

**Gilles Deleuze**

**Seminar on Cinema: Classification of Signs and Time, 1982-1983**

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### **Part 1**

... So, you see the problem, right? Once again, the problem is: what indirect images of time will result from the composition of the movement-images? Once again, we'll proceed in order, that is, we do not exclude there being cases in which direct images of time are given, direct images of time which we could call time-images just as we've spoken of movement-images. But it happens that, for the moment, we have no idea about these cases. So, it's enough for us to say, well, insofar as movement-images are composed, we can only hope for one thing, for the moment; we can only hope for one thing: to reach indirect images of time. And no doubt, the composition of movement-images and indirect images of time are identical, at the extreme. And here we have seen a whole portion, a whole first part, of this enterprise: making indirect images of time emerge from the composition of movement-images; we have seen this with regard to extensive movement, that is, movement in space.

And we have seen that time arises under two aspects, time as the Whole, [*Pause*] and time as an interval, time as the Whole which makes us think of the aggregate of movement, [*Pause*] and time as an interval that makes us think of the smallest difference between two movements, or the passage, or the passage from one movement to another, as it tends towards a limit. And rightly or wrongly, it seemed to us that this was what, both from the point of view of theory and practice, had fascinated pre-war French cinema.

And then, we moved on to another aspect. Movement has another aspect which is intensive movement. And if extensive movement refers to the movement-image properly speaking, intensive movement refers to the reverse side of the movement-image, that is, to what we called the light-image. And you remember that, in fact, movement-image and light-image were like the reverse and the front side. So, it's as if we reversed the movement-image and now we put it on the light-image side. And one wonders what indirect image of time will emerge from the light-image. [*Pause*] So, this time, it's movement as intensity.

And these two movements are very different. Moreover, I would like you to sense that they don't have with soul or spirit -- because, no matter what we put on it, it's... we're using traditional words -- they do not have at all the same relationship with the soul and the spirit. If I ask myself what is the relation of the extensive movement with the soul, I would say that it is an object-subject relation; it is the relationship under which the soul is invited to think and to find the

reason for movement in space. [Pause] It's the soul as a faculty of thinking that addresses movement in space, and it's based on this that I was talking about a Cartesianism of the French school. Thought thinks extension and movement in extension, and as thought, what is the order to which it responds? It responds to the following order or requirement: to think the Whole of movement, or at least, to think the aggregate of movement in a Whole. And that corresponded fairly well to what we saw in Kant, being the mathematical sublime, [Pause] in the sense that in the mathematical sublime, it is thought which commands itself to think a Whole of movement and which, henceforth, forces the imagination to come up against its own limit, which is the imagination.

When it's a matter of intensive movement, we enter another region of the soul, and this is not surprising. It seems this time that we are entering the region of the lived experience of the soul [Pause] and that its relationship with intensive movement is no longer a relationship of subject-object thinking or reflection, but that its relationship has become a vital relationship. And this time, it is not thought which gives or it is not spirit which gives a certain order which would be the order to think movement in its aggregate, but it is like the movement under its intensive form which penetrates right through the soul and which forces it [Pause] to think about intensity... [Pause] No, not even: I would say, which forces it to experience intensity or to discover in it an intensity that it didn't know at first. This is why it should come as no surprise that this time, this other figure of time is fundamentally linked to the soul in the form of its falls and rises. [Pause]

It is therefore necessary to conceptualize almost a series of what? A series of avatars, a kind of adventure of soul through the experience of intensity, and it's a completely different atmosphere than the one we saw previously with extensive movement. So, in this adventure, let's try, I said, I would like to rely on a lot of authors at the same time, to retain certain moments, right, so certain moments. But these are extremely floating moments. This adventure is extremely difficult to relate. And I divide it into times in this way to try to be clearer. First, let me add a parenthesis on all this. Are there any questions? Are there any problems? And on the point we've reached?

Georges Comtesse: I would like to ask a question, a clarification rather. When you, in relation to Kant, when you spoke to us about, about the instant, the instant as a degree of intensity therefore in relation to the degree zero, this instant, it's not... that therefore differs both from the variable present, as the interval of time between two extensive movements, and therefore it also differs from the instant equals zero.

Deleuze: Exactly.

Comtesse: So, that differs from both, but insofar as this instant, which is a degree of intensity, is therefore the instant of an ascent, of a reconversion, of a reversal, in relation to zero, it's therefore an instant which is already in a distribution of intensity, therefore in a possible order, an order of distances. But if this instant that defines them as the before of a future that is already here and of a beyond of a past that recedes indefinitely in it, can't we... if this instant differs from a variable present since it's this before and the beyond in relation to a future and to a past, can't we call this instant itself a new present, that is, a pure present or a present of caesura? In other words, isn't the instant that we speak of as... even if we speak of a degree of intensity, isn't this a new intensive present, no longer variable, but invariable? That's my question, since this

present, ultimately, is the present of an instant of shelter, the instant of shelter, that is, the instant that has recourse to the path of challenge or rebellion of the spirit, therefore to a presence of spiritual being. Could this spiritual being be the luminous intensity of an invariable present? Those are the questions.

Deleuze: They are interesting, but their interest -- it's not a "but", this is not restrictive -- their interest seems to me above all terminological. I mean, it depends on your goal. I mean, I would tend to push the difference in nature between presence and instant to the maximum. So, we agree, we agree on one point: in lived experience, present and instant form mixtures. *[Pause]* Let's suppose we also agree on this, on this: the work of the concept consists, or rather begins, from the moment when we analyze a mixture. What does it mean "to analyze"? To analyze means here: to extract pure tendencies, not simply to analyze in the sense of extracting elements from the mixture, but to analyze the mixture according to tendencies, which tendencies alone are pure. So, if I try to analyze -- we have complexes of presents and instants in our experience -- there are two possible paths. *[Pause]*

In any case, let's suppose that the difference is accepted, that is, we tell ourselves: there is a difference between present and instant, it is not the same concept. On this, depending on your goals, you can tell yourself: it will finally be necessary for the instant to be a type of present, that is, there will be two types of present or x types of present; either you will tell yourself -- once again, it depends on the end you are pursuing, that you propose to yourself -- or you tell yourself, well, no, I would prefer -- what does it mean "I would prefer"? nor can we prefer just anything, it has to be possible -- I would prefer to dig as much as possible into the difference in nature between the present and the instant. *[Pause]*

I would say, as for what Comtesse has just said, for me, the present is inseparable from a certain, literally, extent of time. Why do I use this term "extent" [*étendue*]? Because, precisely, I believe that the present, for my part, I would say, the present is a notion that fundamentally refers and expresses the relationship of time with an extensive movement, with a movement in space. In this sense, as we say, a present is a lapse; there is an extent of time in the present. In this sense, in fact, the present implies a duration and a type of duration; it is itself a duration. It is not in the duration, it is itself a duration, and I proposed to define the present as interval. Every interval is a present. *[Pause]*

I'm trying to clarify, at that point, how it's quite different for me from the instant, in an example that would bring them both together. *[Pause]* I always go back to my example, the shift from quantity to quality that I talked about regarding something else. You shift from one state to another. Let's say you go from a liquid state to a solid state. *[Pause]* I would say that any shift as a determined shift is a present. You shift from one opposite to the other -- I am not saying that this is the only case of a present, there are intervals which are something other than shifts of opposites -- but let us take as the case of an interval the shift from one opposite to its opposite, the shift from one opposite to another. Well, that's a present, the shift, *[Pause]* the passage from one quality to another, and I would call "instant", the upsurge of the new quality, which takes place in one move, which is therefore not an interval, but the extreme end of the interval, the interval being filled, or the change being accomplished, the emergence of ice. You will say the passage from solid state to liquid state is accomplished. That's it, no more ice.

I would call “present” the shift from the hairy state to the bald state, but I would call “instant” the emergence of the new quality, “that’s it: you’re bald”. [Pause] In that sense, I'm not saying that's the only sense of the word “instant” to me, but whatever all the senses of the word "instant" are, there will be that aspect whereby [Pause] the instant is defined as an interval... [Pause] sorry, the present is always defined as a variable interval. So, Comtesse proposes to consider the instant as an invariable present. [Pause] For me, this isn't possible because I admit that, on the one hand, I don't quite see how... [Interruption of the recording]

... And more, I go further, I tell myself, Comtesse's remark implies that he has an idea in mind, behind it, in his head, and that therefore this idea would result in another point that, I, I've reached. Because he surely poses another problem that I don't know. You'll tell it to us: why would you prefer that the instant be an invariable present?

Comtesse: Well, quite simply because to speak as you did, for example, through your simple words, the discourse that you stated, namely, if the instant as a degree of intensity, it is the before of a future and it is the beyond of a past which recedes indefinitely into it, how then can it be defined otherwise, since one defines it in relation to a future and a past only as a present?

Deleuze: Well, no, why do you want there to be only the present, future and past? [Laughter] There are so many other things in time.

Comtesse: All right, and given, given, for example, that the instant, perhaps that would be... For example, if we take the time that starts from the instant, well the instant is an instant of shelter, which means that the catastrophic event I was talking about occurs starting from a post, that is, from a position of shelter. It is already healed, and from this instant, it never realizes it, and it remains in a certain void in relation to this unrealizable instant. So this unrealizable instant, we can perhaps call what it never realizes as an instant, but from which it is to speak in this way of the sublime, that is, ultimately to take the spirit seriously, and to take seriously the spiritual being or the spiritual nature of man, how does one not see here a perfect continuity with, let's say, what always, always, a certain Christian tradition has thought as the meaning of the instant? Quite simply, if we take, for example, we take the... There is an old book by Georges Gusdorf called *Mémoire et personne* [Memory and Person] in two volumes.<sup>1</sup> What is very curious is that from the beginning of his book, he insists enormously on safeguarding, almost in Kantian terms but without quoting Kant, absolute safeguarding, that's it... for him, it's something that is essential, the absolute preservation of the meaning of the present, that is, of the present as the present of being. It is absolutely necessary that the present as present of being never waver. There must not be a cracked present and especially not a bursting of the present as the presence of being.

It is the same with Kant; for example, starting from this present which he calls "instant", well, the past will recede indefinitely, that is, the instant, the catastrophic instant, will remain eternally unrealized in relation to the moment of healing. I say "healing" because perhaps the word "healing" [*guérison*] comes from "sentry box" [*guérite*], and "sentry box" means to take shelter precisely from bad weather, to have a place to take shelter from the weather. This is exactly Kant's position, so we are healed. Good. How are we healed? One is almost always healed when one believes in time -- and especially not in just any time -- the supreme healing is to believe in this instant, or in this invariable present as the present of shelter which calls upon the spirit or

calls upon a challenge to the spirit, a rebellion to the spirit, that is, to the spirit of being or the presence of spiritual being. That's the problem.

Later, when Kant, for example, when Kant will approach, in the essay "On Radical Evil",<sup>2</sup> [1792], when for the first time he will approach, he will approach, for example, the force of radical destruction of the other as the other, radical evil, the inclination to radical evil, that force is a force that he is going to think, but perhaps within an invariable present since he is going to bring this force along. Whereas he was brushing, for example, against a force of desire, a desire certainly unspeakable in philosophical discourse, but in any case, he was brushing against a force of desire, and he remakes the void of desire, that is, time, by saying I refer this force back to freedom, and therefore freedom will ensure a relationship to the present, and therefore will ensure the very conventional and very classic idea of a so-called possibility, which was introduced moreover by Christian discourse, of freedom of man. Always Kant tries to ensure here as a function, in other words certainly, of a present and of a freedom inside a certain void. The question is to know if this void, the void of desire that determines time, is this not engaging us in a discourse of neurotization, or of neurosis? Because the neurotic is fundamentally defined by the emptiness of his desire, which is a desire, of course, which remains inexpressible. What is the relation of Kantian discourse to neurosis?; that was my ulterior motive. [*Laughter*]

Deleuze: Ahhhh. I'll tell you, there that's... what you just said, I emphasize that because it seems very curious to me every time we read texts. When we read great texts, [*Pause*] what creates the difference between readers, or one of the things that creates the greatest difference between readers, it's not, it's not always what one might believe. Personally, I believe that in all great texts, and even the greater they are, the more it's this way, there is a comic spirit that runs through them intensely, but you never know where it is located. That's why great literature is the funniest thing in the world, and that's why writing is a joy. I mean, writing is always, literally always a way of laughing. And so, what creates the difference between readers is that, on the one hand, there are some people who do not know this elementary truth. So obviously, as is said, they take everything seriously; that creates a disaster, it creates disasters, it makes, that results in people who weep when reading Beckett or Kafka, [*Laughter*] you understand? That's just not right! But I'm not talking about that.

The others, that's what's disturbing: between two readers, we know very well that, apart from those I've just mentioned, we know very well that these texts are riddled with degrees of humor or degrees of intense comedy, but each of us does not distribute them in the same way. That's why I'm saying, about what Comtesse just said, and it's very difficult, we cannot say here one is right and the other is wrong if we agree on this; in any case, there is something funny in all that. This is basic. You can't read a book without telling yourself there's something funny in all that. And this funniness is going to be precisely, in my opinion, it's united to what you can call its deepest meaning.

Well, this funny something, in the text by Kant to which Comtesse is referring, there is this story in which, in fact, he tells us, he defines the dynamic sublime -- and it is prodigious, and this is a text of enormous beauty -- and he tells us: well, there we are, do you remember? The dynamic sublime is what reduces me to zero as a sensible being, therefore terror, but which at the same time awakens in me a faculty through which I discover myself as a suprasensible being. So,

nature reduces me to nothing as a sensible being, but what happens in nature awakens in me a suprasensible faculty by which I feel myself dominating it. This idea of the dynamic sublime is admirable, and he adds: on condition of being sheltered, which means literally -- if I am not, or as the Comtesse says, in a sentry box -- which means to say literally -- here we can see to what extent a beautiful sentence in a text has all sorts of meaning -- it means literally in Kant's text, in fact, if I am not sheltered, terror will be so great, I would feel myself as such a zero as a sensible being, my panic will be such that the suprasensible faculty by which I could consider myself superior to nature will be completely blocked. So, in the storm, I can experience the sublime dynamics of the storm only to the extent that I am sheltered, that is the literal meaning.

At the same time, for me, Kant, it's your choice, smiles softly or laughs intensely; he's telling himself: "hey, I'm managing to write a good passage," and to himself, he says: "well, yes", he says to himself, "ah the storm, it's beautiful! it's beautiful! but stay on the shore". And why does he say that, and why is this a properly Kantian type of comedy? Because he knows very well that, I believe, he knows very well that he is limping, and that he has one foot in pure Classicism and he has one foot in what is being announced, that he has one foot in the past, that he has one foot in the future; he does not really know what this future will be. This will be the future of his own disciples, the Romantics. A Classic foot, a Romantic foot. He's acting like a clown; he's acting like a clown.

But again, I'm saying it's the text's degree of humor, again; that doesn't prevent there still being yet another [degree of] seriousness. The degree of humor is taken between two [degrees of] seriousness; in other cases, this is another figure. What is the other [degree of] seriousness? Why doesn't he create it? There he has a serious reason for which he wants us ultimately to remain sheltered, and in my opinion, it does not depend at all on the interior of the text; it's completely outside the text. He wants, for reasons -- these are personal reasons for him, Kant... I mean, personal reasons, no, they are philosophical reasons -- above all, he does not want us being able to experience the feeling of the dynamic sublime in action. Supposing that I experience it in the storm as I am shaken by the storm, at that moment, the storm reduces me, me as a physical being, to zero, and at the same time, it raises up within me the suprasensible faculty by which I exist as an infinite being. I can only experience it within sacrifice.

From there, we come back to cinema. I am thinking, for example -- we will have the opportunity to talk about this later -- of H el ene in "Nosferatu"; she offers herself in sacrifice, she gives her life as a sensible being. She gives her life to the Vampire, but at the same time, she discovers herself as a suprasensible being, and she rediscovers pure light. The spirit of sacrifice, the spirit of sacrifice actualizes [*prend en acte*] very well the two aspects of the dynamic sublime, the reduction to zero of my physical being and the elevation of a supra, supra, suprasensible being. Why doesn't Kant want that? Why does he henceforth want us to stay safe? Because for him, this can only be realized by and within the moral law, [*Pause*] and therefore it would be very serious for him to grant to the play of nature in the dynamic sublime something which is reserved only for pure morality, namely the story of the spirit of sacrifice.

So, myself, I wouldn't be like Comtesse, at the level of the text itself, that is, that's why a textual commentary is infinite. Each person can put there not what he wants, but the texts, for example, what it insists on, and on which it places a serious emphasis, there would have to be, there were

typographical signs in that period, there was the famous point of irony, to show clearly that what was being said was no longer serious. Anyway, it's not good either to insert points of irony – it's hard to know, in what someone says -- I believe that degrees of humor, degrees of laughter, degrees of comedy are hinges and not only hinges, are passages, are... play a fundamental role as soon as soon as someone speaks. This is why speaking is fundamentally, at the limit, is fundamentally non-serious; writing is fundamentally not serious, all that, but it is very important, very important. So, what amuses me in this, for example, I have no doubt that Comtesse inserts his points of irony, his points of comedy in the texts, but it's not in the same place as me. So, he will put a serious accent on a particular passage of the text, and on the contrary, I will insert a comic accent by saying: well yes, obviously, it's good that, yeah... [*Deleuze does not complete the sentence*]

But anyway, to come back to this story of the instant, it's all the adventures that I plan to recount that will see in what sense... So, I would like for us continue after, with Comtesse, it's today that I have to talk about the instant and about, and about this story of the stepping back [*recul*] of the past and the imminence of the future. Understand, for me, the instant, for me, the present, is fundamentally linked to the relationship of the soul with movement in space, with extensive movement. Once again, I see, what are your presents? -- what I am calling “your presents”, and when I was telling you, you are made up of an infinity of presents -- your presents are all the intervals that compose you, and you are composed of intervals, interval between two steps, interval between two breaths, interval between two heartbeats; presents are nothing else. That's what a present is, it's an interval; I told you the bird's present is its interval between two wing beats.

So, this is a fundamentally variable present, and since I do not conceive of intervals which are not variable, moreover I don't conceive of intervals which do not tend towards [*Pause*] an infinitely small difference, that is, at the limit, the vector of the present is precipitation, it's acceleration. In this sense, I can say the present tends towards the instant, but with all certainty, the instant is a limit, and I would never say that the instant itself is a present. So that, when I have finished with the adventure of intensity, I would like for us to come back with Comtesse into this story of the instant. And is there anyone else who wanted to speak?

A student: Please, I'm going to... [*Inaudible comments, on the topic of the soul*]

Deleuze: I tried to announce already that I oppose intensive movement to movement in space. So, if in intensity, as I tried to show, there is a fall and a rise, it is obviously not in space, but in time. So, if you ask me, “how does the soul fall and rise in space?”, I'll say, the question does not need to be asked since the soul can only fall and rise again in time. So, the question, it seems to me, has no object, right?

The student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: It's what?

The student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: When you say, "you", you mean "the soul", is it the soul that produces itself? Well, no, since if you had followed -- you were here, I remember, the last time -- if you had followed what we saw on the dynamic sublime, if you grasped a little what Kant calls, for example, the dynamic sublime, you see quite well that it is a movement which affects both nature and the soul. It is not the soul that creates storms, for example; it's nature that creates storms. On the other hand, that something... at the sight of a storm, sheltered or not, that is another question, that something occurs in the soul, yes. So, to your question, "is it the soul or is it something other than the soul that creates falls and rises?", I would say here too the question hardly arises since it is the intensive relationship of the soul with something else that creates falls and rises.

The student: [*Inaudible comments*]

Deleuze: What you are saying is interesting because it is very legitimate. That amounts to saying, and there, I am always very sensitive to this, that a set of questions to which someone is closed, what you are saying, what you are telling me, that amounts to saying, what you are in process of recounting, for me is pure nonsense. So, I'm saying, very good, that's good then, that's very good. One cannot be open to all questions because what you are saying seems rather to indicate that you are very open to questions of movement in space. So fine, we can't be open to all the problems. For me, there are also problems that say absolutely nothing to me; when I hear them, I ask myself, but what is that? There is, for me, there are problems; these don't interest me. All you're saying is that intensity isn't something that really interests you; that's valid, that's valid. This is proof that there's something else that interests you, but then you should not force yourself, you should not exhaust yourself too much. [*Laughter*] Yes?

A student: [*A few words are indistinct at the start*] ... I had the impression that this way of setting up these three terms, present-time-instant, you are starting from a [*indistinct words*], the present was the reintroduction of the instant into something more global, and that the most important thing would be time. Whereas for me, I would tend, generally, starting from a presentiment or something else, to think that, I have the impression that the present while losing, which with the instant, while losing all temporal dimension, gains something much more important perhaps in temporality, which is timelessness.

Deleuze: Yeah?

The student: Wait, I mean intensity, intensity as something absolutely that is not referred to time.

Deleuze: That, that, this is something else again; in that kind of perspective, that would amount to saying, a veritable analysis of intensity cannot occur as a function of time since intensity here is in relation with... although we might call it other names, it's in relation with a kind of eternity.

The student: Is the a-temporal, with an "a", not "la", but the a- [*l-apostrophe-a*] isn't it still something other than eternity?

Deleuze: Okay, oh, you can always, you can always distinguish, can say yes, there is an atemporal that should not be confused with eternity. Anyway, it will have in common with



eternity to be outside of time. It's possible, it's possible, I don't know, I don't know; it is up to you to construct your problems.

The student: That is, when a present, a moment, a present privileged by us would become profoundly present, then it would cease to be present and so to become the instant, to realize the very idea of an instant...?

Deleuze: Yes. I don't mind, I don't mind, but why are you saying based on that...

The student: ... the temporal realization.

Deleuze: This is where I don't understand how you draw the conclusion that, henceforth, there is no relationship with time. If I go back to my examples which are typically examples of intensity -- going from water to ice; to call "instant" the emergence of the new quality, ice -- but all that implies a completely different time than [*Pause*] extensive movement. It seems to me that it is inseparable from a time; [*Pause*] it seems to me that the instant is as deeply inscribed in time as the present itself, I mean at first glance, generally. I would simply say, it is surely not an interval. [*Pause*] Why does it seem to you that the instant and time are not directly related?

The student: That's my general sense of it.

Deleuze: That's your general sense of it. That's quite valid. Yes, you have a feeling, an orientation, or ultimately you desire it, you desire it, so that's possible.

The student: It seems to me that this is somewhat like the difference we'd find, I have the impression of sensing something like that in [Gaston] Bachelard's dialectic of duration, and in this type of differential, precisely starting from a problematic of the instant as purely a differential of duration in his former teacher.

Deleuze: But his former teacher, [Henri] Bergson, was full of tricks. I mean, Bachelard, and this is fair play, when he takes issue with Bergson, he gives such a, such a reduced image of this and creates such a summary image of Bergsonian duration, but he's right because he has something else to say; he must therefore simplify. Listen, maybe we'll see that there will be a way to settle matters, for Comtesse and you and me, if we follow these adventures. That depends.

Me, I would say each time, in a text, as I was talking about the degrees of humor present in any text, you know, a text is apparently written in two dimensions, but there is a depth to the text. There is, in fact, a third dimension which results in there being several degrees there, and it looks homogeneous generally, but there is a sentence which refers to such a dimension of depth, another sentence that refers to another level of depth, etc. That's why it's always difficult... a page always involves a perspective, and it's not at the same level, the sentences, or even sometimes when you have a relation of a main clause to the subordinate, well, the subordinate is not at the same level as the main clause. And that's it, these are effects of perspective that create a text's beauty, that create a great text's beauty. When we talk about authors like, for example, like [Marcel] Proust who multiplies the subordinate clauses, you see clearly that not only do the

subordinates refer to other tenses than the main one, but they refer to other levels of depth, to other effects of perspective than... Good.

So, listen, I'm trying to tell you, I'm trying to tell you this story, but without sticking to a single author, because I could have tried telling you about [Jakob] Böhme, tried telling you about [Friedrich] Schelling, all that. I told myself, well, but they're so, they're such subtle texts, so... they're not too subtle for you, but they are... Myself, I derive something from them, I derive something quite succinct, and I would say, here is how everything begins in this story of the light-image and its intimacy with the soul.

First stage -- we will state it like this for convenience -- first stage: well, the light which is one with the spirit, we have seen it -- since it is not with the spirit in the relation of an object to a subject, of an object of thought to a thinking subject, it is really life which is the spirit; it is spirit as life, or life as spirit, it doesn't matter -- there we start from this light, and we say, well, this light, we can call it God. God is light. In Böhme, there are very beautiful texts; we will find in Schelling, there are texts of this type, you have to let yourself go there, it's, at this level, it's really not, you understand... what would the objection mean, "oh no, God, it's not light"? [Laughter] Well, God, it's light, but, but, but, nonetheless, Bergson is not their disciple; he finds that in his own way, and we are not surprised, but by that very fact, despite that, by that very fact, God or the spirit, it's the invisible. [Pause] It's the invisible; light itself, it's the invisible, it's the state of perpetual diffusion. [Pause] And in all its trajectory, it doesn't run into anything that could make it visible. [Pause] So I think it's Bergson who rediscovers a theme of Romanticism, and even of a certain mysticism. When he takes up this theme, he explains to us, a light which diffuses, a light in the state of pure diffusion and by nature invisible, is transmitted in all directions and does not reveal itself and does not reveal itself anywhere. [Pause] This light-spirit-God, let's follow the Germans and call it the *Grund*. This is the foundation, [Pause] this is the foundation or the first principle; [Pause] this is all about principles. There you go.

And what is the problem? The problem is that there must be in the spirit-light, there must be in God something which is not to be confused with it, and which is what? Which is the will to reveal itself. Even deeper than God, there is in God a will to reveal itself, to manifest itself. God itself does not manifest itself. I insist on this because you understand, this is an "idea"; you have to think about it a little bit, you have to dream about this idea. You see already, once again, it's not a question, it's really not a question of arguing; it's about trying to understand what he's getting into, to what extent it's Romantic or to what extent an author like Jakob Böhme is already getting involved. Something is needed beyond the foundation. The light-foundation is everywhere, everywhere diffuse, in that way, invisible, unmanifested, unrevealed. There must be in God a will which is not to be confused with God itself and which is the will [Pause] of God to reveal itself, or the will by which God will reveal and manifest itself. In other words, the *Grund* must refer to an *Ur Grund*, *Ur Grund*, that is, a more than foundation, a beyond the foundation. [Pause] If pure intensity is called "light", it must be said that pure intensity refers to an even deeper intension. The intension of intensity is this will to reveal oneself, to manifest oneself. [Pause] The foundation refers to more than foundation. [Pause]

On that, I would say, because we could confuse, we could say, well that's very well known. The Platonists already said something like that. The Platonists, in fact, did not stop after Plato and

even after Plotinus, the whole Platonist school, did not stop getting involved in an undertaking which, literally, had no limit. In their theory of the One with a capital O, of the pure One, they never ceased to constitute a regressive series in which they always had to reach a purer unity, purer and purer. And it was already a bit of a tendency of Plato, but it was very discreet; it's with the Neoplatonists that it develops. And they say, there is first the One-Whole, with a little hyphen; first, there is the One-Whole. [Pause] And then there is the One beyond the Whole, the One from which the Whole proceeds. And then once again, an even purer One, because after all, that something proceeds from the One, it is an impurity of the One. There needs to be a One, from which nothing proceeds, as they say "the unparticipable One". [Pause] But the unparticipable One, a nothing does not participate in it, but it's what allows the participative One to participate in it. So there still needs to be an even purer "One"; [Pause] well, they embark on a theory that will animate what will later be called "negative theology". It's such a pure idea that nothing more can be said about it, good.

I'm saying, this story I'm starting from, it seems to be a bit like this light that refers more deeply, and you already understand that in fact, it's done too quickly, because in fact, it's just opposite. And here, Jakob Böhme, and here I believe that it still dates from Jakob Böhme... Ah no, that must have had, oh no, I withdraw what I said; there must already be seeds in the Renaissance. Jakob Böhme is at the beginning of the 17th century. He completely reverses the problem; for the Platonists, starting from the visible, it was a question of finding something that would be more and more invisible, more and more hidden. Whereas here, the movement is reversed; [Pause] it's a matter of looking for what will force the invisible to let itself be seen, to stop being invisible. What will make light visible? An *Ur Grund* is needed which is the will to reveal itself, to manifest itself. Well, I would say this first stage where the light is invisible there, diffused, diffused everywhere, we can call it, we could call it as well "infinite spirit" or "infinite distance in all directions". [Pause]

There we are; so, then, at this first stage only, I grasp hold of my invisible light, and it's strange, a will in it [the light], but which is not to be confused with it, a will to manifest itself. Why does God want to manifest itself? Well, faced with such a mystery, we retreat. This is what you will find in the middle of the 17th century in the Leibnizian formula: "why something rather than nothing?" And see why [there's] this reversal in relation to Platonism because here, and Comtesse would be absolutely right, it is a Christian thought, it's a thought of creation. Why was there creation, that is, why did God manifest itself? It didn't need to be manifest; it had only to remain pure light. So, if it is manifested, there was in It, It was the *Grund*, but there was a *Ur Grund*, a deeper than God that was God's will to manifest, as a presupposition of God by itself. It gets complicated. [Pause] Let's get away from this complex stage. [Laughter]

Second stage, second stage: [Pause] well, this light or the infinite spirit is going to meet its first condition of manifestation. [Pause] We are in the problem: how is light going to become visible? The first condition of manifestation, it's insofar as an infinite force splits into two infinite forces. [Pause] This is infinite opposition. Infinite distance in all directions has become "infinite opposition." It split into two equally infinite forces, one of which [Pause] is like light with the will to manifest and the other infinite force, where does it come from? It comes precisely from the will to manifest, if you want, rather the first infinite force; it is light, the *Grund*. The second infinite force, this time, it has gone into second position, it's the will to manifest itself as it brings

about the condition of manifestation. And what is the condition of manifestation? It is the abyss or darkness. It is therefore the split into light and darkness. Let's call this second infinite force -- because there, the texts are so difficult to..., I don't know, and so variable -- let's call it, using a term from Jakob Böhme, the *Ab Grund*. The *Ab Grund* [Pause] is what seems like private, separated from its foundation. In Böhme, there will be, and this is repeated in Schelling, a whole series of plays on words, which only German allows, and there as well, what a degree of, what a kind of humor... [Interruption of the recording] [1:06:41]

## Part 2

... All that is... But anyway, you see... And the moment of the splitting of the infinite opposition, it's very interesting. Anyway, it's very interesting for those who are interested in this. Because once again, the infinite split consists of exactly this: in the first stage, I had -- you have to, you have to ... well, it's a matter of sympathy, all that -- so you had invisible light and the will to manifest, the will to reveal, to exhibit [*faire voir*]. [Pause] There, now I am saying: we are witnessing the scission or the infinite opposition of two forces. The will to exhibit was not like a force that opposed the invisible light. It was like a "more than foundation" that worked within the foundation. There was immanence. Now there are two infinite forces in opposition. And one is like the light of our first step, and the other is the darkness that responds to the will to manifest -- this is strange -- although it's the opposite of that. [Pause]

A student: Why?

Deleuze: Why? Because they provide what will prove to be the first condition of manifestation, namely, light will reveal itself -- though it is not yet revealed -- only in its opposition to darkness. Well, [Pause] it's no longer infinite distance; it's absolute opposition, [Deleuze corrects himself] it's infinite opposition. [Pause]

This is a step further, and it corresponds, if you want to give a graphic representation of it, which you will find, and in Romanticism, and which you will then find -- we'll have to discuss it because here, I find, it gets included so much in all these currents -- and that you will find in Expressionism, both in painting and in the cinema, it is the image divided in two. I already have here, there is something like the birth of an image, but an image, an image of infinite opposition, it's a flickering image, right? But if there is an approximation of infinite opposition, it is the image, divided into two halves, light-darkness. There are paintings organized in this way, there are famous cinema images, at the beginning of German Expressionism, in which the diagonal divides an upper part all in light, a lower part all in darkness. Good. [Pause]

[Paul] Valéry will obviously be thinking this when he says, "to give back the light, supposes a somber moiety of shade"; "to give back light", that is, to make light visible, "supposes a somber moiety of shade".<sup>3</sup> The word "shade" [*ombre*] is bad, but all words are bad, it is not the shade which we will see can only arise much later; it is the abyss or darkness. There we have the second step. See that light has remained on its side. The will to manifest which was working in light has realized itself in darkness. Why? Because darkness is the first condition that will make possible the manifestation of light. [Pause]

Third stage: I would say -- but it's not so easy with these authors; it's me who is trying to put some clarity into it, and henceforth, something false, some, who is trying to place here... There are certain texts which call for some very clear commentaries, and there are others in which there are texts of such a nature that if you remove their kind of uncertainty, the kind of luminous halo that surrounds them, you break them, but all I'm saying is a way of speaking -- so it's that I transformed infinite distance into the infinite opposition of light and darkness. But the opposition of two infinite forces, infinite opposition, marks a zero-point. This time, this zero is what we can call *Un Grund*. [Pause] And it is in relation to this zero, this zero-point, that light offers us its first manifestation or visibility or revelation. Why? What is this zero-point? It therefore expresses as the balance of two opposing infinite forces, the abyss of darkness, the infinite distance of light. What do we call it? It's only here that we can speak of "black". [Pause] By opposing light, the abyss has imposed a state of equilibrium which is the zero-point of night, the black, and suddenly light reveals itself as white light. [Pause] And so we no longer have light as an infinite distance; we have light as a distance in relation to zero, to night, to black.

See why this is. Although the abyss and darkness were already black, we could not yet speak of black about the abyss and darkness. At the beginning of this third stage, we therefore no longer have infinite distance, nor infinite opposition. We have finite distance, or a whole play of finite distances in relation to zero. [Pause] Or why say the zero is black, zero, the balance between the two forces? Here too, we moved a little too quickly. We should have said, strictly speaking, that the distance between the two forces was opacity. [Pause] The boundary between the two forces was opacity. [Pause] This diagonal dividing the image in two was pure opacity. But the opacity on one of its sides, on one of its backs, on one of its facets, the facet stretched towards the abyss and darkness was black, and on its facet stretched towards light, it was white.<sup>4</sup>

Because -- and here, I am jumping from one author to another, but once again, as I am trying to discern an outline which is as much the outline of pre-Romanticism as Romanticism, I'm granting myself the right -- because as Goethe will recall, white is the first opacity of light; [Pause] it's the minimum opacity, black being the maximum opacity. [Pause] So the maximum opacity is degree zero; the minimum opacity is the degree that marks the distance in relation to the zero state. [Pause] There we'll have white and black being the first conditions of manifestation, or the second, as you prefer, the second condition of revelation or visibility.

See why this is -- since the first condition, we have seen, we can say about it, it was already a condition, we can say about it -- it was the infinite opposition with the *mise en abyme* in which the will to manifest had passed as into its opposite, that is, -- also there is a strange shift into the opposite -- the will to manifest, the second stage passed into its opposite, that is, into the abyss, in darkness, which was opposed light. But here now, it's white and black that oppose each other. They oppose each other along a finite distance which goes from minimum opacity, white, to maximum opacity, black. [Pause] So, in this third stage, I have and I hold onto the notion of distance in relation to zero, see, which was not contained at all in the previous two stages -- each of my stages has to bring me something new -- or if you prefer, the degrees of opacity, [Pause] and the degrees of opacity will form a scale. [Pause]

They will form a scale, and you can feel what will happen there, if I try, before detailing the scale of degrees of opacity. If I try to say what occupies this third step, what is it? Well, it is the

birth of the visible. [Pause] It's the emergence of the visible or what one could call the "appearing" [*l'apparaître*]. [Pause] And what does "appearing" imply? Let's begin: what is this scale? [81:00] Because [the scale] itself can borrow different forms from this third stage. And when we spoke about the Expressionists last year regarding cinema, we saw it in much more detail, and here, I'm just picking up a point. Because that also applies to philosophy; this also applies to thought; that also applies to painting, all that.<sup>5</sup>

The first form of this scaling, of these degrees of opacity, will be streaks [*stries*]. [Pause] Streaks, that is, degrees of opacity will enter into an alternating series, a white line [*raie*], a black line, a white line, a black line, let's say a luminous line, a dark line, a light line, a dark line. All that is well known; it's what you could call "the Venetian blind method", or the undergrowth method, light in the undergrowth – God, that's been analyzed in painting, and created and inspired masterpieces – light in the undergrowth with its alternating streaks of light and shadow, or the Venetian blind on the sleeping woman,<sup>6</sup> [Pause] the streaks of the Venetian blinds on the sleeping woman's face and body. There too, without speaking of painting, Expressionist cinema has given us images -- feel what I am saying – although it may not move, it is fully belongs to the movement-image. It doesn't need to move for that, in any case it doesn't need to move in space for that to belong to the movement-image. That belongs to the large intensive images of German Expressionism.

And this first aspect of degrees of opacity, that is, these alternating series of light and shade, you find them, it seems to me above all, above all, he's not the only one, in [Fritz] Lang's work, in Lang's work in his German Expressionist period, in which you have there some undergrowth of splendid beauty. You also find them in [Erich von] Stroheim's work who then uses the alternating series with blinds or with bars. In particular, in I no longer remember which of the great the Stroheim films, there is a sleeping woman whose whole body is streaked, whose whole body and bed are streaked by the lines from the blinds, which is an image of a beauty, of a very, very great beauty.<sup>7</sup> Well, see, I would say that this is a first way to organize the degrees of opacity by having the maximum opacity and the minimum opacity alternate, luminous white and black, the black of the abyss.

A student: Excuse me, but we could speak of streaks, of luminous white and black streaks which is a striated scene, the opening credits of "Psycho" [by Hitchcock 1960].

Deleuze: Ah, there, that's right, that's, I mean, that would create a problem for me. You are correct to refer to that, in fact. It's in "Psycho", you're sure, an opening with streaks?

The student: Before, before the shot, the displacement of [*indistinct word*] which will lead to the blinds...

Deleuze: Ah yes, you are right! But I wouldn't shift, to force things in telling you, if I remember correctly, there were relations between Hitchcock and Expressionism. He knows Expressionism well, right? That reminds me of something, I don't know where I saw it, but in his silent period, I don't know, but in fact, in fact, well, and then you have to think, each you ought to be able to think of some... There we have the great light in cinema; in the light-image, these are great moments, these kinds of... Good.

But I'm saying, a second way -- still remaining in my third step -- a second way, it's an entirely different way. Here, it's no longer a question of alternating series, of luminous white and the black of the abyss. It's not about streaks anymore. This time, it concerns something completely different, a mixture which itself passes through all the degrees, a mixture of luminous white and the black of the abyss, which will pass through all the degrees, with two arrows, towards the luminous, towards -- here, we will use, we will change words, we will no longer say white and black -- we will say, towards the light [*clair*] and towards the dark [*obscur*], and these will be all the degrees of the chiaroscuro. So, I would say, it's not an alternating series since in each degree you have a mixture, of light [*clair*] and dark [*obscur*]. And this time, it's like a mobile scale, whereas the scale of streaks is an immobile scale; this is a scale that constantly varies the values through which it passes. It is a completely different technique; this is the "chiaroscuro" technique. [Pause] And of course, of course, of course, they don't oppose each other, chiaroscuro-streaks, they are combined. Everything depends on the situations both in painting and in the cinematographic image, but I would say there too, there are gifts, there are attractions, there are enticements.

The "great one" of chiaroscuro -- this is well known in German Expressionism -- is rather [F.W.] Murnau, although there are some very beautiful chiaroscuros in [Fritz] Lang -- that doesn't prevent the one from being a chiaroscuro genius, that is, and who pushed it to a point, to my knowledge, no one pushed it [more], it was Murnau. And it happens, moreover, and I see at least one image, but there are surely others, or from Murnau in which, by a kind of coquetry, I don't know, he makes the direct transformation into a static shot -- if I remember, but since people are always wrong, then -- in a static shot from "Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans" [1927], in which, the first moment, you know, we are looking for the supposed corpse of the young woman, right, in the big black lake, and there are the boats and there is the lantern of each boat, the light of each boat streaking the water. And you have a series of streaks and alternations, alternating series of black stripe of the lake, then luminous stripe of the lantern of a boat, of a rowboat. And there is a kind of convergence in a moment, and everything is transformed into a chiaroscuro, a chiaroscuro in its pure state which, in turn, will climb all the mobile degrees of its scale.

Likewise, think of painting, where you find, for example, in Caravaggio, stripes that are extraordinary. So, I don't even need to refer to, something entirely different, to painting of undergrowth which, in landscapes, is a very, very important kinds of painting. As for chiaroscuro, well, this is a concern for the whole seventeenth century.

A student: Yes, but doesn't that appear as a problem of opposition? In Rembrandt, isn't that in fact a thematic of the degraded?

Deleuze: Yes, it is, absolutely, absolutely, absolutely, and that's exactly why I said, it's no longer about the infinite opposition between two forces, it's about distances, distances relative to a zero-point. Absolutely, we have entered the realm of a real degradation. But something like that, feel that I'm seeking transitions, when it comes to streaks -- who just spoke? [Deleuze seems to have heard something] -- when it comes to streaks, something of the opposition still remains, but in the form of alternation. It is already no longer opposition, it is an alternation. We have slipped from infinite opposition to finite alternation. When we reach the degrees of chiaroscuro, there is no longer any opposition, except between a maximum and a minimum. And I'm saying, no doubt

it's there that the birth of the visible really appears, the appearing of the visible. And yet, chiaroscuro hides there -- I would say, isn't this the first instant of the visible? -- yet chiaroscuro hides as much as it causes to appear, that is, it's, it's so much the instant, the first instant of the visible, that it's in their disappearance even as the thing, as things appear.

The same student: There is something that, there is something that strikes me in this model concerning something earlier. It's because that looks singularly arborescent to me, not only singularly arborescent, but an arborescence that also works with couples, and one wonders if this [arborescence] in your work... a bit in [Alain] Badiou's work. It stems from contradictions. One gets the impression of being in a, in something entirely dialectical. And with the passage from streaked chiaroscuro to, how would I say it, dispersed, dispersive chiaroscuro, it seems to me that we then return from the arborescent to the rhizomatic, [*Deleuze can be heard laughing or grumbling softly*] and that in addition, it seems to me, here I'm going to say a word that I can't find, I'm letting it out before having thought about it, it seems to me that we are going back to something qualitative...

Deleuze: Yes, listen there, I'm troubled and embarrassed because you're forcing me to talk about myself and to recall here... All the same, your comment, it's, I don't know, I understand that you're saying it in..., but I can't do that. I'm not saying what I think at all. I'm currently recounting to you the story which is Böhme's and Schelling's, and if you tell me "it's arborescent", this thing, obviously, that's even why I don't feel like I'm Böhman, nor Schellingian, so just like, when I recounted Kant to you, it's as if I were telling you a story, so I'm telling you about Kant. And thank God, I don't want to make the slightest objection to such deep and beautiful thoughts, and it would be shameful of me to do so, so but in this, if you want to say, but do you personally connect with all that? [*Laughter*] If you tell me, are you interested in all that? Yes, I'm very interested, I'm very interested. Because, as you finally say, it's true that the schema is arborescent, but that they suddenly threw in such a... I'm thinking about this: take a tree painted by a seventeenth-century painter; it's arborescent, okay, it's arborescent. But it is also something other than arborescent. It's, it's, it's... [*Deleuze does not finish the sentence*]

So, you're right, it's a schema, it's the dialectic. What I'm telling you is, you know, Hegel didn't invent dialectics, you know that. He hardened it enormously, [*Laughter*] he hardened it enormously, because the dialectic in Schelling is something with transitions, soft aspects, some... It's not there. Hegel made a dialectic of war. It's not that it's not beautiful; it is wonderful, his dialectic of war. But there's no more: it's very... it really marks a very special step. Whereas in Schelling, it's something quite different. So, you have arborescences, and then you suddenly have like kinds of mud, nebulae, and then it starts again, and then that, it's, it's the devil to find your way around.

So, you understand, here, I am trying to give you a schema in which we can situate ourselves. But then, you must not tell me that I'm disavowing what I said, because it's not me. Myself, I don't think any of that, it's not me here, it's not my fault, it's Böhme's fault. [*Laughter*] Anyway, it's beautiful, it's brutally beautiful. So, what really interests me... If you tell me, what interests you in that? What really interests me in this is the matter of intensities. And I believe that, as soon as intensities appear, precisely the oppositions can no longer introduce any, or they can



only introduce some very, very ideally; these have become ideal oppositions, no longer real oppositions at all, but, in the end, it doesn't matter.

So, here we have this chiaroscuro, well yes, so there, that proves him right, these are obviously no longer alternations, alternations of opposites. That has become a mixture that passes through all these degrees in a kind of... About the scale, literally, I can only say one thing: the scale has become mobile. But we are still... all the same, in this domain of distance from zero -- and we're taking another step, you see each time, we took one more step, towards the conditions of appearing -- here, we have an appearing that merges with the very disappearance [*disparaître*] of things.

You'll reply, but where do things come from? They're not here yet. Well, no, well, no, they're not here yet. They only have a disappearance [*disparaître*], they disappear before having appeared, that's what is wonderful. Literally, I would say, they are no longer here, but they weren't here yet. Well, before being here, they are already no longer here. What is that? It means that, in fact, chiaroscuro hides, hides and transcribes on its mobile scale, what will define things, namely the outline [*contour*]. It drowns it, and yet it is its dawn; it is like the announcement of the outline. A vague outline appears and disappears through the degrees of chiaroscuro.

But what will the outline be when it appears? We'll see: can it appear, supposing it does appear, supposing it detaches itself from its "disappearing" in the chiaroscuro? The contour will have a different look; it will no longer be the dark [*l'obscur*]. It will be really... Goethe has a nice phrase, "the shady side of things", when he defines... -- Here you see, we could try to set up concepts at the same time; I don't want to set up too much because you have to keep your mobility of vocabulary -- we'd no longer be talking about light [*clair*] and dark as before, we wouldn't be talking about white and black as we did for streaks; we would no longer speak of light and dark. Here we would even be talking about something else, we would be talking about the shadow [*l'ombre*], "the shady side of things".

Well, this would be the appearance of the outline, but how, what does the outline define? The objects and this evanescent outline which disappears in chiaroscuro, which will appear in, in what? Anyway, what is this set of the appearing and disappearing outline? This is nature, or rather the spirit of nature. And through the disappearing of outlines, things, objects come together in a same nature. And through the appearing of outlines, things are distinguished from each other. And as Schelling will say, this is the world of "ego-ness" [égoïté], even if this is the ego-ness of nature. That's strange because what a reversal this is then in relation to the ego. The self is the self of nature, selfishness. It's the spirit of nature, and this whole third stage is the spirit become spirit of nature. [*Pause*] And this is no longer the will to reveal itself; what is it? This is already the first step of revelation, and the first step of revelation in Jakob Böhme receives the name of "desire". This is the selfish desire [*Pause*] that runs through both nature and objects, and objects in nature.

And you will ask me, but that supposes the outline, right? And so, a third step is necessary. Yes, a third step was still needed in this third, no, what was necessary... I had streaks, as a first step, I had the degrees of chiaroscuro, but it wasn't the outline yet, it was already the outline's disappearing. [*Pause*] I need, through the spirit of nature, I need something more, I need a third

moment. Let us call it the appearance of color inseparable from intensity as light. And aren't we told that the degrees of chiaroscuro were already valid for colors? Yeah, they were anticipating color; they were at once the disappearing of colors and the appearing of colors.

What color? Ah, not just any color. In order for the color to appear, it is enough to darken white. White in the scale of degrees, you remember, was the minimum degree of opacity. I'm darkening white. Black was the zero-degree, maximum opacity, I tone down black. I darken white and tone down black, fine, [Pause] and two colors emerge. [Pause] And those two colors are "desire," and those two colors are called yellow and blue, the two figures of desire.

So here, if I refer -- you see the path we've traced -- if I refer to my second step: light now has become yellow, the abyss of darkness has become blue; yellow is white made darker, blue is black made lighter, Goethe's definition. This is very important because it goes without saying that these definitions would not be valid, you understand, if you separate them from all the preceding context or from an equivalent context -- I'm not saying that one particularly -- in which light enters into struggle with darkness in infinite opposition, that's the condition. If you do not give yourself this condition, then what I've just said is absolute nonsense. What I just said, namely, yellow is darkened white, blue is lightened black, loses all meaning, since it only makes sense insofar as the light does not split itself into color. If light splits like this, if you pose a problem such that light splits itself into color, you can't say that anymore. Of course, you can only say that if you consider that light does not split itself into color. And why doesn't it split itself into color? Because it is invisible. So, it cannot split itself into color. It is invisible and not only invisible; being invisible, it is indivisible. This is Goethe's point of view. So, color can arise only in favor of the infinite opposition of light and darkness, or if you prefer, of white and black with another transformation.

If, on the other hand, for whatever reason, you favor the idea that light analyzes itself into color, splits itself into color, at that point, all this is not all for you, what we're saying. In other words, what I'm relating, from a certain point of view, this is Böhme, from another point of view... from this point of view -- Böhme already alludes to colors all the time, that's why I can group them -- this is Goethe. [Isaac] Newton would never say things like that because, for Newton, light divides itself into colors. For Goethe, light is invisible and indivisible and therefore only gives rise to colors through the infinite opposition of light with darkness. [Pause]

You'll ask me, who is right? [Laughter] I guess, that's a legitimate question. Try to understand what I mean. Even science cannot give you an answer to this question. Even science cannot give you an answer to this question because this question is precisely philosophical in nature. Why? Not at all because it is anti-scientific, but because it concerns the very conditions under which a scientific problem can be posed, and science is not the judge of the conditions under which the problems of science are posed. [Pause]

So, here we have the outline of things, and there's my third degree, it is my third degree in my third stage. See the scale of opacities with white at the top, black at the bottom. Here we have black becoming lighter and having yielded a degree, blue as lightened black, white has descended by one degree having yielded yellow as darkened white. These are yellow and blue that make the outlines. [Pause] These are yellow and blue. -- Not in fact, not always in fact, but

by right; that's what it is by right. – These are yellow and blue that make the outlines. To obtain an outline, it is necessary to opacify, to opacify light or to tone down black. [Pause] Things aren't yellow or blue, but the outlines of things are yellow or blue. You'll ask me, yellow or blue? Both at the same time. [Pause] Both at the same time. You'll ask me, but then they are green? No, they are not green, no, they are yellow or blue, in a kind of disjunction; why am I saying that they are not green yet? Because we don't know what green is; we know what yellow and blue are, that's all.

So fine, why yellow or blue? Because yellow is the eccentric movement -- that's been told since time immemorial, from the Renaissance; they have very beautiful pages to which [Wassily] Kandinsky will return brilliantly -- yellow as an eccentric movement, [Pause] a movement of expansion. So here, there is intensity, these are movements of intensity, although they have their expressions in space. And blue as a concentric movement, of contraction. And the proof that these are indeed intensive movements is that these movements depend on what? On this: that yellow is said to be the warm color and blue is said to be the cold color. And hot and cold form precisely the intensive scale, when yellow and blue succeed chiaroscuro, in a completely logical succession, right?

Agreed? And desire was born from... And you see why that's the spirit of nature, the spirit of nature that never ceases uniting everything in yellow, that never ceases distinguishing everything in blue, and that is traversed by egoism, selfishness, its own egoism, Nature, the egoism of each thing that composes it. Schelling's pages – each time I'm quoting the author who mainly emphasized this -- the pages, Schelling's on the egoism of nature and in nature, are among the most beautiful, the most beautiful philosophical poems that exist. [Pause] – Is this ok? You don't have... ? -- It's the world of individuation, really; this is what later -- here I'm mixing everything up -- this is what later in [Arthur] Schopenhauer will appear as the world of individuation, well, Schopenhauer being the one who created and began his work almost with a theory of colors.<sup>8</sup>

Well, it's time to move on to a fourth stage, but then it's the most terrible one. Why? -- After this fourth stage, we will stop because... – Why is it that it doesn't remain there? We have a mystery here. It's because intensity, you see, intensity has ceased; it left infinity -- infinity of distance in the first stage; infinity of the opposition in the second stage -- intensity passed into finite distances in relation to zero, yellow's finite distance in relation to zero, blue's finite distance in relation to zero ... [Interruption of the recording] [1:53:27]

### Part 3

... And, in a certain way, and here, he would be fully correct [*reference to the student who made the previous comment*] to say... to say that this is pure dialectic and that it is roughly arborescent here, it's true. It is necessary for the infinite to work the finite. How could it be otherwise? -- What a mess in all this; I mean what a mess I've made because this is ... you have to feel, through what I'm saying so clumsily, what there is in this that has a breath that's both philosophical and poetic -- the infinite must indeed work the finite. Infinity has not disappeared to make way for the finite. The finite, itself, provided conditions of visibility, but infinity did not disappear. How is it going to be manifest in the finite? [Pause]

See now, this is no longer, the question is no longer, "how is there going to be something that manifests?", but rather "in what manifests, how will the infinite manifest itself in the finite, that is, without suppressing the finite?" Infinity must manifest. And the finite, we have seen -- under these three aspects: the streaks of white and black, the degrees of chiaroscuro, [Pause] the relation of yellow and blue -- under these three aspects, it presented a kind of intensive scale, an intensive scale once again defined by the finite distance in relation to zero. This is where the idea of intensity as such appeared. Before, it was an infinite intensity, but an intensity that includes degrees; therefore, finitude, the degree, is the finitude of the intensity.

How will infinity manifest? Well, it will manifest as an infinite intensification of finite intensity. [Pause] Aaaaah, by infinite intensification of finite intensity! How is such a thing possible? [Pause] See, each time, we thought we had lost a term, and then it comes back, we'll never reach the end, really! Ah ah, what's worse, eh? You understand, I always answer; I'm tormented by the question he's going to ask, all that. Obviously, all this is a deeply religious thought. But what religion? What thought? What thinker? All that is the basis of the philosophy of nature; this is going to constitute all the great philosophy of nature of Romanticism.

Okay, and the infinite intensification of finite intensity, how do you get such a thing? And what would this be? I can immediately name this fourth stage, to put us immediately in the ambiance, it will be: the wrath of God. It will no longer be the spirit of nature, it will be the spirit of anger or the spirit of evil. It will be the spirit of evil as it expresses the wrath of God. And in this regard, Comtesse was perfectly right earlier to recall the theme of radical evil which will pose such a problem not only in Kant, but in all of Romanticism. This will be the wrath of God. Why is the infinite intensification of finite intensity the wrath of God? Well, there you go, this is not obvious.

You will intensify your degrees of intensity. What does "intensify" mean? It means to saturate. [Pause] That is, you have two degrees; at the end of my third stage, I had two degrees. Since white and black had slipped on the scale, I had two degrees as colors which were the finite intensities constituting the outline of nature and things: yellow and blue. You will intensify yellow and blue. You will saturate it. You will intensify it endlessly. What does this mean? You won't stop creating yellow on yellow and you won't stop creating blue on blue. But the operations are not equal because, as we have seen, yellow and blue are not symmetrical, right! Yellow and blue: yellow is the opacified, darkened white; blue is the toned down, lightened black.

Intensifying yellow is not very difficult; it is to increase its dimming, to increase its obscurity. If yellow is a darkened white, you will increase this darkness, this dimming, and you will have intensified your yellow. You will have saturated it. The opposite operation, to saturate blue, what is needed? Here, there is just a trick to understand -- I beg you, then afterwards you'll be done; you'll figure it out -- remember, blue is a lightening of black. To saturate blue, one must not lighten it even more. It is necessary to decrease the lightening that it represents compared to black. [Pause] Like blue, it's not darkened black -- there's nothing darker than black -- it's a toned down black. To intensify blue is to tone down the lightening. To intensify yellow is to increase the dimming it represents with respect to white. To intensify blue is to tone down the lightening it represents in relation to black.

A student: Not necessarily. From the negative to the negative, intensification can be a positive of the positive. Here, I get the impression that you are causing an interplay of negative with the negative. That is, ...

Deleuze: Ahhhh. Any color is, in any case, opacity. It is not: there are light colors and there are dark colors. There will be light colors and dark colors, but any color is more or less opaque. So, to intensify is, in any case, independently of the negative and the positive, to intensify is, in any case, to make more opaque. Saturating means, in any case, increasing opacity. It is not, on one side, making it more opaque and, on the other side, making it less opaque. There are colors only through opacity, for one simple reason, once again: color expresses the direct relationship of light with an opaque body. So, the color starts with what Goethe so aptly calls “lumen opacatum”, “lumen opacatum”, lumen opacatum, lumen opacatum, whatever you want [*Deleuze changes the pronunciation of the second word slightly*], opaque light, okay? Here, this kind of, well, very prodigious creation of... as a result, there is no... Here you mustn't put the dialectic where it isn't, we've had enough of that, good God! It seems to me that there is no dialectic; all color is opacity. To intensify color, which is an intensity of light, it's necessarily to make it more opaque.

And the way to make yellow more opaque is to reinforce its opacity since it is itself the opacity of white. It is opacification... darkening... it is the darkening of white. And to opacify blue, as blue is a toning down of black, obviously, it is to diminish the lightening. [*Pause*] And what's going on? And there, well, it's easy to have this experience if you do that. And regardless of any diabolical intervention, [*Laughter*] you will see a splendid thing. You will see that this intensifying operation lifts and gives rise to a reddish hue. I am indeed saying: a reddish hue.

Goethe's text was so beautiful that I couldn't resist reading it because here it is with a precision, a kind of scientific precision. [*Pause ; Deleuze hums, looking for the text*] “The blue nor the yellow...” -- paragraph 699 of the *Treatise on Colors*, it is divided into very small paragraphs -- paragraph 699: “Blue nor yellow cannot be concentrated without another phenomenon happening simultaneously...” -- another phenomenon, this is an accompanying phenomenon, it is very important to me, you will see why – “In its most luminous state, color is something dark”. -- See, this is what “lumen opacatum” has just said: there are no light colors, there are relatively light colors. But color in its very essence is necessarily opaque light. It is necessarily something obscure. Once again, Newton would never have said such a thing, or even conceived of such a thing. He couldn't, as he presented the problem completely differently. -- “In its most luminous state, color is something dark. If you concentrate it, it has to get darker” -- Well, you have a dark yellow, a darkened yellow and a darkened blue. But since blue is a lightening, it will be a blue whose lightening will be toned down.

He is right to say, [*reference to the student with the comment on dialectics*] this is a dialectical movement, a negation of the negation, okay, yes. I was wrong to say that..., of course. But once again, it's not my fault. So, if we concentrate color, as it's itself opacity... Color is something dark; if you concentrate it, it must become darker. But at the same time, but at the same time... notice, it's two things, right? [*Pause*] It needs to get darker on one side as well as the other, yellow needs to get darker, blue needs to get darker. “But at the same time, it is endowed with a hue that we designate by the word reddish”, reddish. That's not reassuring.

Paragraph 700: "This hue is constantly increasing, so that at the highest degree of intensification" – that is, the more I intensify my yellow and the more I intensify my blue, the more the reddish hue ... right? – "So that at the highest degree..." -- Don't you feel the wrath of God rising? It's not in the intensification. On the contrary! I would say that it's the love of God which recovers itself as infinite in the finite. It is that which intensifies the finite intensities, or it's that which pushes us to intensify the finite intensities. It tells us: "Go ahead, go ahead, put some yellow on the yellow. [*Laughter*] And put some blue on the blue, go ahead," and we poor innocents, we put our yellow back on the yellow, some blue on the blue. [*Laughter*] And we think we are doing it right, ad infinitum. And God cause it to rise "at the same time," so we say, "I can't help it, I didn't do that," right? "But at the same time, it has a hue that we designate by the word reddish." [*paragraph 700*] "This hue is constantly increasing such that at the highest degree of intensification, it predominates." -- What does that mean? We can't go too fast -- "it predominates" ... I'm just holding on to the fact that I have a reddish hue on both sides.

See, my fourth stage is the infinite intensification of finite intensities. Well, I intensify, so a first moment, -- I have divisions each time -- so a first moment of this fourth stage: I intensify my yellow and my blue; [*Pause*] second step: while I'm doing this, a reddish hue rises on both sides, reddish hue which will be what? Which will present itself as what? Which will also present itself in many forms. It will be like on the "surface" of intensified yellow or intensified blue. On their surface, it will be like a shimmer, a shine. [*Pause*] One commentator, a very good commentator on Goethe's *Treatise on Colors*, Éliane Escoubas who sometimes came here, commenting on this text by Goethe, pointed out that in Homer, red is said of the sea in some very, very special conditions, not exactly red, but purple.<sup>9</sup> We will see later, the porphyry in Greek. The sea is porphyry. And what is it? This will interest us, the porphyry state, the red state of the sea. In Homer, it is when the sea is fragmented either under the waves of the storm, or even under the churning of oars, a kind of scintillating fragmentation. See, the shimmering of the sea, this shimmering, that's the porphyry sea. That's the intensification of blue.<sup>10</sup>

And the shimmering of an intensifying yellow is also, it's like the first aspect of the reddish hue. And here, I'm starting over again with all my examples. This is not only philosophy, because it is important to have a theory of the shimmering or the reflection of the hue, the shimmering as the first image of the hue. I would say the shimmering is the fragmented hue. [*Pause*] It is the hue that composes, decomposes and recomposes. And it is already linked to the reddish. And what is that? If I come through this to cinema, it's not my fault that this is the person who, who is, the person we always want to quote, the one who obtained, then in black and white, the most powerful effects shining in scintillating fragmentation, sometimes hallucinatory. It's Murnau again.

I see at least three, three major types of images in Murnau that are fantastic shimmerings. Obviously here, it becomes, it becomes for how many years? I mean, I don't know how you can save this stuff in cinema. They are condemned to disappear. The archangel from "Faust" [1926], the archangel from "Faust" whose feathers produce an unbelievable sparkle. [Éric] Rohmer, in his essay on Murnau's "Faust", has it very well, there is a page on shimmering in Murnau.<sup>11</sup>

Second example, "The Last Laugh" [1924], a shimmering of the city. And there, Murnau is not the only one; the Expressionists, for them, the city is above all something that sparkles. That's

why it hesitates. It is not yet the place of the devil since the devil, we will see that he needs more than sparkling. It's not the place of the devil, it's not the place of the human spirit, it's where it's still undecided. And some people are completely wrong because... for example, when there's shimmering in Murnau, I have seen historians sometimes speak of an Impressionism that would suddenly take over from Expressionism. You have to be cockeyed to define Impressionism by the shimmering! Surely that's not it. Shimmering belongs completely to the technique of light in Expressionism. It's precisely, it's precisely the first figure of this hue. And it's no coincidence that Murnau's great shimmerings are obtained through glass. The windows of the elevator in "The Last Laugh", which will make the light of the street shimmer through the windows, recompose, decompose, etc., and shimmer there all ablaze. Or even, the genius of shimmering in "Sunrise" [1927] when the couple crossed the dark lake and arrived at the town where their love will be reunited. There you go, a shimmering that turns out well. Given this, I would say that shimmering is like the first figure of this reddish hue.

And then a second, a second figure of this reddish hue, it increases! Goethe has just told us, it increases. It is no longer a kind of scintillating shine; it increases, that is, it is truly a reflection. [Pause] It's growing, it's growing, and it keeps growing. What does that mean, it keeps growing? What is this, the infinite that has reintroduced itself into the finite? That is the work of the infinite in the finite. By dint of pushing the intensification, what will we attain? No longer a reddish hue which was like the announcement of a threat, but a flaming red which no longer owes anything either to blue or to yellow which were only finite determinations, and which will reconstitute the infinite in the finite, a red which no longer owes anything to either yellow or blue, [Pause] and moreover, which consumes them, which inflames them, and which is no longer anything more than a reddish hue accompanying them, but a blaze, a blaze that makes them disappear. There is only fire-red, and fire-red destroys both nature and its objects. And the fire-red there kindles, consumes selfishness. Schelling will insist on this point, the "fire of Sodom".

And at this new step, again we find Murnau, and we find him in two ways, it seems to me, two of Murnau's processes. First, we find the splendid fires because, imagine, doing that in black and white... The means of capturing fire in black and white, it's not easy. Murnau's processes were extremely complicated. We find it in "Faust" again, in what form? The great pyres, the pyre where Faust throws his books, and then above all, the pyre of the plague-stricken; there it is no longer shimmering; it is a kind of blaze. I would say, this is pre-color, it's making color with... it's red; the screen is red. Good.

There you are, there are these fires, and then there is a much more curious process in Murnau which we obviously find in "Nosferatu" [1922]. Where could the reddish hue and blue and yellow intersect, if not in a character as demonic and supernatural as Nosferatu? How awful! Nosferatu is the wrath of God. [Pause] And what is Murnau doing here? Not always, sometimes; that's been analyzed. What is he doing? This was very well analyzed in the book by [Michel] Bouvier and [Jean-Louis] Leutrat who analyze "Nosferatu" shot by shot.<sup>12</sup> An astonishing thing, he has a background, a dark background on which, let's say, a black background stands out. The open castle door and Nosferatu is on this background, stands on the doorstep, so on a black background. There would be a possible treatment by chiaroscuro. And sometimes Nosferatu is captured in chiaroscuro. [Pause] But in several cases, between the black background and Nosferatu, between the two, Murnau interposes a light spot which makes the silhouette of

Nosferatu no longer stand out against its background. It is as if, literally, an *Un Grund*, a luminous bottomlessness, had been inserted between the background and the figure. As a result, Nosferatu is projected towards us and, at the same time, loses all thickness. He is now only a flat figure that blazes in this kind of, of fire, which is not motivated by anything.

There too, it's a bit like the lights of Caravaggio when he throws out a light at you which is, as they say, pragmatically justified by nothing. And here, this light precisely will constitute the junction of the two intensifications, that is, it will be equal to a pure red. See, what I'm calling the work of the infinite in the finite, it is when the two lines of intensification of yellow and blue have each given off the reddish hue over their entire series, the two series intersect, there is no longer either yellow or blue; there is a pure red to which Goethe and many others reserve the name purple, [*Pause*] purple being defined as a red which is neither yellow nor blue.

Ah! But to finish up, a red that is neither yellow nor blue, what is that? Well, this is well known. In a way, we can say: it is not in nature. That is why the spirit of nature burns there; it is the blaze of the spirit of nature. It is nature left behind. It is the spirit that finds itself outside of nature. Why is pure red not in nature? [*Pause*] You know this because the two ends of the rainbow do not close, this misfortune of nature, which is the mark of its finitude, that is, ultimately, the mark of its inability to constitute a totality, therefore the mark of its "egoism". The rainbow at one end has a yellow red, at the other end a blue red. But the yellow red and the blue red of the rainbow don't overlap, except by prismatic experience, that is, when you make them overlap, this radical insufficiency of nature which shows us that nature is not the real place of infinity.

So, far from expressing the pinnacle of nature, purple expresses the moment when nature burns and when the spirit will find itself in this hearth: it's the wrath of God. In other words: purple does not belong to nature, it belongs to the spirit, to the regained spirit. But the regained spirit comes in what form? The first figure of the regained spirit will, alas, be the spirit of evil. It's Nosferatu, it's Mephistopheles. And in fact, in Murnau too, in "Faust", Mephisto's head is phosphorescent, just as Nosferatu was also phosphorescent, who had lost all thickness. It's awful, this story, this wrath of God, this spirit of evil. So there, all the more reason, you are right, this is the dialectic; you have to go through it. You have to go through Nosferatu to find the angels, you have to go through Mephistopheles. What?

A student: On condition that we remain here with Nosferatu.

Deleuze: You want to stop right away at Nosferatu. Okay, everyone can stop at the point they want, but anyway, you're going to miss something. You will be very annoyed because how to explain? So far so good -- my final points will be for next time -- then how do I explain? And here too, the red, this flaming red, what is it? A second figure of the instant. It is no longer the finite instant, it is no longer the instant as a degree of finite intensity; it is the instant as intensification, that is, the work of the infinite in the finite. [*Pause*] And, in fact, the eye that sees, the instant of the eye that sees, is the burning of the eye. The German Romantics will state the effects of the burning of the eye, the instant of burning. It's beautiful, all that. I suspect it may not be true. But it's beautiful!



So, you understand, so he wants to stop at Nosferatu, and finally, first, it's very unpleasant, it's unpleasant because obviously he puts himself in Nosferatu's shoes. But if we accept the sacred law "always put yourself in the place of the victim", [*Laughter*] in the case of Nosferatu, it does not matter after all since we recognize this anyway. But that's not possible because how do you explain that red, red, that terrible, terrifying color, which is the color of nature on fire, which is the manifestation of the spirit of evil, is also... and awakens in us an irresistible feeling -- do you hear? Do you hear? Do you hear? [*Laughter*] -- irresistibly in nobility and harmony -- [*A noise in the background, laughter, including Deleuze*] This is in the name of Nosferatu. Alright, good, good, good, we're moving into the spirit of Goethe. -- It was something else. It was not Nosferatu's own nobility, it was a different kind of nobility.

Well, the answer announces a fifth stage to us, and it will not come as a surprise to us. -- I would just like to leave it there so that we can take things up next time depending on what you understood or did not understand -- This won't surprise us. It's that what red will arouse in us, what is it? It is an irresistible aspiration to what? To the totality, this totality of which nature was deprived since it could not manage to make its yellow red and its blue red coincide, [*Pause*] therefore which called the spirit of evil, but the spirit evil that inflames nature only because nature had no red. Well, it's got to make room itself for the spirit of goodness, that is, of salvation. Since what nature does not have, the spirit can provide it in the form of a harmonious totality of all the colors valuable as intensity.

A student: There's a Matisse painting that is extraordinarily red which provides an extraordinary notion of the totality; he really paints red on red.

Deleuze: Ah well, that's interesting. I'd don't recall it, I don't recall it; if you find a reproduction, you'll show it to me.

The student: It's at Beaubourg [Museum].

Deleuze: Ah, you've also seen this painting? It's at Beaubourg? Ah well... So, what I'm asking you for the next time is to go back over all that, and then tell me what you think works and what doesn't. And then, we'll move forward, we'll reach the end. So, reflect on this: at the level of red as I have just developed it, I would like you to feel that we find exactly the problem of the "dynamic sublime". This is what I would like to show next time: that red and the dynamic sublime are completely equivalent. [*End of the recording*] [2:31:50]

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Georges Gusdorf, *Mémoire et personne* (Paris: PUF, 1951).

<sup>2</sup> The French title is "Sur le mal radical" (1792); Kant published his essay on 'Radical Evil' in 1792, and then republished it as the first chapter of *Religion within the Bound of Bare Reason* (1793).

<sup>3</sup> A reference to Valéry's poem, *Le Cimetière marin* [1922; The Graveyard by the Sea]; see translation, <https://allpoetry.com/The-Graveyard-By-The-Sea> (accessed 27 February 2022).

<sup>4</sup> On these details of shadow and light, see *The Movement-Image*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>5</sup> See especially sessions 10 and 11 of Cinema seminar 1, February 23 and March 2, 1982.

<sup>6</sup> "Dormeuse aux persiennes" is the title of a painting by Picasso.

<sup>7</sup> Deleuze refers to this film by von Stroheim, "Foolish Wives" [1922] in *The Movement-Image*, p. 50.

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<sup>8</sup> On Schopenhauer, see the seminar *Anti-Oedipus and Other Reflections*, June 3, 1980; the seminar on *Painting*, Session 8, June 2, 1981; and on Foucault, session 10, January 14, 1986.

<sup>9</sup> See the preface by Éliane Escoubas, “La Bildung des couleurs” in the translation of Goethe, *Materials for the History of Color Theory*, trans. Maurice Elie (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, coll. Philosophica, 2003), p. 9-23.

<sup>10</sup> On colors and especially “reddishness”, see *The Movement-Image*, L’Image-Mouvement, pp. 52-53.

<sup>11</sup> See Éric Rohmer, *L’organisation de l’espace dans le « Faust » de Murnau* (Paris: 10/18, 1977).

<sup>12</sup> Michel Bouvier and Jean-Louis Leutrat, *Nosferatu* (Paris: Cahiers du Cinéma-Gallimard, 1981).