me, in other words, you're taking a radically anti-semiocritical stance, because if you remember... were you here last time?

Student: Yes.

Deleuze: The starting point of semiocritique, and I insist on this, is that the fact of cinema is not movement but narration. Because this is what they fundamentally require, since if they were to say that the fact of cinema is movement, it's clear that at that point, there would no longer be any semiocritique, in other words, there would be no linguistic point of view regarding cinema, or at least the linguistic point of view on cinema would appear under completely different conditions. What seemed to us to be the basic act of semiocritique is their deliberate bracketing of movement, in saying that it is not movement that defines the cinematographic image. They don't deny that the cinematographic image moves, but once again, they go so far as to say that this is not what distinguishes the cinematographic image from the photograph. The distinction between the cinematographic image and the photograph, according to Metz – and here the texts are quite formal, as astonishing as they are – is that the cinematographic image is narrative, while the photograph is not.

So, your point of view, which demands that we take movement back into consideration as a fundamental character of the image, already lies outside the way he poses the problem in terms of semiocritique.

Student: Yes, in fact that's exactly why I don't understand how the problem is being posed.

Deleuze: But of course, I think, or at least I hope, you do understand it. You may not agree with it, but you understand it perfectly well.

Student: It's like he's saying, that the language system, that the language system... [*inaudible words*] in people to the liberation of... [*inaudible words*]

Deleuze: The liberation of what?

Student: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: I'd say that for them, it's not the same plane. That linguistics as a science, obviously, only begins, from the moment that we consider language independently of the conditions of possibility to which it can refer regarding the hand-face relation. They wouldn't hesitate to focus on that, would they?

Student: I have a question I'd like to ask you: when you define... when you say that cinema is a language system without language, does that mean you're necessarily saying that language... that language itself is not itself also an image. In other words, you're excluding from language its tendency towards a limit. But if we define a language system, if we give a language system, or language, a Cratyllic, or Cratylan, definition... like Socrates in *Cratylus*, there's nothing to prevent us from considering that cinema is at the same time a language and a language system. The second question... concerns the notions of paradigm and syntagm. The whole problem is to know whether the notions of paradigm and syntagm have an irreducibly linguistic meaning, or whether we need to extend them, extend their meaning to other domains, and extend their sense of application to other domains.

Deleuze: It's a huge question, I'll answer that later.

Student: I have a question... [*inaudible remarks*] there are rules of paradigms and... [*inaudible remarks*] But there are also rules in cinema that can be said to be syntagmatic, such as characters. In a language, we accept that there are phonemes, and that could represent an idea, a moneme. But in a film, you can have an actor who not only plays but represents an idea, the idea of the character. So, can't we just say that cinema is a language? Because there are syntagmatic rules.

Deleuze: OK, I'll have to start again. No, these questions bother me because... Well, I'll try to come back... First of all, regarding the first question I was asked, please don't refer this to me. Let me remind you that, for my own purposes, I'm just reporting a thesis that doesn't pertain to me in any way. So I'm not the one who's suggesting this or that. At the point I've reached, I can do nothing other than go through an exposé of what we call semiocritique. So, it's semiocritique I'm talking about. So the question of whether we agree or disagree, for each of you and for me, doesn't arise because we're simply trying to understand what they're saying.

My second remark is that, at the point we've reached in the analysis, to say that, since the cinema image or anything else could be subject to a syntagmatic and a paradigmatic, it would be a language... this worries me even more, because it means you haven't been following me at all – and this isn't a reproach – in what I've been trying to say about the difference between a language and a language system, as it is understood by linguists today.

As for invoking Plato, mimesis, or even more, in the other intervention, invoking Ideas, if I understand correctly, that could be expressed, all this implies... it's as if in your head, what I thought I'd succeeded in last time, that is, to determine what language is, had completely failed. Because I would say that at no point do Ideas or concepts intervene. Let me start again. A language... I'd like you to follow me. We mustn't invoke Plato, for example, since Plato does not, as far as I know, propose to distinguish between language and language system. So, it's very difficult to invoke an author in terms of a problem he never posed and which is not his own. Let's be clear... [*Recording interrupted*] [26:27]

... and there is a no less important and perhaps even more important distinction to be made between language and language system. The two distinctions are not the same. If we try to say what the language-language system distinction is in modern linguistics, perhaps it can be formulated in several ways, and as I said, the most convenient way, it seems to me, is this:

Language is defined by a system of double articulation. First articulation: meaningful units. Meaningful units are made up of a signifier and a signified. We could call the signified an

Idea or concept, but it's not this that comes into play. What intervenes is – and this isn't considered in language – what intervenes in language is at a first level, a first articulation, the articulation of meaningful units that we'll call monemes. Whether a moneme corresponds to one concept or several concepts is a question we'll leave to one side. That's not what defines language. What defines language is a first level of articulation involving meaningful units.

But this isn't sufficient to define language. To define language, a second level of articulation must be added, which is to say that these first-level units must be based in some way on second-level units. These second-level units are called phonemes. They are non-meaningful units. So, the very essence of language is to make the non-meaningful meaningful. Phonemes are not meaningful, they are merely distinctive. In other words, a phoneme is defined in relation to other phonemes, from which it differs in this or that respect, for example voiced-unvoiced, unvoiced phonemes and voiced phonemes, plosives and fricatives, whatever you like, which are purely distinctive units with no meaning whatsoever. We're told that there is language when we have such a system of double articulation. We're told that only language has this system, plus the telephone number code in some but not all cases.

So this is what defines language. If you don't have a double-articulated system of this type, meaning, such that the two levels are fixed and non-interchangeable, you don't have a language and you don't have the right to speak about language. If you tell me that Plato spoke about language in other conditions, I don't know, because I don't even see a language-language system distinction in Greek philosophy, at first glance anyway. I don't see it. I do see a distinction between language and speech. What I don't see in Greek philosophy is a distinction between language and language system. Not that they lacked one, it's their own business, but they didn't need it, that's just the way it is.

Now we move on to language system. How is a language system defined? As I said, the simplest way would be to say that a language system is defined by its rules of usage. Concerning what? Concerning two aspects: combinatorial possibilities and selection. Or, if you prefer, connection and selection. Why is this? Because you need rules of usage to know which meaningful units – hence my return to language – which meaningful units can be combined with one another, and which cannot. You need rules of selection to know when and why a particular word or unit is chosen rather than another. So, language, as we've just defined it, requires rules of usage for the units of the two articulations.

Think about something very simple: a given language doesn't have an infinite number of phonemes. And what's more, languages are distinguished from each other by the phonemes they use, before being distinguished by the meaningful units they construct. Okay. You can make phonemic tables corresponding to this or that language. A language system therefore consists of the rules of combination, combinatorial possibilities and selection that apply to the units of language. These rules are called syntagmatic rules and paradigmatic rules. Syntagmatic rules are rules of combination, while paradigmatic rules are rules of selection. Example: did you say *billiard* or *pillard*? I use a paradigmatic rule. If I say: the *pillard* has taken the boat, I use a paradigmatic rule... sorry, a syntagmatic rule. I combine phonemes at their level and monemes at their level. This is the second point. So, we'll define language system by the determination and practice of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, conceived as rules of usage.

Third and last point: syntagms and paradigms – I say this to abbreviate from syntagmatic rules and paradigmatic rules – syntagms and paradigms concern the elements of language.

The question is: do they concern other things? Do they concern other data? Somebody might say, no. If they don't concern other data, I'd say that language is the only language system, because syntagms and paradigms as rules of usage define language. If they only concern the data of language, I'd say: language is the only language system. Right. Suppose I was able to define syntagms and paradigms in terms of rules of combination and rules of selection relating to data other than the data of language, that is, the two types of unit taken in double articulation. If I can define syntagms and paradigms that give, that bear upon data other than the data of language, I would say that there are language systems without language. They are without language because the data do not pertain to language. Yet they are language systems because these data are subject to syntagms and paradigms.

Such data, which are therefore subject to rules of language, even though they are not, even though they are not language data, can be said to be statements, non-verbal statements. Language systems without language and non-verbal statements are strictly correlative, since non-verbal statements are data that do not pertain to language, but to which syntagmatic and paradigmatic rules of usage apply. The syntagmatic-paradigmatic rules that apply to these data which do not pertain to language... these syntagmatic-paradigmatic rules are rules of language. So non-verbal statements correspond to language systems without language, and language systems without language correspond to non-verbal statements. In this sense, you can speak about gestural language systems, mimetic language systems, you can perhaps speak about a language system of fashion, you can speak about a language system of flowers, you can speak about a cinematographic language system. Yes?

Student: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: Can you speak a bit louder?

Student: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: Can photos themselves be seen as a language system without language? I don't know, I don't know. I'll tell you, for a very simple reason, it's not my concern, since I don't believe... I don't believe in anything I'm saying here, for a very simple reason, I'm not expressing my own thoughts. It's not my idea. When I tell you about Kant, I believe in what I'm saying. But when I tell you this, I don't believe it, and I'll tell you why I don't believe it.

So, the question is rather, if I put myself in their place, would *they* say that photography is a language system without language? I think they would. I think they would, but then again, only some of them would. Some of them would say it on account of those theories about photograms we saw the other time, and we will come back to that.<sup>1</sup> I can't really say, but in my view at least Metz would, but he has... his thinking has evolved a lot, Metz wouldn't say it in his first version. He wouldn't say it because, at the base of everything, there must be a narrative, and for him, photography is descriptive, not narrative. If there's no narration... there has to be narrative data for there to be a language system without language, in other words, for syntagms and paradigms to apply. So, I think that he... but it wouldn't seem implausible to me to create a theory of photography in which syntagms and paradigms apply. Besides, I suppose [Roland] Barthes would have said that there was a language system of photography. I'm not quite sure, but I think he would have said so.

Student: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: Maybe, yes, regarding the image, yeah, maybe, maybe. Perhaps, perhaps. In any case, it's less certain than the language system of flowers, which is... So, you can understand why Barthes wrote a book about fashion.<sup>2</sup> Barthes wrote a book on fashion because he felt that fashion-related data constituted a language system without language, meaning that these were statements, non-linguistic statements to which linguistic syntagms and paradigms applied, hence language system without language.

Georges Comtesse: I'd like to make a comment.

Deleuze: Of course!

Comtesse: If someone... it's not a question, it's simply a remark... if Christian Metz manages to define a narrative [*inaudible words*] and a semiotic based on linguistic definitions [*inaudible words*] and therefore in relation to narration, the image will be defined as an analogical image, that is, as a fact of resemblance, and so the sequence of images will be the sequence of narrative statements, passing from one statement to another. So, the point I'd like to make – and it's not so much a question – is that Metz went back to this idea, especially in a text in *Communications* entitled “Beyond analogy, the image”.<sup>3</sup>

The question that arises, then, is not so much the question, at this point, of narration, nor even the question of the rules that might define a language system that would articulate or bind together, or rather bind together the units of a language, it's not so much that. To my mind, it's two things: on the one hand, what narration itself entails for there to be a narration, and secondly, a certain interpretation of language systems, but of a language system that would be defined by what narration entails. And at this point, he says the important thing, the important thing, is that – we assume, almost everyone assumes – that when we speak, when we say something, when we do something, we create a language system of some kind... we speak or we say, or we express something. What's much more fundamental than narration is the idea that a language system is the expression of something, and that this something is therefore precisely the transcendental dimension of the language system. The language system would be interpreted as the act of expressing something.

And so, it's from there that there could be both a possible narration and possible statements. As Metz puts it, the problem I find now is no longer simply the problem of the analogical or iconic image – that is, it's no longer iconic, very well – the problem of the fact of resemblance. But the semiotic problem that arises in a new way is less the problem of the fact of resemblance than of what he calls the status of something. So, he distinguishes, he makes the distinction between the status of something that can occur in the statement or in the image, and then the fact that the image would resemble something or that it could be taken for something. That's simply the point I wanted to make.

Deleuze: Oh, yes!

Countess: It's not so much a question.

Deleuze: No, this isn't a question, no...

Countess: But which can become one!



Deleuze: And which might become one. Because you say very well, and you understand, for once, try to understand my situation. I'm forced to explain pedagogically, because that's my function, a language-language system distinction that I thought you all really knew by heart. I've been made painfully aware that it's less well known than I thought. Grant me, just explaining that takes a good hour. You say to me, but be careful, there are texts by Metz, and you invoke "Beyond analogy", and you allude, as you so aptly put it in a remark, to an even more complicated problem. We're wrestling with a less complicated problem, but one with which some here are legitimately struggling.

So, you understand, I'm not ignoring your more complicated problem, we'll get to that. What's going to become interesting is that I'm afraid your remark will no longer be a remark, but frankly, it will become a reproach you make to me because, if I've understood correctly, what you grasp from the text "Beyond analogy" is completely different from the way I understand it. But for the moment, I'm unable to respond to this remark, which is a very accurate one. We're at the very beginning, in other words, we're dealing with the elementary foundations on which this semiotics is built. And I continue to say – I'll even correct what I say a little when you've agreed to go back to the basics – well, there's one word where I won't follow you there for pedagogical purposes: there is no *fact* of resemblance. The three moments that I distinguish are: firstly, regarding the word "fact", it only applies to the fact of a narrative cinema. It's the fact of Hollywood, just as there is, as I said, a Euclidean fact: geometry. There's a fact of Hollywood: narrative cinema. Here, the word "fact" is fully justified.

Secondly, the analogical or iconic statement is not a fact because, as he says, and without this he couldn't move forward, it's a *judgment*. It must be related to a judgment of resemblance, at least in the text, in the early texts, but I'm forced to start from the early texts. And thirdly, there are paradigmatic or syntagmatic rules of usage that apply to these analogical statements.

So, please, I only ask you to understand this. You understand, when it's me... understand my situation. When it's me speaking for myself, in the end it doesn't really matter whether you understand or not, because the question isn't whether you understand. The question is: do you get anything out of it, or do you get nothing at all? It's not quite the same question. We could imagine someone who understands nothing and still gets a lot out of it, it's difficult but that's conceivable. It's not... But when I'm reporting someone else's thesis, it's urgent for me that you understand it, regardless of value judgments, whether it be Kant or Christian Metz.

So, I'll start again. Is that understood? I'd say that on this point, there's nothing to discuss because that's the way it is. I'm sorry, that's the way it is. You can tell me that it doesn't suit you, or that it suits you fine, that no, that you don't like it as a set of problems, that you can't say that you really like it, that, but that's of secondary importance. It's not whether you like it or not, it's... and in any case, for linguistics in general, it's quite important to know what they mean when they use sometimes the term language, sometimes the term language system. Because, once again, everyone knows the distinction between language and speech. But language-language system is a more important distinction, since speech can obviously only be defined by use, use in actually pronounced or pronounceable statements, or of the rules of usage. Well, that presupposes the language-language system distinction.

So, is it... is it crystal clear? Okay, so I repeat that cinema will be presented to us as a set of iconological statements, that is to say, non-linguistic statements insofar as they are nonetheless subject to the linguistic rules of syntagms and paradigms. How, you may ask, can

non-linguistic statements be subject to rules of language? As we've seen, language rules don't just apply to the elements of language. From then on, you'll be talking about non-verbal statements, non-verbal statements that are statements insofar as they are subject to the rules of a language system, of paradigm and syntagm. Give me a smile. Okay, so let's continue.

Student: There is something preventing clarity here, and that's the smoke...

Deleuze: There you go, please stop smoking. I've already told you, you'll soon have a break. Yes, speak up.

Student: In what way, according to Metz... [*inaudible remarks*] language-language system in cinema, if you only consider language as examples of verbal language. Verbal language... [*inaudible remarks*] in relation to images in cinema...

Deleuze: So, let's be clear, because this distinction is not his, he uses this distinction. He uses it to say that cinema isn't a language, it's a language system without language, in other words, it's a coupling of non-verbal statements and linguistic rules, okay? If you tell me, what's the point of that, Metz's answer would be that it's the only way to make film criticism a science, that is, to go beyond mere impressionism or criticism based on feelings, or, I don't know what else... So, to give it a scientific basis. How's that for an answer? I think that's what it is... or at least, if not a science, to give film criticism a method, a rigorous method.

Comtesse: I also mean that, suddenly, it's different from the things he says about early cinema.

Deleuze: Yes, Comtesse is right. He found himself in a cultural form, that of cinema, which had been driven throughout the silent era and at the start of the talkies by the belief in cinema as a universal language. So that's why he will call them naïve – I'd say, philosophically speaking, pre-critical. And it's in this sense that, as I was telling you, his position is comparable to that of Kant when he practices critical philosophy, by assigning a fact and asking: under what conditions is this fact possible? There's the fact of narration, but under what conditions? Is the fact of narration in cinema possible? Answer: on condition that analogical, iconic statements are subject to syntagmatic and paradigmatic rules... [*Recording interrupted*] [57:53]

## Part 2

... Well, you've seen how exhausted I am, I can't take it anymore. So, let's get on with it, let's get on with it because we keep having to start over. Now I'm going to go very fast, I'm going very fast, I'm going very fast because afterwards everything becomes quite simple. But what's with these syntagmatic and paradigmatic rules? We still have to say what they are, don't we? Well, especially since Metz attaches so much importance to them, telling us that the main secret of this discipline, semiocritique, will consist in “the large syntagmatic”. So, it's a question of studying the rules of usage, the rules of usage to which cinematographic images are subject. So, perhaps things will become a little more concrete. He has varied his classification considerably and he says that this classification is open-ended, that it needs to be reworked and so on, but at its clearest stage, he distinguishes eight syntagms. Eight, okay? There's no way out... eight syntagms.

But what is a syntagm in cinema? In cinema, a syntagm is what he calls an “autonomous segment”. In other words, he's in full control of his terminology. What is an autonomous segment? If you like, in very broad terms – he states things in the simplest terms – an autonomous segment is a sequence, namely a series of shots that react upon one another. You might say that, ultimately, all sequences react upon each other – yes, more or less – which react directly upon each other. So, we'll distinguish as many syntagms as there are autonomous segments.

First syntagm: the single shot. One might say that this single shot stands for itself. Metz makes no secret of the fact – but this is already a problem – that it's a catch-all category, so to speak, meaning that this first syntagm, the single shot, brings together the most diverse elements. For example, a close-up can be such a syntagm, but so too can a sequence shot be this kind of syntagm. Between a close-up and a sequence shot – and here, he insists, in all his texts, he says: it's a category I haven't properly analyzed – but it goes without saying that in this first syntagm, there are all sorts of very different syntagms. It doesn't matter, that's not a problem.

Second syntagm: or the second and third together. These are what he calls “non-chronological” syntagms. He distinguishes between two kinds of non-chronological syntagms, one he calls parallel. Montage brings... – sly as you are, you make huge leaps! – montage, what is that? What's that got to do with anything? Does the syntagm imply montage? That would be very bad, it would be awful. If the syntagm presupposes montage, his whole theory collapses, because he shouldn't be speaking about syntagm or paradigm. He should be speaking about montage, if it's montage that constructs the syntagms and paradigms... that's bad. Let me reassure you, he's thought about this. It's not a mistake. In other words, since I'm really trying to say what's troubling me about this whole thing, we should at least give Christian Metz the credit he deserves. I mean, there's a type of dispute, we'll see as we go along, which appears to be a false dispute, because he has some very good answers... but we'll see his answer later.

But anyway, in the case of the parallel syntagm, he says that montage brings together and interweaves two or more motifs that recur in alternation. Example: a scene from the life of the rich and a scene from the life of the poor, images of calm and images of agitation. It's important to note that these syntagms are not taken in the same action. It would be another case when they are taken in the same action. You simply have scenes of rich people's lives and scenes of poor people's lives which are not linked, which are not linked. This will form a parallel syntagm, images of agitation, images of calm, the city and the countryside, the sea and the wheat fields, it will be a parallel syntagm.

Second type of a-chronological, non-chronological syntagm – you see, there's no chronological relationship between the images of the sea and the images of the land, the images of the countryside and the images of the city, there's nothing chronological about them. In fact, there's no common action that would enable us to say, Ah, well, that was before and that's after. This second type is the syntagm he calls a *bracket* syntagm. What he calls a bracket syntagm is, it seems to me, a syntagm considered to be made up of several independent elements from the same motif. He gives other examples, but I see a very clear example, I think, in [Alexander] Dovzhenko, where there are, in I don't remember which Dovzhenko film it is, several typical images that follow one another like this, indicating extreme cold. There's the first image, of a poor old man who's really sitting on his bench. You can see he's cold. The next image, a horse that can't move under the snow and that the farmer

is whipping. Third image, and so on, but you can come up with your own examples. Images that would be typical images of cold and that follow one another, and this would be the bracket syntagm.

So, you see, we've already got three syntagma: the single shot syntagm, again with everything you want in it, and this is a false syntagm, a pseudo syntagm, since it's divisible into all sorts of syntagms. And then the parallel syntagm, and then three: the bracket syntagm.

Four: the simultaneity syntagm. This is the descriptive syntagm, description as a narrative element. Example: It could be a series of images showing a house. A house, there's a tracking shot along the house, and then the garden, the garden attached to the house. It's a syntagm of simultaneity, since the garden and the house are supposed to coexist, to be simultaneous.

Fifth: alternating syntagm. Please note that this is not to be confused with the parallel syntagm, as the alternating syntagm is not non-chronological, but chronological. An alternating syntagm is defined by several consecutions, different consecutions, a consecution of images regarding pursuers, a consecution of images regarding the pursued. A consecution of images regarding... for example, if you think of *Birth of a Nation*, which featured famous alternating syntagms – images of the besieged, images of those who come to the aid of the besieged. You have an alternating syntagm, which is again very different from the parallel syntagm of a moment ago, since here we have a common action, a common action with various consecutions. So, this would be the fifth, the alternating syntagm.

Sixth: syntagm of continuous consecution. This time, there aren't several... it's a scene. What he calls, more precisely, a scene.

Finally, seven and eight: syntagms with discontinuous consecutions, either because the banal aspect of an action is suppressed – there's an ellipsis of the banal aspect – or because only certain episodes of the action are presented. The seventh case will be called an ordinary sequence, the eighth an episodic sequence. Okay, so this is the large syntagmatic.

And now you will say, let's move on to the large paradigmatic. So, you see, he's defined, he's keeping his promise, good or bad, it doesn't matter. His promise was to define rules of usage that could be called syntagmatic, and which relate to the analogical statements, the iconic statements of cinema. And you see, it's always premature, and we already find at this level... how, how does he get out of this circle, this clearly vicious circle? It's a statement because it's subject to syntagms, and it's subject to syntagms because it's a statement. That's why he absolutely needs the cinema of narration as a basic given.

But, well, well, well, so we wait for the large paradigmatic. Or perhaps there isn't one, and this is going to be very interesting, there isn't one for a very simple reason. It's because, as he says, in language, the paradigmatic can be very important, as important, and perhaps even more important than the syntagmatic. But what about in cinema? The paradigmatic is all the less important because it's infinite. Remember? The paradigmatic is the relationship between present units, meaning autonomous segments, and others that are absent and yet comparable in certain respects. But as he says: in a language, this is determinable. Let me take up my old *billard-pillard* example again. The paradigmatic is the /b/ and /p/ relationship. Did you say *pillard* [looter] or did you say *billard* [billiards]? There's a choice to be made. If I say, I said *billard*, it doesn't mean *pillard*. *Pillard* could have been there. But the number of

comparisons I have to make a given moneme – for example *billard* – the number of comparisons I have to make is limited... [*Recording interrupted*] [1:13:00]

... will send me back to *pillard*, what else? If there was a word: *fillard*, it would be a second one. You see, for a word... I say the word *mousse*, well, I'm sent back to *pouce* [thumb]. *Pouce, mousse... gousse* [pod]? Yes, yes, yes, very good, *gousse*. Yes. A few... but each time, it's limited. It's limited for a very simple reason: it's because the phonemes, the phonemes of a language are themselves limited, meaning the distinctive units of a language are limited in their relation to one another. So, I can take my second syllable and play the same game; in any case, it's limited. And it's on account of its own limitations that paradigmatic language is so important in linguistics. In other words, there are a number of determinable choices to be made.

As Metz so aptly puts it – and he returns to this theme on several occasions – the semiology of cinema is in danger of becoming more syntagmatic than paradigmatic. It's not that there are no filmic paradigms, no, of course there are. But it's precisely that there are too many. There's an infinite number. I quote, for those who are interested: volume I of *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*: “Since these images are indefinite in number, only to a small degree do they assume their meanings in paradigmatic opposition to the other images that could have appeared at the same point along the filmic chain”.<sup>4</sup> Or on page 69 – in any case, the paradigmatic side isn't going too well – again, you find the same thesis: “The image paradigm is fragile in film; often still-born, it is approximate, easily modified, and it can always be circumvented. Only to a slight degree does the filmic image assume meaning in relation to the other images that could have occurred at the same point along the chain. Nor can the latter be inventoried”. You see, precisely because it's not a language, so we have the large syntagmatic but a very small paradigmatic, okay.

When, when something arises... are you still with me? What arises – and here I can't... otherwise, here again it's to take into account all the points, even the strongest ones, of the semiocritical conception – it seems odd that these authors who want so much to be, not just fashionable, but to follow cinema in its most modern forms, it's rather odd that they are so much part of... though it may seem odd to us, that they're so much part of this fact of Hollywood cinema as narration, and that they've clung to it so much.

And Metz, right from his very first books, alights on a cinema that for the sake of convenience, we have called modern. Now, the most obvious commonplace concerning this cinema is that narration is compromised. Neorealism and the Nouvelle Vague have already broken with Hollywood cinema. So, does this mean that semiocritique confines itself to Hollywood cinema? Of course not. But what will he say? Metz, in fact, devotes an entire text, a long text, to this cinema in which people say that he breaks with narrative, and here are his first reactions... Metz's first reactions.

It's always he who speaks. Don't think I'm adding anything. Metz's reaction is to take a famous example, in *Pierrot le fou*, a very beautiful scene in which the couple escape from the apartment climbing down the gutter, and they get into a car that takes them along the banks of the Seine. But it's a very strange scene, because there are flashbacks. They are, the couple are in the car on the Seine, and Godard makes them go back to the point where they are climbing down the gutter, and starts over again, and so on, in other words, it's a scene of progression and retrogradation that seems to completely break the flow of the narrative.

And here, Metz has a very firm position, which consists in saying: not at all. This cinema is no less narrative than any other, it's absolutely narrative. So, he maintains the uncompromising position that cinema is narrative. The Hollywood fact remains. Cinema is narrative and remains so, and will remain so. He simply says that modern cinema forces us to invent new syntagms, and indeed, he did forewarn us about the list of syntagms. It is, it is... it's open. And here he invents a strange syntagm for the Godard sequence. In this passage, he says, Jean-Luc Godard, well yes, he invents a new syntagm, a new type of sequence, that we should call a potential sequence "that represents a new type of syntagma [...], but that remains, entirely a figure of narrativity". Well, he knows perfectly well that this doesn't work. A potential syntagm, which would explain the retrogrades and variants. Since there's repetition, there's retrogradation, a return to the scene with variants. There are repetitions and variants, and that's what breaks up the narrative.

And now his disciples get in on the act, because in the meantime, Metz has acquired a lot of disciples, and disciples are a good thing, always getting in on the act. And these disciples had an idea, and they found a diabolical accomplice. This diabolical accomplice was [Alain] Robbe-Grillet. And Robbe-Grillet threw them a word: *dysnarrative*. And Robbe-Grillet said: modern cinema is *dysnarrative*, and above all my cinema, meaning Robbe-Grillet's, is *dysnarrative*. They liked that, because it was a way of saying that it isn't non-narrative. It's *dysnarrative*. So, there was a good chance they'd be able to retain the idea of narration.

And I think it's only right to pay these disciples of Metz a great tribute, because they have carried out extraordinary analyses, which I find tremendously difficult. But they took their analyses very far, in order to – and in particular, to give back what they owed – apply them above all to Robbe-Grillet's cinema. And what is their schema? And these disciples are André Gardies in particular – I think that's how it's pronounced, [Dominique] Chateau and [François] Jost. Jost in particular has done considerable work on all these problems.<sup>5</sup>

Now I always go back to the most rudimentary question: what's their fundamental idea? Well, if you've been following me, their fundamental idea is self-evident. In other words, yes, with modern cinema, there's a change, a fundamental change of a structural nature. In other words, the paradigm takes precedence over the syntagm. There has been a structural mutation, a true structural mutation. The structure is no longer syntagmatic or predominantly syntagmatic, but becomes predominantly paradigmatic. What does that mean? I'm going to go very quickly here, because their analyses are extremely complex, extremely... I refer you to two books: Gardies, *Le cinéma de Robbe-Grillet* and Chateau and Jost: *Nouveau cinéma, nouvelle sémiologie*.<sup>6</sup>

Well, what does a predominantly syntagmatic structure do? It ensures the accumulation of story, the accumulation of episodes of the story, the accumulation of episodes and their evolution. In fact, you'll recall that a syntagm is a combination of elements. The syntagm is progressive by nature. It ensures that the narrative unfolds, that it is both enmeshed and open, that it preserves the past and opens towards the future. So, it favors what's known as classical narration. As you'll recall, a paradigm is the comparison of present units with absent units that are comparable in some respect. And it's governed by *commutability*. What is commutability? Let me remind you that commutability exists between two elements  $u$  and  $u'$  when you have three... I mean two syntagms, two different syntagms,  $v, u, w$  and  $v, u', w$ . At that point, you'll say that the two syntagma that have  $v$  and  $w$  in common, and that have  $u$  and  $u'$  as the difference, are commutable.

I'll use an example from last time just to make things clear: the cushions on the old billiard table, right? You know that a billiard table has cushions [*bandes*]? The cushions of the old billiard table, the old looter's gangs [*bandes*] are commutable. This time you have:  $v w u$  and  $v w u'$ . Old billiard table cushions, old looter's gangs. Do you agree? Assuming a predominantly paradigmatic narrative, what will you get? Well, a barrel of laughs. Why would that be? Normally, from a paradigmatic point of view, it's the rule of selection, meaning you have to make choices. Did you say billiard table or looter? I didn't hear: billiard table or looter? But what allows me to choose is the syntagmatic development. I say, "Oh dear, that old billiard table had cushions". Up until then, someone who doesn't hear well hasn't the means to choose. The old looter had a gang. I wrecked the cushions of the billiard table [*J'ai crevé les bandes du billard*]. You see there's no way to choose yet. But if I rip the baize of a billiard table, ah, in that case it must be a billiard table we're talking about, it's not the looter because although you can speak of *killing the old looter's gangs* [*crever les bandes du pillard*] you can't... and so on. I continue.

The syntagmatic development gives me reasons to choose between commutable elements. If you have a predominance... – I'm sensing that what I'm saying is complicated, I'm not going to go into all that now, I'm fed up with it – If you don't have... if you have a weak syntagmatic, I dare say, you're lost. If you do have a syntagmatic, well, you've got a paradigmatic that's all the stronger for the fact that not only will you have commutable elements, but also for the fact that there will be a permutation of commutables and you will have no way of choosing between them. In other words, what you'll have is something undecidable between the two commutables. You'll have something that is clearly undecidable between the two commutables. You'll have something clearly undecidable between the two commutables, namely: did you say *billiard* or *pillard*? I said both at the same time. Ah well... ah well, I said both at the same time. This will make for a strange story: the old looter's gangs are the cushions of the old billiard tables. Well, yes, that's how it is, isn't it? It's like that, it's both. Okay, then.

Damn it, I lost the key! No, I've got it, no I've found it again. With a normal syntagmatic, you don't have much of a problem. You had the key, you lost it, you found it. You've gathered things together, advanced and made your operation evolve syntagmatically. If your syntagmatic starts to falter, you have three commutable formulas: I have the key, I've lost the key, I've found the key. There's no way to choose between the three, as there is a permutation of commutables. You have a poor syntagmatic but with a rich paradigmatic. Boris has betrayed Jean. Boris has saved Jean. Jean has betrayed Boris. If you have a strong syntagmatic, it can be worked out. It's all successive episodes. As Metz would say, it's a syntagm with discontinuous consecution, with episodes. But if you don't have a syntagmatic... If you only have a strong paradigmatic? Yes, Jean has betrayed Boris. No, Boris has betrayed Jean. And then Jean has saved Boris. And then, lo and behold, Jean and Boris are the same person. With the example of the key, you will have recognized *Trans Europ Express* [1966], a passage from Robbe-Grillet's *Trans Europ Express*. And in Boris and Jean, you will have recognized the great theme of Robbe-Grillet's finest film: *The Man Who Lies* [1968].

We'd say that dysnarration is defined by a paradigmatic structure with strong paradigmatics and poor or crushed syntagmatics. As a result, the narrative no longer accumulates and evolves, but proceeds by repetition and permutation of commutables. Why repetition as well as permutation? Because repetition is a zero permutation. Actually, it's permutation one, it's permutation one. So, what I'm saying is that this is going to become extremely complicated,

because how do you obtain a paradigmatic that crushes the syntagmatic? That's what Metz's disciples... – and Metz himself agreed with them, when he admitted the inadequacy of his initial solution: that all that was needed to account for modern cinema was to add syntagms – you see how for his disciples the answer is more complex, since what they will say is, yes, there has been a real structural mutation in narrative, but this mutation basically derives from the prevalence of the paradigmatic.

But then, on what does this primacy of the paradigmatic rest – and here the problem bounces back, and it's obviously going to drive them crazy – when narration seemed to demand the primacy of the syntagmatic? And so, they'll have to bring in all sorts of elements, including what they call parameters and micro-parameters, which, oddly enough, Metz was already talking about. These are elements that have no real importance in the cinematographic image. But these micro-parameters, notably costumes – we come back to clothes again -, notably costumes, will be called upon to play a role, a fundamental role, particularly in the cinema of Robbe-Grillet. And it's the introduction of these parameters into the image that will play a major role in reversing the paradigmatic-syntagmatic subordination. But I don't have time to go into all that. I just wanted to give you some indications.

So, you see, they'll be able to say they're absolutely in line with modern cinema, since they're introducing a new regime. What they don't want to hear about is non-narrative cinema. They'll say: yes, non-narrative cinema is experimental cinema. And experimental cinema isn't our fault, it's a fact that it's marginal. And in other words, since Hollywood, since the fact of cinema, that is, the constitution of a narrative cinema... that's why semiocritique is not very favorable, regarding the concerns of contemporary film criticism, semiocritique doesn't have much time for experimental cinema. On the other hand, it very much favors what it calls "modern forms of narration", meaning dynarrative, a dynarrative cinema that, in its view, is the very tendency that defines modern cinema.

But we're not quite finished, because in their caution, since we have to hand it to them, the extent to which... It's very interesting, I'll tell you the basic elements. If you read Jost and Château's book on Robbe-Grillet, it'll blow your mind, because they come up with a very rich paradigmatic. And constructing a paradigmatic, you'll see, is no mean feat, it would have you begging to go back to the most complex axiomatics in math. Well, we'll leave it there.

Syntagmatic, paradigmatic, what are they? As we've seen they are rules of usage, rules of usage. We might as well say, to give them their name now, that in other words these rules of usage are *codes*. They're codes. I start again, you mustn't confuse languages with codes. Metz said this right from the start, that language, made up of a double articulation with two kinds of elements, distinctive elements and meaningful elements, is not a code. The code consists in the rules of usage that determine the combinations and selection of these elements. That's what a code is. So, the paradigmatic and syntagmatic are codes.

You can see right away that they have no choice. There will inevitable be a hell of a lot of codes. The paradigmatic and the syntagmatic, the great syntagmatic about which Metz at one point wondered if it wasn't the exclusive code of cinema, was something he very quickly gave up. What's more, there are all kinds of codes that come to bear on the cinematographic image. Syntagmatics is just one rule of usage among others, and here too Metz leaves the list open, but formally distinguishes between five major codes... Oh la la la la! I can't stand this any longer.



There are... for example, so let's list the codes, shall we? First code: the large syntagmatic. Second code, which he doesn't mention: the paradigmatic. Even in predominantly syntagmatic cinema, there's always a small paradigmatic; in other cases, there's a large one. But here we already have two codes. Third code: there is, Metz tells us, the code traditionally referred to as "filmic punctuation". There's the punctuation code, meaning fade out, the shutter – you see the old shutter process in silent cinema – the iris – another old process more or less abandoned – and then the camera sweep – I'll pass quickly, I should have deleted it because I don't know what it is, – good, Well, some of you do. Okay, so the punctuation code. Pass. So, this is a third code. Fourth code...

Student: No, the sweep is when the camera spins round very, very quickly, like this... it makes a... it makes a...

Deleuze: Well, isn't that a pan?

Student: Oh no. Because when you pan, you can still make out something, whereas when you sweep, it's blurred, you can't make out anything at all.

Deleuze: Ah, so that's why he doesn't put it among camera movements...

Student: Yes, it's not even a camera movement.

Deleuze: Oh, right. It's not a camera movement. Okay, okay. Yes, I see, yes.

Fourth, third, I don't know... fourth code, camera movements, which form a specific code. Tracking, that's what it's all about, panning, dollies, hand-held camera, optical tracking like the zoom, and so on. This is the code for camera movements.

Fifth: there's also a code – or a set of codes, he adds, since these codes are also divided into sub-codes – there's also a particularly important code that organizes the relation between speech and visual data. Phew, it's about time! It's about time, because I'm sure you've noticed. The whole history of the cinematographic image as a statement subject to paradigms, that is, to language rules, or subject to syntagms, that is to language rules, was made without the slightest mention of the talkies. What's more, syntagmatics demanded that no account be taken of the talkies. Not only did it apply to silent cinema, it also applied to the image conceived as an analogical statement by way of resemblance. So, there was no question of the talkies. As syntagmatics ruled out any consideration of speech in cinema, there had to be a code for cinematographic speech, that is to say an audio-visual code. So, what is the audio-visual code? Well, you see: dialogues, voice off, whatever you like, well, and many others, we'll see.

Sixth, I don't know. And then there are all the codes of montage – here too it's about time – and then there are all the codes relating to montage. See what he means? Not only are there several codes, but it's obvious that these codes presuppose one another. Comparing the syntagmatic and montage, he says that they are both codes. But don't get confused, because if you go back to the list of syntagms, you may get the impression that montage is already presupposed. Yes, it's often presupposed, but not always. Because, if you go back to the list, it's obvious that the first syntagm – the single shot – doesn't presuppose montage. But, as I see it, all the others do presuppose montage. If you make a bracket syntagm or if you make an alternating syntagm, montage is already implied.

Yes, but Metz's idea – and there's no need to criticize him unjustly – is quite simple: all cinematographic codes presuppose one another, interweave and refer to one another. It's simply that legally and abstractly, they can be differently defined. Because it's true that many syntagms presuppose montage, but what makes me say that syntagm and montage are still two codes? Firstly, because there are syntagms independent of montage, and secondly, because montage exceeds all these types of syntagm, since what is that montage does so well? Joining different syntagms. So, the criteria for montage as a code are not the same as the criteria for syntagms. And in the manner of Eisenstein, you can very well conceive of a metric montage, a rhythmic montage, a harmonic montage. But what you don't have is... a harmonic, rhythmic, or metric syntagm.

And at the same time, montage itself will, in certain respects, presuppose syntagms, just as syntagms will presuppose montage, and so on. So, these five codes won't stop intermingling, and there will be many more, many others. There will be many more, because as Metz insists, this business isn't finished yet, because cinema, as a cultural form, is also subject to non-cinematographic codes. It is subject to non-cinematographic codes such as, for example, a moral code. And moral codes play a major role in cinema. It's subject to pictorial codes, sculptural codes, etc. which are not specifically cinematographic codes. In Hollywood, for example, there was a moral code that says a kiss shouldn't last longer than a given time. It's a moral code that's not specifically cinematographic, yet it governed Hollywood narrative cinema.

So, you have all the non-specific codes that weigh on cinema as a cultural formation, and then you have the specific codes. The specific codes are the rules of usage that concern the iconic or analogical image as such, meaning as a cinematographic image. You can see that there are five or six of these codes... [*Recording interrupted*] [1:49:54]

### Part 3

... so it's a very complex theory since, once again, I've only given the basics.

Well, we'll just have to see, and now I'm going to make a confession. I'll tell you why all this troubles me. Of course, I have no objections. I have no objections to make. I have problems, a series of doubts I'm going to share with you. All this really bothers me. So, of course, this may seem like a series of objections, but make no mistake, they're not objections at all. In other words, it's all... well, well. Anyway, Let's move on to the objections, no sorry, I mean the break... No! No! Listen... I've made an absolute slip of the tongue... let's move on to what..., so how should we react to all this, and again... No, it's a catastrophe, that slip of the tongue, but it's a slip of the tongue, isn't it? Don't forget that it doesn't mean a thing. So those who're smoking, over there... [*Recording interrupted*] [1:15:20]

... Because, as you are very sensitive to this – and now I come to the last problem I'd like to address – as you are very sensitive to it, there's a gap somewhere that has to be bridged. He has to find a way of bridging it. For, once again, it's because cinema is, in fact, a narrative cinema, that images can be likened to statements. As we've seen, these statements are analogical, iconic statements, that is, based on resemblance and implying a judgment of resemblance. On the other hand, and at the same time, they are subject to syntagms and paradigms which are linguistic processes, and which, in turn, are also codes. Somehow, the

gap between analogy and code must be bridged. For analogy and code are strictly opposed insofar as the former proceeds, once again, by the determination of resemblance, while the latter proceeds by a treatment of conventional elements.

So, the operation of bridging the gap between the two is going to be a very, very delicate one, both for Metz and for Umberto Eco, whose position is not the same as Metz's – but then, it would take all day to recount all this – so it seems to me that, at a first stage, they show that their problem is to demonstrate that, in the end, analogy and code are less opposed than they seem at first glance. Many authors have said as much. And, as a first point, analogy itself always refers to codes. Why is this? Because resemblance is highly variable, and it varies according to the code by which we judge.

A simple example: a child, a child's drawing. A child judges the resemblance of his drawing when he draws a horse, or when he draws a man, when he draws his daddy. He has certain criteria for judging resemblance, he is not without criteria for judging resemblance; they are quite different from the criteria for judging resemblance used by an adult. It could be said that every analogical image refers to socio-cultural codes that are responsible for evaluating the resemblance between an image and its referent, as we say. Umberto Eco, in particular, has made a long study of this aspect. And you can see that this is only the first step, because the socio-cultural codes for judging resemblance are not specific to cinema. They're the social and cultural codes of a given society. So that's not sufficient for us, because what we're calling for, no, what we – I'm talking about a fictitious “we” – what the semiocritics... what semiocritique is calling for, is something else. It's a question of bridging the gap between the analogical image as a cinematographic image and a code specific to cinema. We need to find a code specific to cinema. We've already found the code specific to cinema: it's the syntagm, and the others: montage and so on. But how do you bridge the gap?

And that's where Metz' great thesis comes in, to which Comtesse alluded earlier, namely that fortunately, he says, – Eco will have another solution – but Metz' solution will be – I'm summarizing a lot – what is Metz's grand thesis? Fortunately, thank God, in an analogical image, there's always something other than the analogical. In an analogical image, there's always something else. And it's this something else that the specific code will focus on. In other words, there is no such thing as a purely analogical image. The analog image always contains something non-analogical. This is what he tells us in the following page of *Essai sur la signification au cinéma*: “It is not because an image is visual that all of its codes are likewise... it is not because an image is visual that all its codes are likewise. It's not only from the outside that the visual message is invested by language”. What does he mean, from the outside? Yes, the visual message is invested by language... [Recording interrupted] [1:59:08]

... by language, for example a photo caption – “But it is from within its visuality, it's from within its visuality, intelligible only because its structures are partly non-visual... because its structures are partly non-visual”. He means something quite simple, and concludes: “So the beyond of analogy is the forms in the sense of [Louis] Hjelmslev” – you see, a linguist – “that is to say, the structures” – and he concludes by saying – “Not everything in the icon is iconic”. Not everything in the icon is iconic.

He means something very simple, just think about it: in a painting, a classical painting, a portrait of a woman, there's a resemblance. Already, the resemblance varies, the judgment of resemblance varies according to the society. That's the non-specific code for judging

resemblance. But how is the resemblance attained by the painter? Let's say that the portrait of the woman is an iconic, analogical image. How does the painter attain the resemblance? He attains the resemblance through means that themselves bear no resemblance to the means that produced the same or similar qualities in the model. I mean, how can I put it, the flesh – I'm weighing my words – the flesh tone and the presence of blood beneath the skin, is produced naturally in the model by a certain phenomenon that I'm unable to specify. The flesh tones reproduced by the painter obviously depend on pictorial means, namely, the different ways of producing flesh tones. This has been a major problem for painting. It's been a huge problem for painting: how to create flesh?

There's a book that came out recently that's very, very good, very interesting, very amusing on this point, on this theme of flesh tones, how to recreate flesh. It traverses painting from the Middle Ages to post-impressionism, where two great painters, Van Gogh and Gauguin, after the impressionist period, rediscover this fantastic problem of how to recreate flesh. They rediscover it upon new foundations. But how? You could say that it's obvious that Van Gogh's way of recreating flesh tones has very little to do with Titian's. They employ completely different means. In any case, these means of making flesh that resemble the model's flesh do not, themselves, resemble the means by which nature produces these flesh tones in the model.

You see, it's quite simple, just go back to the formula: not everything is iconic in an icon, not everything is analogical in an analogical image, of course! And when he says that the visual message is invested by language not only from the outside, when I put a caption, but from the inside and in the very visuality that is only intelligible to me because its structures are partially non-visual, it's quite obvious that the pictorial structure is non-visual. Non-visual in what sense? In the sense that it involves not only color relations – you see colors, but color relations, though perhaps they are something you feel or understand, are something you don't see by definition. They're produced by something other than color relations, by much more than color relations, such as harmonic relationships of a quasi-musical type, which you can't see either, but which nevertheless make up the image itself, and which justify to the letter that not everything in the icon is iconic.

So, you see how they can move from the idea of the analogical image to a code that marks the rules of usage that will apply to the analogical image. If there can be codes – and this, it seems to me, is the semiotics' ultimate response – starting with syntagmatics, that apply to the analogical image, and if there can be specific, internal codes, and not just general socio-cultural codes, if there can be such codes, it's because every analogical image contains something that is non-analogical.

So, in this way they will form their highly consistent conception, but between what and what? It's as if you had two lines, it's like having two lines. I would say, “iconic-type narrative statement”, that's the first line, “iconic-type statement”, or what amounts to the same thing, narrativity, or dynarrativity, it doesn't matter. Or we could just as easily say, and you'll see why I'm adding this: “manifest scene”, manifest scene. As a complement, corresponding to the iconic statement, you have the “specific code”, which applies to what is not iconic in the image. You can call this the structure, the signifier, the signifying chain, whatever you like. For example, the syntagm will be the signifying chain that also constitutes the deep structure, it doesn't matter what term you use.

To narrativity will correspond the story, the story being the organization of the signifying chain, the organization of syntagms, and so on. Corresponding to the manifest scene, you have the deep scene, which is equivalent to the deep structure. Let's drop this word for those who know it, but I won't even comment on it now: the *primal scene*. And once again, linguistics has tied the knot with psychoanalysis. And we're told that what Metz will do next with great refinement, some of his disciples follow, others not – it's odd, there are some to whom it says nothing – and you'll have the ultimate psychoanalytical revelation: that at the same time as we have a syntagmatic structure that constitutes the signifying chain in cinema, by the same token, beyond all the scenes it contains, cinema has only ever had one scene. The only cinematographic scene is the primal scene, in other words the “original crime”.

And when I told you of my admiration for a book like Jean-Louis Schefer's *The Ordinary Man of Cinema*,<sup>7</sup> that doesn't mean we don't find, in many authors, even the best, for example in Jean-Louis Schefer, this idea that cinema is inseparable from a crime that affects and concerns us all. What is this crime? Well, this crime is the primal scene. I'm afraid to ask, because I have the impression that there are some of you – and yet this is a quite joyous thing – who have remained so untouched by psychoanalysis and so pure that you don't know what the primal scene is, but refer to a psychoanalysis dictionary because I don't want to spoil all your surprises and discoveries.

And that's where there's a fundamental link between cinema and crime in the form of... as some psychoanalysts say, cinema has only ever had to film one thing in all the variations you can think of: the primal scene, meaning that prodigious scene in which the child witnessed – what it was exactly, we don't really know – but a fundamental scene that was to mark them all their life, and in which they produced their own castration, an operation that continues to function at the very heart of cinema, if only in the form of framing, you can easily recognize the operation of castration. Well, because... I mean, I'm not exaggerating, all that. It's all been said, it's all been written. But I mean, it's there, you see, where this link between psychoanalysis and linguistics is made, which not only has been made on the side of linguistics and psychoanalysis, but which they have also felt the need to make in terms of cinema.

Well, now I have nothing but doubts. My doubts have increased with this business of the primal scene, but there you go. So, I'll tell you my first problem: my first problem – I sum up all my problems, all my problems at once, I sum them up through this business that's tormenting me. Because it's a vicious circle. No, sorry: wouldn't it be a vicious circle, wouldn't it be a vicious circle, because I don't see any reason to call the cinematographic image a statement, if it's not subject to syntagmatics. But I see no reason why it should be subject to any syntagmatic if it's not treated as a statement.

This bothers me, yes it does. So I ask myself, what can we do? Did the same vicious circle appear with Kant? Well, yes, maybe, maybe, but the post-Kantians didn't spare him, did they? And it's not certain that in Kant's work... but that's my ultimate problem. I'll move on to my first problem, I have just enough time to state it, and then I'll stop. Okay, I'll tell you my impressions. My first problem... as there are three – the fact of narration, the approximation of the iconic statement, the rules of language usage – so I have three problems. Three is quite sufficient. I'm not referring to the little psychoanalytical-linguistic detail. That's just for amusement, those aren't problems. On the contrary, they're a laugh.

My first problem, then, is this question of narration, because my question is: is narration a given of the cinematographic image, even if it is historically acquired? Is it an apparent given of the cinematographic image? You can feel what I'm having trouble digesting is the elimination of movement. I'm saying something simple – well, as simple as things seem simple to me – the main characteristic, the distinctive feature of the cinematographic image is its automatism, in other words, the fact that it moves. It's a movement-image. This has nothing to do with narration. It has nothing to do with it. There may or may not be narration, I don't see any reason why there should be. And I'm amazed, as I said, I'm really astonished, and it's not a feigned astonishment, at the way semiocritique throws movement out of the window, because it's very aware of the problem and just tells us that there's a semiotic gaze that has nothing to do with the cinephilic gaze, the cinephilic gaze, I suppose, being an apprehension of movement, and the semiocritical gaze being, on the contrary, a suspension of movement.

Hence the question: but what about the photogram? But I've tried to show – remember our previous sessions – that the photogram, it seems to me, is in no way detachable from movement, that this was even its difference from the photo, so we won't go back to that. Some might object that the photogram... as far as I'm concerned, I've tried to explain that the photogram is precisely a differential of movement, in the mathematical sense of the word, and is therefore absolutely inseparable from movement, and that this is what makes it something other than a photo.

So, I would say, in semiocritique, we are told that narration is an immediate given of the image, even if it's historically acquired. But it's an apparent given of the image, it's a manifest given of the image, and it's – there's no contradiction at all here – an effect of the linguistic structure underlying this image, it's both at the same time. Well, I don't think so. It seems to me that the only apparent given of the cinematographic image, at least in so-called classical cinema – we'll see about the other type later – in classical cinema, it is basically *movement* and absolutely not narration. So, narration is not a manifest given of the image. Even more so, I can't even say that it's an effect of a language structure that's exerted, that's exerted on the image. Why can't I say that? Because these are points we haven't yet looked at.

But I'm wondering, when does narration come into the picture? This is just to give you some points of comparison, so that it's clear. Once again, I'm not claiming to be right, I'm just saying a very simple thing, as we've seen over the last few years. For those who weren't here, I'll summarize it. If you allow yourself the movement-image, you also give yourself something very special called the movement-interval. If you relate the movement-image to the movement-interval, if you relate the movement-image to an interval in movement, bizarrely enough – actually not bizarrely, it's quite normal – you have, how shall I put it... a particularization of the image is produced. The movement-image becomes particularized. In its relation to the interval in movement, the movement-image is particularized. In saying all this, I'm not speaking in any way about narration. It is particularized in terms of three fundamental types of image: the perception-image, the action-image and the affection-image.

I would say that narration is only the distribution of perception-images, affection-images, and action-images in accordance with a sensory-motor schema, in accordance with a sensory-motor schema. You'll have a narrative if the perceptions, affections and actions follow the sensory-motor schema. It's not complicated. But what is the sensory-motor schema? It is movement related to interval. I'm not introducing anything new. I'm just introducing the question of movement and the interval of movement.

So what I'm saying – and this is all I wanted to say – is that, for me, narration is neither an apparent nor a manifest given of the cinematographic image, nor an effect of a supposedly linguistic structure that underlies this image, but what is quite different, it is a *consequence* of the movement-image, movement being the only manifest given of the image and producing, as its consequence, narration, when this image-movement is specified according to the three principal types of image – perception-image, action-image, affection-image – in such a way as to constitute a sensory-motor schema. So, in my view, narration is generated solely from movement and the interval of movement, these being the characteristics and the only characteristics of the cinematographic image.

So I can say, narrative has never been a fact even in Hollywood cinema. Narration is not a cinematographic fact. Narration is a consequence of the following cinematographic fact: that fact being that the cinematographic image is a movement-image which, when related to the interval of movement, produces action-images, perception-images and affection-images. The combination of images – which has nothing to do with a syntagm – according to the sensory-motor schema the combination of images, the combination of action-images, perception-images, affection-images constitutes a narrative. In other words, there's a story. The story is this: How does someone react to a situation? Do you follow me?

So my first doubts concern the very fact of narration, my answer being: narration is not a fact, in Hollywood or anywhere else. Is dynarration a fact? Those who followed what we did last year know that, as far as I'm concerned, no... just as I said that narration is not a fact but derives from the movement-image and the specification of the movement-image according to the three great types of image, I would say that the modern fact of dynarration is no more a fact than it is the effect of a language structure that would be paradigmatic instead of syntagmatic. But dynarration is the immediate consequence of the rise of the time-image, and when the time-image frees itself from the movement-image, when cinema accedes to a direct time-image, and no longer an indirect representation of time that would depend on the movement-image, when cinema produces direct time-images, then dynarration necessarily follows, for one simple reason: the sensory-motor schema is broken, the sensory-motor schema that was the only rule by which narration could be identified.

In fact, as we've seen in previous years, and as I've taken up again this year, there are two fundamental direct time-images in cinema, one which is the *series* of time, that is, beyond the empirical succession of time... one which is the series of time, following the before and after, but not in terms of succession, as the before and after have now become *qualities* of time – we saw this when we looked at the question of fabulation, the before and after. And then there is the *order* of time, namely the coexistence of all relations of time as found, for example, in a filmmaker like [Orson] Welles, or in another way in a filmmaker like [Alain] Resnais, and again differently in a filmmaker like Robbe-Grillet. And it's the construction of these direct time-images that immediately results in dynarration, just as the construction of movement-images and their types immediately resulted in narration.

This would be my first comment. My second problem is connected to this but we'll stop here for the moment. We will start again next time beginning from this second problem, namely, just as it seemed highly doubtful to me that we could treat narration as a cinematographic fact, it also seems highly doubtful to me that we could treat the cinematographic image either as an analogical statement, or even as an analogical image. So, I'll leave you to think about all this. And if you didn't quite understand we can start all over again. [*End of recording*]  
[2:26:14]

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> See sessions 11 and 12, January 29 and February 5, 1985.

<sup>2</sup> See R. Barthes, *The Fashion System*, Berkley, Los Angeles: California UP, 1990.

<sup>3</sup> See *Communications* 15 (1970), pp. 1-10. Deleuze gives the reference to this text in *The Time-Image*, p. 285, note 4. The text also appears in Metz's *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, vol. II, Paris: Klincksieck, 1972.

<sup>4</sup> See *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, Chicago, Chicago UP, 1990, pp. 26, 69.

<sup>5</sup> On dysnarrative cinema, see *The Time-Image*, pp. 136-137. On the books by Gardies and Chateau and Jost, see references below.

<sup>6</sup> Gardies, *Le cinéma de Robbe-Grillet*, Albatros edition, 1983 and Chateau and Jost: *Nouveau cinéma, nouvelle sémiologie*, 10/18 Paris: UGE, 1979.

<sup>7</sup> See Jean-Louis Schefer, *The Ordinary Man of Cinema*, New York: Semiotexte, 2016. On Schefer, see session 8 of the Cinema 3 seminar, January 17, 1984. See also *The Time-Image*, pp. 36-37, 168, 185, 201, 263, 267.