

Gilles Deleuze

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

Lecture 21, 24 May 1983 (Cinema Course 42)

Transcription: La voix de Deleuze, Antonin Pochan (Part 1), Sophie Treguier (Part 2), Lucie Picandet (Part 3); additional revisions to the transcription and time stamp, Charles J. Stivale

English Translation: Graeme Thomson & Silvia Maglioni

Part 1

... I'm sure it's in a western. I guess maybe, no I'm pretty sure the actor is Jimmy Stewart. I'm guessing that it must be an Anthony Mann¹ movie. And the scene I need, if such a scene exists, because after all... Well, anyway, the scene I need is one that starts out in a pretty classical way like in a lot of westerns. It's where you have the experienced cowboy teaching a young guy how to shoot. But there are a lot of scenes like this. He's teaching him to shoot, I think, and what I'm pretty sure of then is that the dialogue – this is the dialogue I'm interested in – has Stewart or perhaps it's someone else, explaining to the little guy... he's telling him, "You understand, you understand, boy, it's not at all a question of shooting first, it's not about being the fastest, it's about making the other guy hesitate for a second, just enough to ensure he loses. It's not a question of trying to be first, but of forcing the other to be second, it's about forcing the other to be late". Does that ring a bell?²

A student: That sounds familiar...

Deleuze: That's it, everybody's always telling me how this or that rings a bell, so you imagine my frustration. And I sometimes look for, for... for specialists, and I don't know any specialists in the western. There must be some out there, but I really urge you to look for yourselves! And if it doesn't come to mind right away, I'm sure you'll figure out what it is eventually, it's just that this doesn't mean anything to you right now.

The student: What year is that from, roughly? Is it Anthony Mann?

Deleuze: I think it's by Anthony Mann, maybe. It doesn't matter.

The student: I remember a film... It's not with Jimmy Stewart, like the one you were talking about, it's Brian Keith, and that other actor who died recently.³

Deleuze: Yes, but does it have this scene?

The student: He's in a jail or he's been taken to a jail somewhere, you know, in the desert.

Deleuze: And he teaches the guy to shoot?

The student: Yes, that's right. That's Brian Keith.

Deleuze: We're dying to know more!

The student: And the other actor is...

Deleuze: Yes but that doesn't matter. But what's the title of the film?

The student: Well, I think...

Deleuze: I'll find it, yes, it's in...

The student: Because I know three or four of the actors...

Deleuze: What was the actor's name again?

The student: It's Brian Keith, and the other one, he died, he was in... you know that movie that he did in Hollywood with Yul Brynner.⁴ It's not that movie, but I'm sure he was the other actor.

Deleuze: Yeah, yeah.

The student: He died two, three years ago of... I don't know, I think it was cancer.

Deleuze: Well, yes. [*Laughter*]

The student: It's not funny. He's teaching him how to shoot...

Deleuze: Yes, but...

The student: And then, after the other one...

Deleuze: It's not the teaching him how to shoot that interests me, it's this line of dialogue that I need to find.

The student: I seem to remember he says something along those lines...

Deleuze: He says that?

The student: Yeah, maybe, that's what he says...

Deleuze: It seems. Look, if any of you manage to find, once you've had a think, please write to me, send me a telegraph. It's really... well... Whose is this? Is it yours? Well, then let's get to work, since there's nothing else to do.

So I was talking about this history of thought considered as a game. But to present thought as a game is already something quite shocking, and then it's too easy... And yet we are forced to, it's a useful word for which... What?

The student: It was Steve McQueen who...

Deleuze: It's McQueen!

The student: And it's Brian Keith who teaches him.

Deleuze: Oh, right, okay... So, yes, well, for us it was a question of identifying a lineage, that is to say, it was not at all a question of getting attached to this concept of play, which after all isn't so interesting, but what interested me more was trying to identify a lineage of thinkers. And once again, when you identify a lineage, it's a bit like in technology: one shouldn't be surprised that the representatives of this lineage turn out to be extremely different. Again, I'm still very sad, because it questions the very nature of the concept in philosophy. It pains me when I hear people say: hey, generalities don't mean anything, and yet in saying that they tend to come out with generalities that are even more banal, the way we mustn't speak about romanticism, we mustn't speak about this or that, we mustn't speak about symbolism. On the contrary, I believe that if we want to build consistent concepts it is absolutely necessary to speak about all this.

And I told you that here we have a perfect example, because it's a lineage which is rather underground, and where there are literally schools or trends, let's call them trends, or currents. There are well-known currents, and then there are underground currents, either because they have jumped from one point to another, or because they are excessively divergent, and so perhaps we can then construct a concept in line with these currents. So, I was saying, let's trace what would almost be like two lines, so I sketched out a brief history. All of a sudden, it was like a thunderbolt had struck – I say a thunderbolt because, of course, we can always find precursors, but as far as I know, the point where things really explode is the wager, Pascal's wager. And in fact it struck at a moment, and this is the philosophical expression that would correspond – it is not the expression *of* – but Pascal's wager in fact emerged at a moment when what at that time was called the calculus of probabilities was being developed in mathematics. So we have to consider it in terms of this whole context.

And here I am forced to make a big leap. In reaction to Hegel, that is, to the "A is not non-A" of the Hegelian dialectic that we spoke about before... to the "A is not non-A", we have the response – and he presents it as a response, indeed as a kind of refutation of Hegel – we have the "either/or" of Kierkegaard, what Kierkegaard calls "the alternative".

And then in the 19th century, you have a French current, which was very important in the 19th century, but which today has completely fallen... has for a long time fallen completely into oblivion, except for the names, except for one name, but these are people who are no longer read. It's one of the injustices of fate, you know. We don't read anymore; there are some who we still read but who are not so great. There is a very strange school whose founder was called Renouvier⁵. He wrote a lot, he caused some tremors in his time because he was a philosopher from the margins, a non-academic philosopher. And in his work, what appears, this time in an atheistic mode – whereas I was talking about Pascal's Jansenist Christianity and Kierkegaard's reformism – what arises is the theme of a choice, the theme of a freedom-to-choose that is linked to a whole discontinuous conception of time, and Renouvier is a very, very peculiar thinker, it seems to me, very interesting. And this Renouvier had a friend, a friend who is read all the less because his work is no longer to be found, we only have a few fragments that were published posthumously, and he's now only marginally known as one of the models for a character in a famous novel by Louis Guilloux⁶, which tells the story of a professor of philosophy who is unable to write and who is burdened with having huge feet on which he can only walk with great difficulty⁷. And this was Jules Lequier⁸, L-E-Q-U-I-E-R, who wrote some strange things in the form of dialogues that were obviously inspired by Pascal and who with his atheist friend Renouvier takes up... takes up

in his own way the theme of freedom, of a freedom-to-choose. And then, as I said there is, there is... there is Sartre. There is Sartre who in *Being and Nothingness*⁹ and in his other works of that period, will greatly develop this idea of a freedom-to-choose, and much more, of a choice that he calls the existential choice. Okay.

So be it. And from our point of view, I would like to know – because it's a very complex form of thought, a very complex current – what they mean exactly when they speak about a wager, an alternative, or a choice. That's my question. What becomes of thought in all this, that is to say, *what figure does thought assume through these operations?* Since, you remember, that the previous figure that we found in different ways in the ancient and modern dialectics and in expressionism was a mode of thought that was always posited in terms of a struggle or combat. Here instead we have thought considered as a game... a kind of thought posited in terms of choice, alternative or wager.

Now, I proceed here by enumerating, because we have to be sensitive to... I'll try to make things clear. So I begin from the lowest, the simplest point, which consists in saying: first remark, first remark on these authors and this form of thought. What does it appear to consist of at first glance? Well, at first glance, it appears to be a question of sorting things out. It's a question of sorting things out, but of sorting out what? It's a question of sorting, therefore what we have finally on the horizon of choice, as what is presupposed by choice, is the idea of creating an order. But I would say, a form of order (*classement*) that is not the same as a classification.¹⁰ What would be the possible difference between classifying and ordering? Let's say, for example, that a classification consists in classifying things according to what they have in common. Botanists make classifications, zoologists make classifications. Why? Because they speak in terms of large families, which they divide into big genera which they then subdivide into species and so on. A classification is thus the division of something common.

Ordering on the other hand is a completely different matter. To order is to make an order of things that *in their appearance* – I'm not saying apparently – but which in their appearance have nothing in common. Or in any case, even if they do have something in common, it is not in function of this something in common that they will be ordered. So if I manage to sort out things which in terms of their appearance have nothing in common, at that moment I'm no longer creating a classification but an order. And if I distinguish between ordering and classification, it's for a simple practical reason, it's to distinguish between these two different cases.

So, let's take some passages from Pascal. What immediately becomes clear is that he is constantly proposing different orders of things. You know Pascal's *Pensées*¹¹ is one of those books... it's one of those mystery books, since it's a book that doesn't really exist. I mean, it's almost the equivalent of Nietzsche's *The Will to Power*¹². It's a book that he planned but we'll never know what shape it would have taken; it's a bit like notes for a book, notes for a book to come, so much so that it will never arrive. It's true. What we see in Pascal's *Pensées* is the extent to which Pascal is enjoying himself, and in fact it's a real joy. We sense that these are truly moments of pleasure for him: to create these orders, in the rigorous sense that I just tried to give to the idea of ordering, that is, to make an order of things that in appearance have nothing in common. That is to say, ordering is a form of classification that does not proceed by way of specific genera and differences. I can say that the greatest classifier of thought was Aristotle, precisely because he founded... I believe that it was Aristotle himself who founded the very concept of classification because he shows how genera are specified in terms of

difference, and so in a sense, he produces classifications. Pascal, on the other hand, didn't do this. With him we are in a completely different "atmosphere", that of ordering.

So I'll give you a few examples so that you can get a feel for the "atmosphere" of this kind of thought. What I'd really like is for you to reread the *Pensées*, or to read... and you'll see how... sometimes they don't look like much. It's... it's a bit like Nietzsche, often it doesn't look like much. Here's one: "There are only three sorts of people... There are only three sorts of people: those who have found God and serve him; those who are busy seeking him and have not found him; those who live without either seeking or finding him." So you see, there are those who have found God, whom we can generally call persons of faith; at the other end of the spectrum are those who live without seeking him and who haven't found him, let's say these would be people who are indifferent or else atheist; and between these two are others who are striving to look for him but have not found him. The first ones... I quote again from the text: "The first" – meaning the ones who have found God – "are reasonable and happy, the last..." – the atheists or those who are otherwise indifferent, meaning those who live without seeking him or who haven't found him – "the last are foolish and unhappy; those in the middle..." – those who seek but haven't found him – "are unhappy and reasonable."¹³
Good.

So, I would say that this is the way – and we'll see other examples later – this is the way Pascal thinks. You'll tell me, well, what does that mean? For me, it completely supports, once again, Michel Serres' view, when Serres says that Pascal has nothing to do with dialectical thinking, and if he says so, and if it's important that he says so, it's precisely because many people have fashioned Pascal into a kind of precursor of modern dialectics, a kind of pre-Hegel.¹⁴ And many Marxists – as far as I know all the Marxists who have confronted Pascal – have done so in order to turn him into a kind of dialectician. But you can see that this form of thought is, on the contrary, as I have just read, a type of "either/or" thought which has absolutely nothing to do with dialectics. So we really need to tighten up these concepts – sometimes we have to broaden them out, but other times they require tightening – here it is not... we are in a wholly different atmosphere, a completely different way of thinking.

Because he makes an order, and what does this order produce? This ordering is not a classification since it does not presuppose anything in common between the three... here we have three kinds of people, and there are only three. There are only three kinds of people. What do they have in common? First case, reasonable and happy; second case, reasonable and unhappy; third case, not reasonable and unhappy. What do we have here? You sense – I'm just saying this in order to wrap up these preliminary formal remarks – it's... we'll call it an alternation. It's an alternation, A, B, C.

[A woman's voice is heard calling Deleuze from outside]

Deleuze: What?

A secretary: Can you pass by the office after your class?

Deleuze: Okay, okay. What time are you leaving?

The secretary: Before noon.

Deleuze: Okay.

The secretary: See you later.

Deleuze: Second case. There is a text, for example... there is a text by Pascal which is very interesting in a way, but there are many such texts. He asks a question that in itself doesn't seem to amount to much: is it appropriate to honor people who are highly born? Is it appropriate to honor high-born people?¹⁵ Good. So here's a summary of how the text develops. Ordinary people honor them because they are afraid of them: a) Ordinary people honor them because they are afraid of them; b) the half-clever... the half-clever despise them saying: "They don't fool me, they are just people like the others"; c) the clever ones honor them, saying: "They have the power so we have to take advantage of this"; d) devout people despise them in the name of the justice of God; e) Christians honor them in the name of charity.¹⁶

An extremely interesting thought, but less so for its content than for its form. Here we see the typical procedure involved in this ordering: putting things in order independently of any common genus, putting in order according to forms or types of alternation. This alternation is even more marked since: a) ordinary people honor – for different reasons, for reasons that have nothing in common – so, ordinary people honor; b) the half-clever ones despise; c) the clever ones honor; d) the devout despise; e) true Christians honor. It is an alternation of honoring, despising, honoring, despising, honoring, despising, and each case is different.

A more important example, because what does Pascal do – and here I'm going to go very quickly since I talked about it earlier – what does he do as a mathematician or physicist? He orders things. Here I should underline that Euclidean geometry does much more – I can't say that it does only this, but Euclidean geometry makes classifications, and Euclid clearly states that in geometry it is best to proceed in terms of specific genera and differences. At this point, you make a classification of figures. You see those that have something in common, for example curves, and take curves as a genus, and you bring into play specific differences to obtain the different species of curves. You make a classification.

Pascal does not make classifications. What he does, thanks to extraordinarily new methods in mathematics, is to create an order. What is this order based on? Well, on finding the point of view – and here we're making some headway, although we already looked at it last time, but now we can see this better, we can discover it at a deeper level – finding *the point of view from which heterogeneous elements can be arranged*, finding the point of view from which heterogeneous elements can be arranged. This is altogether different from the method of classification, which consists in finding... so, anyway, the question is to find the subjective point of view, since a point of view refers to a subject, to find the point of view, that is to say the subjective point of view from which heterogeneous elements can be arranged, instead of finding the objective point, that is to say the genus which, by dividing itself, gives me a classification of things according to their homogeneity.

And I was saying, what is the great 17th century theory of conic sections? What did this bring about that was new compared to Greek mathematics, which was already aware of conic sections? Precisely this. In a very short treatise on conic sections¹⁷, what does Pascal state precisely? Well, an order and not a classification. An order consisting of a certain number of curves apprehended as having nothing in common with one another. They have nothing in common, meaning they are not of the same genus. From then on, what will enable the process of ordering is to have found a point of view according to which they can be arranged and will allow themselves to be... [Tape interrupted]

... The point of view is what allows me to arrange heterogeneous things, things that are incommensurable with one another, and it allows me to arrange them according to this: that *from this particular point of view what appears is an alternation between these things*. And this is a process of thought, which it seems to me is not inventoried, which is not classical. It is, rather, what I would call a "typology". So here you have... you can sense that we have arrived right at the heart of the matter. This ordering of things according to a point of view that establishes between them, that introduces between them, an alternation is already the "either/or". It is already the "either/or", we are at the heart of the matter. But alas, this is only a starting point.

And as I was saying, well, regarding conical sections, you have your cone, you see the apex of your cone and then the cuts, all the cuts you can make. Now the cuts that you can make will give you... Let's assume, to stick to the simplest examples, it's not... there are more... but to stick to the simplest examples... it will give you a circle when – and you will recall this, I don't need repeat it – when the cut is parallel to the base of the cone. A circle. And when the cut is at an angle, an ellipse. And when the cut actually cuts through these two cones, like this, you see they are... when the cut is vertical, it will give you a hyperbola. When the cut is slanted, at a vertical slant, it will give you a parabola. Now, just to keep it simple, you have four curves. And what... what is the point of view?

You see, Pascal is not looking for a common genus of these four curves. He is looking for a point of view from which these four curves can be ordered. And this point of view is the eye placed at the apex of the cone. Okay. So how do we order them? Well, you will notice from the nature of the cuts that some curves are closed and some curves are open. The circle and ellipse are closed, whereas the hyperbola and parabola are open. You can notice something else: some cuts are rectilinear, such as those that give the circle parallel to the base of the cone, or those that give the hyperbola, this time horizontally, cutting the two cones. Other cuts are at an angle. So, this will give you the following alternation, for example, you can establish the alternation. Circle: closed-rectilinear cut; hyperbola: open-rectilinear cut; ellipse: closed-slanted cut; parabola: open-slanted cut. Wonderful! He introduced an alternation, that is to say, he ordered the curves without passing through a common genus. He ordered purely heterogeneous elements by introducing an alternation between the cases. *The alternation of cases replaces definition or classification by genus and species*.

Remember that this is a problem that is found in every domain, because what is at stake here are choices between modes of thinking that are of the utmost importance. Take the law, for example. The legal code very often proceeds in an Aristotelian manner, that is, by the classification of crimes. A "genus" will have its differences; you will have, for example, a first difference between first degree murder and second degree murder: with premeditation, without premeditation, in self-defense. You can constitute legal genera with differentiations, with specifications that give you species. In short, you will say that the code is a classification, that the penal code is a classification of crimes.

And here we have a completely different process, you understand that we don't think in the same way at all, and that we are constituted, we have ways of thinking that are quite... There are people who are unable to think according to a particular form. It's very strange. And I even believe that there is a whole field of law which in the end is the only really interesting and creative field of law, namely jurisprudence, which is the study of cases, the study of cases that create problems, that is to say, they find themselves among those cases that don't fit within existing classifications. And in this case, you will introduce alternations. And this

will be the central question of jurisprudence: to find the subjective point of view. That's why the word *legislator* can have two completely different meanings: a legislator is sometimes the one who assigns the great genera – this, if I may say so, would be the Aristotelian legislator – and then we have the Pascalian legislator, the man of jurisprudence, who in actual fact is not really a legislator at all since he doesn't make law. He *causes it to shift* by introducing alternations between cases. If I may, I'd like to go back to an example that is dear to me because it clarifies this whole question of jurisprudence. I choose this example, because for a long time it's something I've found quite astonishing, and also to show you that... it really constitutes a method, this method that I'm trying to... this method of ordering.

You see, for the moment I have three notions by which to define this method: firstly, subjective point of view, which allows – and this would be the second aspect – which allows us to order heterogeneous elements without passing through a common genus. Third aspect, the ordering itself, consisting in an alternation of cases. I would say that this is a very important form of thought. And you understand that people who think in this way are very unlikely to be able to find common ground with those who think in the other manner, in terms of different genera, or with those who think dialectically. There will be numerous misunderstandings and I think that if people constantly argue... if people don't agree, it's because they are not posing the same kinds of questions; what you have in each case is a different type of problem.

Take the following example: you take a cab, you smoke, the cab driver tells you that smoking is prohibited, you tell him: I'm going to sue you, I'm going to sue you. So what does it mean to sue a cab driver who forbade you to smoke? You sue, it's a case of jurisprudence – this example is no longer current but there's... because it's a question that's long been settled. But there was a time, I imagine myself in that time, when the question was not settled. There was no by-law. Now there is a by-law, the cab driver has the right to prohibit smoking. But in the name of what, legally speaking? The law is very interesting.¹⁸

So, here's why. I sue, imagining we're in that time when it was possible, and I say as a plaintiff that when I take a cab I enter into a rental contract with the cab driver. I rent the cab, the transaction by which I take a cab is, legally speaking, a rental. By definition, the tenant has the right to use, not to destroy, but to use and misuse the property he rents. A landlord cannot forbid me from smoking in the premises he rents to me. So I have the right to smoke in the cab: now I have my a).

The driver's lawyer answers: not at all. Not at all, that's not the way it is. A cab cannot be considered a private dwelling. When you take a cab, you are not making a rental contract, because the cab is a public service. In terms of public service, the cab driver has a perfect right – and this is the privilege of public service – to prohibit smoking: so this is my b). To recap: a) cab = rented premises, dwelling, rented mobile home; b) cab = public service, not a rental.

Let's move on to c). Okay, I say, but even with a public service, don't I make a contract? Indeed, when you take the bus there is a contractual relationship that intervenes, or when you take the subway, it is in the name of this contractual relationship that if you break your leg in the subway, the subway can be held responsible. So you have a contractual relationship with them. So, okay, the cab is a public service, but in itself, even as a public service, doesn't the contractual relation take precedence over the other? And what is the other relationship involved in a public service? What is the other relationship involved in a public service? It's

our d). The other relationship involved in public service is a statutory relationship, the status being opposed to the contract. And it is because a public service does not only maintain a contractual relationship with its clients, but also includes and defines a statutory relationship in relation to its function, that it can prohibit smoking. So, my cases can multiply *ad infinitum*.

An offence to public decency. An offence to public decency – Leibniz... Leibniz too was interested in law, and he didn't have such modern examples to draw on – an offense to public decency. So my a) consists in offending the decency of others. All of a sudden I strip off, and this offends others' sense of public decency. Well, it seems that here there is no problem. Except that if I interpret the article of the law on indecency like that, if I interpret it in this way, then I will not be able to corner a certain number of people. For example, I cannot say that there is an offence to decency when there is a pornographic show before people who have paid for it. So it's annoying if as a lawyer, I want to nail them for it. How do I nail them? Ah, here I have to do a lot of work, because the situation is extremely complex. I have to maintain the following tortuous idea: that the offence to public decency does not refer only to a) which would be an offence to the decency of those who witness it, but that "offence to decency" can refer to *the offence to the decency of the one who commits the offence*. It therefore becomes an offence to *his own* decency. At that moment, thwack! I can nail him, and nail the spectators too from that point on, since they have all participated in this operation by which someone has offended their own sense of decency. Here too, I performed an ordering, I made alternations, just like with my alternation: cab, rented abode, public service, contractual relationship with public service, statutory relationship with public service. I ordered things, this is what ordering things consists of. Ordering as opposed to classifying. Fine.

Therefore, let us end this first remark in a completely different domain since we are trying to accumulate givens. This time it will be in the domain of the image, of the image, the aesthetic image.¹⁹ We've looked at all kinds of examples, right? Indeed, you have to be able to select examples from many different areas in order to constitute a concept. So now, after having looked at scientific, moral and legal examples, let's move on to some aesthetic examples.

There are a certain number of artists, who include both painters and film directors, who present us with what appear to be alternations, in particular alternations between white and black – in the case of monochrome cinema, alternations between white and black – and who are famous for their art in creating these alternations, either in a succession of images, or within a single image. Ultimately, they attain a very high aesthetic result that resembles a quite singular kind of paving or tiling: a white square, a black square, a white square, a black square! Wouldn't paving be precisely one of the typical cases of what we have been speaking about since the beginning?

Who are these directors who are able to alternate black and white so well and with such depth? Ah, one of them is undoubtedly Dreyer. Dreyer's scenes are famous... scenes where you have an extremely skilful alternation of black and white, where there are, for example, vertical black silhouettes flanking a horizontal white bed²⁰, or sometimes much more complex alternations that are made through slices. Or the alternation between one image and another. The examples we can take from Dreyer, not in *Joan of Arc* – we'll see why, maybe we'll have the occasion to look at this practically all-white film – but when he doesn't proceed by pure whites, he proceeds by alternations of white, black and shadow. After all, doesn't this resonate with Pascal's three kinds of people? White, let's say – surely it doesn't, it

doesn't correspond but... – can't we say white is the order of virtue, black is the order of evil and gray is the order of uncertainty? There is at least one film by Dreyer in which he uses grays with genius, which is *Vampyr*²¹, whose hero is precisely the man of uncertainty. In *Ordet*²² or in *Day of Wrath*²³, on the other hand, we have some celebrated alternations between white and black.

In Bresson, in a completely different way... because while in Dreyer there is a tendency, there is a typically Scandinavian tendency towards the mosaic, in Bresson's films what we have is no longer a mosaic, here the alternations of white and black – especially in *Diary of a Country Priest*²⁴ – include... they are considered a kind of pinnacle of Bresson's art of light.

So, what do I attain from all this? Well, we already have something in painting, think of the great monochrome painters, what is it about... what is of interest to us in this? Well, it's that previously, and if I take up a theme that we developed last year and returned to again this year, I said that there are all kinds, as much in cinema as in painting, there are all kinds of artists for whom the fundamental problem is... Well, what is it? It's the problem of a struggle, of a fight between light and darkness, with shadow translating the moments of this battle, a violent battle between light and darkness, or, if you prefer, between light and black. And this really is the basis of expressionism and expressionist light. I retain two things, as far as expressionism is concerned, or as far as this tendency is concerned: the opposition of light and darkness, and what follows from it, namely the battle between the two. First characteristic: light has something to do with its opposite, black, the black of darkness. Second proposition: there is hence a battle between light and darkness, and I would say that expressionism is strictly inseparable from this conception of light.

And last year, I was trying to formulate a notion that I called lyrical abstraction, one for which I had made an initial definition and that, now we have made some headway, I can define in two different ways.²⁵ The first way to define what I call lyrical abstraction, is that it concerns *those for whom light has nothing whatsoever to do with black and darkness*, and that the real problem of light for them is a very secondary one. For them, the real mystery of light and *the real question regarding light is its relationship with white*. And I was saying that it is in this way that they themselves... that a director like Sternberg is the opposite of an expressionist, his problem is the question of light in its relationship with white. Second proposition: of course, this doesn't prevent their work from including shades of black or from having shadows. No. But it will never be in the form of a combat. The second principle of lyrical abstraction – the first being that light has fundamentally to do with white – the second principle of lyrical abstraction is that *white, black and gray never enter into combat but into an alternation*. And to paint, or to construct an image, will be to make white, black and gray alternate. It will be an alternation. Okay.

This is my first point. The slower we go, the better it will be, because we're still sticking with the concept of alternation... notice that I am still far from... you can all sense that what I want to get to is the idea of the alternative. But I don't yet give myself the alternative. I really have to construct it progressively, piece by piece. For the moment, I have at most the idea of alternation, given that alternation is something I can define as making an order instead of making a classification, and as involving a subjective point of view according to which I can order heterogeneous elements. So white, black and gray will no longer be grasped in terms of relations of opposition; they will be heterogeneous elements that I order, and that I order by making them alternate. There will be... you can already sense there will be no longer any struggle between white, black and gray; there will be, at most and at best, *a choice to be*

made: What will I put there? In which case will it be white? In which case black? In which case grey? That's our problem, so that was my first remark. This is the starting point of a typology. What is important to me is that you bear in mind this difference between classification and ordering. As I said, Pascal never classifies; he orders, and ordering is a completely new activity compared to classifying. So... is that clear? No problem? Are you fine with that?

Hidenobu Suzuki: Doesn't the example of white, white and black appear also in Malevich? The white square on a white background, the black square on a background of...

Deleuze: Yes, of course, of course... Oh yes, oh yes, you find it in Malevich, you find it in painting, you find it... where else would you find it then? you would find a very high level of it in Japanese... I think, I don't know. Yes oh, there's a whole history, no? You find it in Jasper Johns²⁶. Yes, yes, but I think we could also find it before that. What interests me are alternations of white and black in classical painting, and the idea of light being conceived in relation to white... this is something we would find... light not conceived in relation to... but then it has to be said that it's actually much later... that what would be new in painting, what was new perhaps, was conceiving light in direct relation to black. But earlier on, earlier on it was conceived in relation to white, even technically speaking and not only in terms of thought, but this was also a question of coatings and so on. Light conceived in direct relation to darkness and in relation to black is, I don't know... it's Caravaggio's, it's... perhaps, perhaps. Second remark, yes, it's very hard because the coatings, the dark coatings... it all depends on how you coat your canvas. Dark coatings, I think all that was introduced very late, around the 17th century, wasn't it?

A student: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: This is what we call a red preparation, but a brownish red, brownish red, yes... before that you coat it with what, with chalk or... I don't know, milk, or what else?

The student: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: It's white, that is to say the first problem of this coating, whatever it is that you're using as a primer, is the relationship of light with white. I mean, it's actually beneath the painting that it arises, it's not, it's not only on the surface of the painting... just as in cinema there are surely problems of film stock that affect the black and white.

Okay, second remark. Obviously, if we spend an hour on each remark it can get annoying... So we have a typology, this ordering by alternation, and what would it be a typology of? What does this typology concern? I'll go back to conic sections. Does my order, my typology really concern figures? Well, no, because the whole thing is actually very neat. In classification... classification concerns figures, figures defined by their essence. The essence of a figure will be its genus plus its specific difference. I can say that *classification concerns figures as essences*. And indeed, to classify is to put these essences in order, whereas the question of conic sections according to Pascal... When he orders circle, hyperbola, ellipse, parabola, is he classifying figures defined by their essence? No, no, no, no, and no. And why not? Because there is no genus, no specific differences. So, strictly speaking, he doesn't classify. Now, let's take this to its logical end. Not only did we need a subjective point of view to be able to perform the ordering I'm talking about but also *what comes to be ordered*

are not objects. They are not objects definable in terms of an essence, they are not things definable by an essence. So what is given an order in Pascal's ordering of conic sections?

Well, and here we have a second infinitely precious remark: what is ordered are *modes of existence*. But of what? Modes of existence of the cone on a plane of projection. The circle is the way in which the cone exists on the plane of projection when this plane intersects it following a parallel to the base... right? It's obvious. The ellipse is another mode of existence of the cone on another plane of projection and so on. I say I haven't... by attaining the subjective point of view, I haven't ordered essences because to order essences you have to be a Platonist or an Aristotelian, there is no escaping that. Which is why there is nothing to object to. But to put it simply, when I no longer resort to classification but to ordering, it is because I propose something else. I propose *to order modes of existence*. The conic sections constitute a series of the cone's modes of existence on the plane of projection.

Let's go back to Pascal's text, when he asks himself: are men of illustrious birth despicable or honourable? Here he makes an order, so what does he order exactly? When he speaks about ordinary people, the half-clever, the clever, the devout, the true Christians, it's a question that concerns modes of existence in relation to illustrious people. I identify these modes of existence. And the three cases in relation to God: he who has found God is, he tells us, happy and reasonable; he who does not seek him is unhappy and foolish; he who seeks him and does not find him is reasonable and unhappy. But one should not be misled, it is not a question of genera and specific differences. Here what he is defining *are three modes of existence of man in relation to God*.

I go back to my example of Proust: Shall I love... shall it be Albertine that I love? Or shall it be Andrée, or Giselle? What I'm putting in order is not Albertine, Giselle, Andrée and the whole gang of young girls. It could be any one of them – I don't know how many there are – but it could be any of them, they are all there arranged in my mind. But what is alternation? What is ordering? [*Airplane sounds*] Never would the narrator dare to make an order of the young girls. On the other hand, what he is perfectly entitled to order are the modes of existence he would assume, supposing he were in love with this one rather than that one or that other one, or with that one rather than this one. He might say: "Ah yes, this one", and he might fall for the worst, but this is all part of ordering. "With this one, I am sure to fail", which is to say that I might be in love with her, but she will not return my love. Well, this is the one that I'm going to choose, this is the one, this is the one, this is the one, yet I know in advance that she won't love me. In which case I subject myself to an unhappy love. Well, if I've ordered things well, this is quite legitimate, there is no law. I think, okay I subject myself to an unhappy love. Well, we all know very well that there are people who spend their entire lives subjecting themselves to unhappy loves. You can't believe that they don't already know that – all of which is going to help us move forward a little. Fine.

So, what are we doing now? We are in the midst of modifying our concept. The alternation of cases refers in fact to *alternatives between different modes of existence*. In other words, the subjective point of view, that is, the choice, the subjective point of view or the choice is made not between things – because things refer to essences, which themselves would justify classification – it refers neither to things nor to terms. The subjective point of view, which is to say the choice, concerns modes of existence. But what modes of existence? Obviously, the choice concerns *the modes of existence of the one who chooses...* [*Tape interrupted*]

Part 2

... You will tell me: one shouldn't exaggerate, especially in the case of conic sections! But yes, we should. Because the eye, the abstract eye, is strictly identified with the apex of the cone, the point from which the cone appears in this or that form, according to a plane of projection. Hence the choice becomes the most profound act of subjectivity, but one which consists in the fact that it concerns the modes of existence of the subject who chooses. *To choose is to choose between modes of existence*. And what was put in order – and hence one understands why – was ordered without the possibility of assigning a common genus because the common genus and its differentiation regulate essences, whereas here it is a question of ordering modes of existence and not essences. I who choose, can choose only between possible modes of existence which are "my" modes of existence.

That's why all the authors I'm talking about will, at the level of this second remark, stumble upon – no, not stumble... – will record a result which is inevitable, if you have followed all our detours, a result which is inevitable, meaning that what they will now require will be a theory and a practice of modes of existence. And this will be Pascal's theory of modes of existence, which we will look at later. And it will also be the great Kierkegaardian theory of what he calls the stages of existence: the aesthetic stage, the ethical stage, and the religious stage. And in Sartre, it will be the distinction between two fundamental modes of existence: the authentic and the inauthentic. For the moment, we have no right to cast negative judgement on any one of these modes of existence. We have no reason to say that one is any better than another, and maybe we will never have occasion to say that one is any better than another. All I can say is that I'm now moving from the *alternation of cases* to the *alternative between modes of existence*. It's the "either/or". I live in the regime of "either/or", and to exist is to choose a mode of existence. And the formula of existence is "either/or", and this means to put in order, to give an order to these.

Hence we have the idea that for all these forms of thought... when we try to define this current of thought, the easiest way would be to call it "existentialism". The choice is existential since it concerns modes of existence. Hence the success of this word at the Liberation, the way Kierkegaard was presented as the ancestor of existentialism, Sartre as the creator of an atheistic existentialism, while Heidegger, who had nothing to do with this form of thought, and said so, was quick to distance himself from... [*Tape interrupted*]

Because by definition... how could you expect Sartre to understand Heidegger? I mean, one can't be as dumb as all that. I can only understand someone from his own point of view. And if I have something to say, it means I have another point of view. So it's not that Sartre contradicts Heidegger and doesn't understand him. It is that Sartre speaks from his own point of view about Heidegger, he speaks about Heidegger from his own point of view. From Heidegger's point of view, it's obvious that this can only produce misunderstanding. And it's not the first time this has happened. When Kant critiques Descartes, he does not critique Descartes from Descartes' own point of view. That would be stupid! That would be to suppose, once again, that Descartes was mistaken, from his own point of view, and that I know better than Descartes what Descartes' point of view is. You mustn't push it, as they say. When Kant criticizes Descartes, it can only be from Kant's own point of view. It's inevitable he will make objections to Descartes for the simple reason that Kant's point of view cannot be that of Descartes, thus Descartes' point of view does not include that of Kant.

So, there is never any problem. Sartre never proposed to understand Heidegger. A philosopher never proposes to understand another philosopher. He proposes to read him with passion, whatever you like, but it is not his problem to understand him. It's not his problem to

make objections either. His problem is in function of the new point of view – if he has found a new point of view – and to see what becomes of such and such an author from this new point of view, and that's all. And maybe this author has nothing at all to do with the new point of view. At which point, he has no existence from this new point of view. Hence the pointlessness of any discussion in philosophy, of any question or objection, just as it is in mathematics, though for other reasons. That's my second remark.

Third remark. We'd got to this point: to exist is to choose, and to choose is to choose one's modes of existence, or to choose between modes of existence. To exist is to choose, and to choose is to choose between modes of existence. Well, that's the formula of the alternative. But here, we have to admit to an objection, and this is the object of my third remark. In fact, there are cases where I don't have a choice. In our existence, there are many cases where we don't have a choice. Here things are going to get difficult because they will be very simple, extremely simple, but so simple that, I don't know... there is something that cannot be said, that's how simple it is. I mean when you're dealing with modes of existence, it's... it's very difficult to talk about all that, isn't it?

You see how we often say: "I have no choice". In my view, there are three cases where I would say this, cases that can also be mixed. One such case, which on the surface of it is the most noble: "It is my duty to...". How can I have a choice in this case? Duty calls me. We call this case a moral necessity. And who has not known these moments when duty calls? Second case: I am obliged. I have no choice because I am obliged. This is what we would call a physical necessity. There is a state of affairs, there is a situation that obliges me, I have no choice, oh no! I don't have a choice! Third case, which would be the most insidious. I have no choice because I want it too much. I can't resist, I don't wish to resist my desire. This is important because it allows us not to confuse this thought of choice with a desire. "Ah, everything is pulling me, I can't help falling in love with... with Albertine! It's Albertine that I need, it's... Everything pulls me towards her, I have no choice!" Or else: "Oh, I have to do something, I have to move". So you see, this is what we will call a psychological necessity. So these are the three hard necessities that seize hold of us: sometimes moral, sometimes physical, sometimes psychological.

I have to go to the secretary's office! To the secretary's office... I have no choice! [*Laughter*] Is it a physical necessity? Well... A moral necessity? Certainly. Duty calls. I have to go and sign I don't know what form... A psychological necessity? Well, I could say that I need to go, I need a break, I can't take it anymore! But that isn't the case at all! [*Laughter*] But well... let's say I take advantage of it, I go to the secretary's office, you see the situation? Well. How do I explain... how do I explain the strange thing that happens in this case? And here, I seem to be leaning... to... these are things that I suppose many of you already know. I would be happy if we could reach some kind of clarity on this point, because it seems self-evident but in reality it is so difficult.

Let's add another simple example: a domestic scene, something that no longer happens, but that happened a lot when I was a child. The most fearful fathers, those who are determined to instruct their child in something, for example in solving a problem in mathematics. So here the typical family scene would be: Come here! Come, I'll explain your math problem. Well, we sense that we're heading for... that things will quickly degenerate, because the kid, even if he's not very bright, very quickly realizes that his father is not cut out for teaching, that is to say, though he certainly knows enough mathematics to solve the problem himself, he's no good at explaining it. No good at all! That's why the child panics when the father says: come

here with your math problem. What happens after five minutes? The father gets angry and yells. The child screams and bursts into tears. So, what's going on here? In Sartre's analysis – and here I'm really doing an analysis in the style of Sartre...

Sartre would say: if you ask them, if it's a good moment, well, you'll see that each brandishes – you wouldn't even need to ask them – each one brandishes their anger, or one brandishes anger and the other sorrow, as though it constituted an "in-itself", as though they are trapped in an "in-itself", the in-itself of tears or, if you like, what is basically an essence. I am angry, I am seized by rage. I am blinded by tears. The tears and the anger are like essences that have settled on me and penetrated me. But everyone knows that this is not true, because I "get" angry – I, the father – I "get" angry or rather I got angry. And why do I get angry? I get angry because I failed in my role as a teacher. Not being able to behave like a good teacher: a) I assume the role; b) I get angry, I'm no longer a teacher, I am an avenger. I get angry (*je me mets en colere*),²⁷ that is to say, in the manner of Sartre, that I constitute myself as an angry consciousness.

And the kid knows very well how to parry, he is no more stupid than the father; he constitutes himself as crying, or as whining, he goes *waah* and so on, which redoubles the father's anger. Just as I "get" angry, I start to cry (*je me mets en larmes*)²⁸. What an odd contradiction we are facing here. I can only get angry by pretending that anger is an in-itself, that is to say, a state that I don't put myself in but which on the contrary gets into me. I start to cry, but I can only do so on condition that I do so as if tears were an essence or an in itself, that is, as if tears started in me.

In other words, there are choices that I can only make *on condition that I myself believe that I do not choose and that I have no choice*. There are choices that I cannot make, that is to say, whose very condition as a choice... there are choices whose condition as a choice is that *the one who makes this choice experiences himself as not having a choice*. We'll see that things are going to get very complicated, because this is not an easy idea to understand. That's what will explode at the Liberation for Sartre; that's why the Sartrean theory of choice will be, if not calculated in terms of the situation of the Occupation and Liberation, then at least fundamentally steered towards, fundamentally aimed at the situation of the Occupation and Liberation. But first, you must try to get a sense... because this is very interesting. I choose, I choose, I get angry, I constitute myself as angry, I constitute myself as in tears. But I can only do this by acting as if I have no choice. And I could not get angry if at the same time I did not affirm that it is anger that gets into me.

But for us this third comment is a very serious matter. I can just say very cautiously at this point that there are a number of situations in which I might say I have no choice. Maybe all of them, maybe all these situations where I say "I have no choice" are like this, though I can't go so far as to say that... I can at most say that there are a certain number of situations where I say "I have no choice", and where, in fact, *this is my way of choosing*. If that's true, then it will let us make considerable headway regarding this third remark, namely: what is this choice between modes of existence? The fundamental choice between modes of existence will be *the choice between choice and non-choice*, that is to say the choice between the mode of existence that is capable of choosing and the mode of existence that can only choose itself on condition of saying and affirming: I don't have a choice. The choice is thus between choosing and not choosing so that not choosing still constitutes a choice. Not choosing is the choice I make on condition of thinking, believing and affirming that I had no choice. So there

are two fundamental modes of existence. The problem for us is: what do these modes of existence consist in? And this will be the object of our fourth remark.

This mode of existence where I choose on condition of denying that I choose is what Sartre will call "bad faith", or the mode of existence of the "bastards". This brings us back to, this brings us back... I think, it takes me back to the past... it's very curious. We no longer think in this way, currently anyway – which doesn't mean that it won't come back, it doesn't mean that these aren't profound analyses – but I think that the problems of that time, those points of view, I mean those problems, have really changed. I feel like what I'm doing here is archeology but anyway, this is what Sartre called "bad faith", or inauthentic existence. Pascal called it diversion (*le divertissement*)²⁹, diversion, and you have to understand what diversion means. It's really a detour, a turning away (*detournement*)³⁰, to divert oneself.

Kierkegaard called this the "aesthetic stage of existence", but why? Yet more importantly, he also considered it a part of the "ethical stage". For what does Agamemnon do, Agamemnon who is a hero of the ethical stage, like all the Greeks? The Greeks are inseparable from *ethos*. Agamemnon is a man of ethics. And in the name of ethics, in the name of the *ethos*, Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter Iphigenia. And Kierkegaard, in some splendid pages in *Fear and Trembling*³¹ – another book that I urge you to read and reread – in the splendid pages of *Fear and Trembling*, he comments abundantly on the case of... – and Kierkegaard is a genius when he starts to comment, he really gets down to it, he goes all in, he makes a kind of prodigious theater out of it – the case of Agamemnon: he sacrifices his daughter, poor Iphigenia, and he weeps, he weeps and weeps, he has no choice. He has no choice, but why? The winds are unfavorable. The boats can't leave. The high priest said that the winds would become favorable and that the boats would leave, and the whole fate of Greece is at stake. The ships must leave, the high priest said, but it will only happen if you sacrifice your daughter. Moral duty. The necessity of the situation. Despite all his desire to save Iphigenia, Agamemnon must sacrifice her, and Kierkegaard, who is in top form when he writes these pages, says that all of Greece applauds this, there are no young fiancés who do not applaud the sacrifice, saying: Agamemnon is a hero! He was capable of sacrificing his daughter, he was capable of sacrificing his daughter. And then all the young Greek girls say: Bravo! Bravo! What a patriotic act, Kierkegaard supposes here. But it seems there is no protest; everyone agrees, everyone thought it was an excellent decision and Agamemnon, it was well known, was a great leader.

And Kierkegaard says: Imagine that Agamemnon – this is where we recognize the great Kierkegaard – imagine that Agamemnon had had favorable winds, or didn't have to leave, and one morning he got up and said: "Well, I have to sacrifice my Iphigenia". Then the people of the neighborhood, the fiancés, all of them say to him: "No! What is the matter with you, why?" And he answers: "For no reason, no duty. For the sake of the power of the absurd." And everyone thinks, "He's crazy!" And yet, here you will recognize a character who opposes Agamemnon point by point, who emerges from another book, from another civilization, and that is Abraham. And yet he had waited to have a son for a long, long time, and he wanted a son badly. And he has to sacrifice his son, not on account of moral duty, not on account of a critical situation, not on account of a desire – he does not want to. So on account of what? What is this madness we are told about in the Old Testament? Because it can only be pure madness. What's wrong with him? That's the way it is. "It's between God and me", independent of anything, beyond all aesthetics, beyond all ethics. We will encounter this problem again. But in any case, Agamemnon, we just need to remember how Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter because he has no choice, while the other, Abraham,

sacrifices his son because he has the choice. It's very strange to sacrifice your son because you have a choice, even though you don't want to. It's a great mystery. Well, these are the kind of mysteries we often find in the Old Testament that Kierkegaard recounts here. Okay.

So my question is: let's try to get a clearer view of this mode of existence, the mode of bad faith, or diversion. So, regarding that... well, we'll see all this in a short while, since right now I'm afraid I have to go to the secretary's office. [*Tape interrupted*]

... You have all manner of thoughts and reflections on diversion in Pascal's *Pensées*. We have the impression that it is a simple matter, that it consists in saying: Well, people only think of having fun, instead of thinking about their condition and the relation of this condition, of the human condition, to God. And we say to ourselves: well, of course. So, for me, this is part of those things that fully concern thought, but where it's a question of – if you like, I don't know what to call it – they are passages that convey the feeling of thought. They're not the kind of passages... there are, there are several levels of thought involved: there's thought in its conceptual dimension and there's also a feeling of thought. So, at first glance, they might seem to be extremely disappointing texts.

And he takes hunting as a typical example³². Here we have an example, a good example because it's fashionable, the hunter. And he says, well yes, the hunter, this is the very epitome of diversion, the poor idiot. And what he says, of course, one has the impression that this is too simple. We could always add things to this, which would be bad Pascal, but it wouldn't change the essence. In the end we see what he means. He tells us this: Well, you have these guys who chase rabbits, saying "I'm going to get this rabbit, I'm going to nail it!" He takes this as the very essence of diversion. They chase the rabbit... "I'm going to get it!" So here Pascal proceeds according to his method, he will order the cases. He asks: is it the rabbit that they really want? And the answer is: No, they don't really want a rabbit, because if I bring them a rabbit, and I tell them "Here's the rabbit you wanted, a real rabbit", well, they won't be happy, they won't be happy. So it's not the rabbit that they want. And Pascal immediately concludes, because he's in a hurry, he immediately concludes by saying: You see, it's because there's only one thing they'll never admit, that *it is the chase they seek and not the quarry*. This is Pascal's text *à la lettre*.

So, you will tell me how enormously disappointing this is. Enormously disappointing in appearance, because you will meet all kinds of hunters – none of them necessarily any brighter than any other – who will readily admit that what they seek is the chase and not the quarry, and that it is hunting itself that is a pleasure. Moreover, if we follow our method, which is also Pascal's, what we choose is never an object or a term. What we choose is *a subjective mode of existence that includes this term*. So I would say quite literally that it's not the rabbit the hunter chooses, it's the hunt itself, since hunting is a mode of existence. Right. Good. That's simple. And if we say to the hunter... Wait a minute, let's slow things down here. You see, first case, I'm... I'm putting things in order: a) I desire a rabbit. But if someone gives me a rabbit, I no longer want it. I want to catch the rabbit myself; b) No, what I really want is to hunt. So, c) Let's imagine a question. Why? Why is it that you want to hunt? So, here, the answers are various. Well, if I desire to hunt, for example... some people will even go so far as to say, well, it's not so much hunting I desire, it's having a nice walk with friends, a nice walk with friends. So here everything's fine, we're having a walk, it's in order to have a walk, it's to get some exercise, okay. But there are others for whom the question will be more complicated, who will explain to you their affinity with animals and so on. Good. Even someone who at a pinch says – and you will find some people who will say

this – it's for the sake of movement. Hunting is a kind of movement that suits me well, it's a taste for movement. That is, it's a way of shaking off torpor. Fine.

So they will say exactly what Pascal claims they cannot say. Pascal says they will never admit that, in the end, hunting is simply a way for them to shake off their torpor. But that's not true! You'll find a lot of hunters who admit that hunting is a way of shaking off their torpor, that is, to get themselves moving. Does this mean that Pascal is wrong? How could he be? Obviously not, he is not wrong. Because what he means, and the context shows it clearly enough, is that there is one thing that no hunter will admit to, and this is what we're looking for. What won't a hunter admit to? That is the crucial question. He will admit to the fact that he wants to kill, that he wants to get moving. He will admit to all of this. Modern hunters, in any case – and in the 17th century, it couldn't have been any different – they will admit to all this, but there is one thing they will not admit to, and what is that? It's that *if they don't get moving, they will die of boredom the minute they're left alone with themselves*.

I mean, this doesn't seem like anything particularly important, but it's already a great deal. What Pascal discovers in the depths of a consciousness is that, in his view, this consciousness can only exist by hiding it. This mode of existence may very well claim that it is restless but what it cannot say is: "I am restless because as soon as I am alone, I will die of anguish and boredom". Here, Pascal once again becomes interesting. In other words, I will find all kinds of people in the world who will say: "Yes, I like movement" – psychological necessity – but I will find no one who will say: "Yes, I choose tumult because as soon as I find myself alone, I know and I feel that I am a miserable wretch". This is something that we have to hide from ourselves. You see?

I mean, I insist on this point because taken at face value... a text taken at face value doesn't seem to say much. And then, but... You see... "They do not know that it is the chase, and not the quarry, which they seek". They do know, but here Pascal moves fast, a bit like the way mathematicians do. You know when mathematicians create something – not when they teach, but when they create – they begin with a demonstration focusing on the essential, they make a kind of sketch. They don't demonstrate everything, they proceed... there are huge ellipses in the texts of great mathematicians. So they throw something out there and they begin with that, but then they leave the rest... or else between two fragments, they leave a big blank. Here, even more so. In *Pensées*, which is an unfinished book, I have the impression that Pascal leaves enormous ellipses. He appears to keep things simple, and then all at once: bang! What they can't admit to themselves. "Man is so unhappy that he would be bored even if he had no cause for boredom, by the very nature of his temperament, and he is so vain that, though he has a thousand and one basic reasons for being bored, the slightest thing, like pushing a ball with a billiard cue, will be enough to divert him."³³ Anything, anything but admit this.

So, obviously, being a Christian, Pascal will translate this for us – though it is quite independent, it can be understood completely independently from Christianity – Pascal will translate this in terms of the relationship to God. Namely, he cannot accept the inscription in the human condition of a direct relationship with God or a face to face relationship with God, which is a way... which is a Christian way of saying what I was speaking about without referring to Christianity, namely this kind of realization: in the evening, when the tumult – a Pascalian word this, this notion of tumult – when the tumult has died down, the guy looks at himself in his mirror, and says: In the end... or at least he has an inkling, the smallest inking that no matter how rich or socially successful he is, what is he in the end? Nothing but an

idiot, a miserable wretch. So that would be this consciousness at bottom. From then on, he will be fully aware that he is constantly agitated, but what he will not be aware of is the reason for this agitation, but why won't he be aware of it? Because the whole of his consciousness is made to escape, this consciousness within consciousness, it is a consciousness within consciousness that the whole of consciousness will desperately try to cover, namely, the revelation that if I am so agitated, it is because I cannot bear myself for a second.

So this is very close to Sartre. I mean, when Sartre launches his great analysis of bad faith, he tells us: Beware! – here I'm summarizing a lot – Bad faith is neither lying nor the subconscious, because bad faith can only be understood in terms of the unity of a single consciousness. Bad faith is an operation that can only be understood in terms of the unity of one and the same consciousness, which excludes lying. In the lie, there is a splitting of consciousness, there is a double consciousness, consciousness of what I say and consciousness that it is not true. This isn't bad faith. Lying has absolutely nothing to do with bad faith. But is not unawareness either.

What Sartre wants to say is that within consciousness there is another consciousness that this consciousness can only cover up and hide. And this is the operation of bad faith. And this operation of bad faith, Sartre will discover in his own way by saying... But bad faith – in the same way that Pascal tells us that diversion is our very mode of existence, at least for most of us, most of the time – Sartre will say that bad faith is the way we exist, at least most us, most of the time. And he calls this the *inauthentic mode of existence*, and it seems difficult to avoid this, since whether it's bad faith strictly speaking or sincerity, it's the same. Sincerity has bad faith and bad faith is sincere. It is actually this very union of sincerity and bad faith, it is actually *this identity of sincerity and bad faith that defines the inauthentic mode of existence*.

The sincere person is the one who says: "This is how I am". Why is he in bad faith? This is how I am. I am a good boy, I am brave, etc. Or else, he will say: I am a coward. I am a coward. Honestly, I'm a coward. Oh, I'm a bastard! Okay. This can happen. But is it sincerity? Not at all. Because when I say: "This is how I am", it may be a nice thing to say, but it's just like Pascal's hunter, it's exactly the same. When I say: "This is how I am", you must understand... What is there to understand, anyway? You should never say things like that, never. What I am, I necessarily present as an essence. That is to say, I present myself as being what I am. All that I'm telling you now comes from Sartre. In sincerity, I present myself as being what I am, or, as not being what I am not.

No, no, no, no. I'm going too fast. In sincerity, I always present myself as what I am. That is, what I am, I present as my essence. Except that there is no essence. There is no "my essence". Moreover, this becomes completely contradictory since in presenting myself as my essence and being the one who presents it, I necessarily take a distance from what I am. I am what I am, in such a way that I, in all sincerity, can imply at the same time that I am not what I am. I am what I am, that is my essence: sincerity. But I, who tell you this, and who exist, am not my essence. I am not what I am. The proof is that when someone tells you: "I am a coward", you understand that he cannot be as much of a coward as all that since he admits he is a coward.

In other words, *by affirming that I am what I am, I deny that I am this*. This is the operation of sincerity. Look at me, I'm being completely open with you. Oh, if you only knew, and it's even worse than you think, I'm a coward and I'm mean, I'm sneaky! That means, I am what I

am: essence. But this isn't entirely the case. I, who am telling you this, am therefore something other than my essence. I who tell you, in so far as I exist, am obviously something other than my essence – wink wink – you see, I am a good boy since I'm telling you all this. Sincerity is toxic: it is perfectly contradictory. In other words, someone who is sincere is in perfect bad faith.

The other pole of bad faith, I'm not... Oh, you know, I'm not an alcoholic. I'm not an alcoholic. Well, and the guy really believes it, he believes it. I'm not an alcoholic! Well. The proof, the proof that he's sincere – we'll see that this isn't the same as the former case – is that I can stop when I want. Well, there are cases where stopping means something and stopping is the real choice, and authentic existence according to Sartre is very, very... But there are cases where it's really part of the routine, right? I'm not an alcoholic, I can stop when I want! Why? Because we neglect a very important fact, that stopping is part of alcoholism itself, or rather there is a type of stopping that forms part of alcoholism itself. That's why it won't be so hard to distinguish between real stopping and false stopping. In fact, every alcoholic is no less alcoholic when he stops than when he drinks. How is stopping part of alcoholism itself? It is the famous "last drink". And by definition, in alcoholism you have a last drink. There isn't a continuous flow of drinks, not at all, that's not the form it takes...³⁴
[Tape interrupted]

Part 3

So the problem with "having done with alcoholism" is to transform this type of stopping that belongs to alcoholism into a completely different type of stopping that does indeed quit alcoholism. But there is a type of stopping that belongs completely to alcoholism. So, by saying: "I am not an alcoholic", I appear to be saying that I deny what I am not. That is to say, I deny that I am an alcoholic. I deny that I am an alcoholic. This is just the opposite of the last example, that of sincerity. But precisely by denying what I am not, *I deny that I am not that*. I deny that I am not that, since the kind of stopping I invoke in order to say that I am not an alcoholic, is precisely part of alcoholism itself. So by saying that "I'm not", I'm denying that I'm not. Which is bad faith.

And for Sartre sincerity and bad faith will be at the same time opposites and the same thing. They will be the two aspects. One is always both at the same time. One never ceases having a foot in both camps: one in sincerity and one in bad faith. Okay. And why is that? Why? Because there's only one thing that we cannot bear. And what we cannot bear – and here Sartre will in the end provide us with an atheist version of Pascal – what I cannot bear is precisely what lies at the bottom of all consciousness, which he will sometimes call anguish, sometimes dereliction, sometimes the absurd, sometimes being in excess or, rather, being superfluous – something that my consciousness can only constitute by escaping it, by fleeing. This is a very Pascalian idea.

And regarding Kierkegaard, I don't have time for this just now, so I'll have to pass, alas. We'll go back to it next time, but at another level. For the aesthetic stage, it's a constant. What is it that the man of the aesthetic existence, the man of the aesthetic stage flees, according to Kierkegaard? What he flees – and Kierkegaard analyzes this brilliantly – is a kind of despair intrinsic to boredom. What the man of aesthetics desires is to find something interesting. Give me something interesting! Give me something interesting! And he will cover, he will conceal, he will conceal boredom with all his masks. The man of aesthetic existence is the man of masks. Except that for Kierkegaard masks are strange things. Because the mask is first of all

a mask that I borrow. And I always begin by borrowing masks, to fill my boredom and emptiness. So you know I play the smart Alec. I think I'm Jimmy Stewart, a cowboy, whatever, so this is not... I borrow masks, and this is aesthetic existence, you see.

But one passes very quickly to a second level of aesthetic existence. Because the first is a little empty, it's mediocre, so I must invent my own masks. I have to become the actor of my own plays. At this moment, the man of aesthetic existence becomes what he was in potential only, namely the seducer. He becomes more dangerous. He has become aggressive. He invents his own masks. But it turns out badly anyway, it turns out very badly, because when one invents one's own masks and then makes an aggressive use of the mask, an offensive use of the mask, that is to say when one seduces, then beneath the mask or behind the mask is something that grows, which is like the feeling of an interiority. At the first stage, there was no interiority, there was emptiness, there was nothing but the mask and the void, whereas here we have an interiority, a relative interiority. In the words of one of Kierkegaard's loveliest phrases: "The most abstract form for reserve is that it closes itself in"³⁵ There is a withdrawal into oneself that closes in on itself since it is born behind the masks. And here, behind the masks, there is a feeling of annihilation, a feeling of boredom raised to the supreme power which joins a kind of feeling of annihilation. "My head is as empty and dead", he said – and Kierkegaard knew all about it because he was a seducer too – "My head is as empty and dead as a theater in which the play is over."³⁶ My head is as empty and dead... and dead as a theater where the play is over. That's the other side of the mask.

So, you see, all that amounts to the same thing. How, therefore, can we define this inauthentic mode of existence, whether in terms of bad faith, or diversion, or the aesthetic stage? Well, in the end, it's precisely this: a choice that I make whose condition is the claim that I don't have a choice. Look how sincere I am. I am not the person of bad faith, or prey to the diversion of the hunter. And what's underneath it all? Why am I hiding? Why will the condition of this consciousness be that of hiding what makes it possible, namely: *I hide from myself that I choose*. I hide from myself that I choose such and such a mode of existence, *precisely because I can only choose this mode of existence by saying to myself that I have no choice*. That is to say, you understand, if I can say either that it's my duty – sincerity – or that it's a question of personal taste – I like to hunt, I like to move – or that it's the situation that requires it. You will say to me that there are nevertheless cases – we must not exaggerate – there are cases where the situation requires it. Yes, maybe... I don't know, maybe. Sartre himself went very far, he said: No! There are never any such cases.

Now, let's take the cases that preoccupied Sartre, the extreme cases: torture, threats, hostages, the threat to people, being tortured oneself. So, what choice do we have? How can I do otherwise than say that I was forced? If I am told: "Twenty people will die if you don't talk" or when I am tortured... these situations were very common at the time and they continue to be. What's going on here? Can I say nonetheless... Don't I have to recognize that there really is no choice? We'll see later. For Sartre, there can be no doubt: one has a choice. And after all, after all, there is a choice one can make. There is, for example, in most cases, a possible choice which is that of suicide. I'm talking about in the case of being tortured. In other cases where there are hostages and so on, this seems to me to be the most complicated case... Well, I don't know, we'll see, we'll have to come back to this point.

But then, what I've just tried to define... this was my fourth remark: we will call the mode of inauthentic existence, the mode of existence of one who chooses on condition of denying that they have a choice. It's always the same story, if you like. Meaning that to choose is always to

choose between choosing and not choosing, given that not choosing is to choose by saying I have no choice.

So, the fifth remark... if you have managed to follow all this, you will have already understood everything, because from now on, if I become aware that it is a question of choosing – this is where things get bizarre – if I become aware that it is a question of choosing, from then on I no longer have to worry, I no longer have a choice, but in a completely different way than before. Before, I chose on condition of believing I had no choice. Now I know that it is a question of choosing. As Kierkegaard says, again in a formula all his own: "There is never a solution, there are only decisions". I become aware that it is a question of choosing. Well, that's it, I don't have a problem. Why not? I don't have a choice, because there is at least one thing I can't choose: *what I can't choose are all the modes of existence that I could only choose on condition of believing that I don't have a choice*. In other words: I make the choice of choice. If I choose choice, I have already chosen a mode of existence. I don't need to specify what there is to choose.

You see how far I am now from the *terms* of the choice. I have already qualified my mode of existence by choosing choice. By choosing choice, I have forbidden myself all the choices that I could only make if I said I had no choice. In other words, if I choose choice, I, Agamemnon, will not sacrifice Iphigenia, and I will say to the high priest, and to Greek public opinion: "Expel me, do what you want with me, I will not sacrifice my sweet Iphigenia, because sacrificing sweet Iphigenia is something that I, father of Iphigenia, could only do by saying that I have no choice". If I learn and become aware that there is a choice, I can no longer make the choice I would have made only by saying that I have no choice. Do you understand? Do you understand? Won't this change your life?

A student: What about Abraham?

Deleuze: Ha ha! Abraham is right in the thick of it. He adds something. Perhaps you can sense Abraham's arrival. He, the operation he will carry out is... But alas, I cannot yet tell you what Abraham's operation will be. But what I can speak about now, is Pascal's wager, and what it conceals. In other words, it's a way of renewing... There was a point on which all philosophers had always agreed: the will, when we speak of the concept of will, the will has only one object, which is freedom. There is no will but the will to freedom, or if you like, freedom has no other object than itself. It is the same thing that he finds again, but in a very particular context which is this very, very, marked, very particular, a very singular way of thinking regarding choice... the only choice is that of choice. So someone might say: If you say that choice implies choosing to choose, you haven't said anything at all! Oh, but yes, I have said a lot, since I have already excluded all sorts of things, all sorts of choices that would henceforth be impossible.

Hence Sartre's idea: "We were never freer than we were under the Occupation." This thought that today seems... well, what does it mean? It means that the majority... well, you can already see the problems arising, because remember there were also fascists. But for the moment, we'll leave those aside. But the majority of those who were called collaborators, those who made a deal with the fascists – who were all the Vichyists, all those who followed Pétain³⁷ – that is to say the vast majority of the French, the majority were not fascists, they were... The French fascists were a localised minority. Whereas these people were not fascists. They supported them, but you can't say that they were themselves fascists. On the other hand, there was something universal about them: they did not choose Pétain. I have never heard

anyone... I have never heard a supporter of Pétain admit that they chose Pétain over De Gaulle. Never, never. This is even, it's even a way of thinking that wouldn't make sense to such people and for a very simple reason. Of course, collaboration wouldn't have been possible for them unless they *were* fascists... we'll see which cases suppose, I mean pose, the problem of what constitutes a fascist as such. Yet collaboration was something they could only choose on condition of saying and believing that there was no choice, there was no choice. The Germans are here! We are occupied. I, as a factory manager, have to keep my machines running, I have my workers to feed and so on. What can I do? What do you want me to do? You have to, all right! I had to, all right, I had to. Okay, okay, I had to do it.

And what of those who became aware that there was a choice? Well, those who became aware that there was a choice were already part of the resistance. It's not difficult. You'll tell me – once again, I'm leaving aside the case of the fascists because there were a bunch of fascists who did choose. Well, they will pose a problem for us. But for the moment, we'll proceed in order, we'll put that to one side. Those who became aware that there was a choice had already chosen because the choice of being a collaborator had become radically impossible for them. The choice of being a collaborator could only be made, once again, on condition of them saying to themselves... otherwise it's very abstract, you can always say to yourself abstractly... Can one imagine a collaborator who would say: "I have chosen to be a collaborator"? No. You can of course imagine a fascist saying: "I chose to be a fascist", and again, we'll see under what conditions. But a collaborator who speaks in the name of the established order and in the name of the state of things, is by definition a collaborator. He speaks in the name of the state of things. In the name of the state of things, he cannot say, "I have chosen to be a collaborator". He can't say that.

What he will say instead is: Oh, my heart is with you, and my heart is with the resistance fighters. But you are children, you are poets, you are... and so on. I, who am a realist, know that, alas, we have no choice. Ah, if we had the choice! Ah, if we had the choice, I would be with you – we heard that, we heard that... – I would be with you with all my heart, if we had the choice, but I don't have the choice, and then I have my wife to feed, I have my workers, I have to provide work for them, and so on. That's it, and as soon as I chose, my choice was determined. Choosing to choose is not to choose in a vacuum. It is to choose a certain mode of existence, *the mode of existence in which I am conscious of choosing*. So by that very fact, you see how I was able to order two fundamental modes of existence beginning from a subjective point of view, that of choice: the mode of existence that I choose in knowing that I choose, in knowing that it is a choice, or the mode of existence that I can only choose by denying that it is a choice.

So things become very interesting here because we at once see why the authors of this lineage, that of choice, are opposed to morality. They are, literally speaking, immoralists. And I speak for Pascal as well as... They hate morality. And you can see why. Because morality speaks in the name of duty. It does not speak in the name of modes of existence. Morality is a discipline that, rightly or wrongly, regulates our actions according to transcendental values. And I see no other possible definition of morality. These transcendental values include good, evil, duty, virtue. And we will call "morality" any activity of this type, any discipline that judges actions by relating them to values: is it right, is it wrong? In this sense, Agamemnon is a man of morals. Whereas this lineage of immoralists is not at all a group of people for whom things are all the same. You have seen the ways in which things are not all the same. It's a certain lineage that tells us: What you believe, what you do, what you say, you will judge not by relating it to transcendental values, but on the

contrary, by relating it to the modes of existence that it supposes, the *immanent modes of existence* that it supposes.

Here the proof is very concrete, just as it is for good and evil. Yet the moral proof and the immoralist proof are completely opposed. There are things that the moral proof will strongly condemn and that the immoralist proof will recommend. Their struggle will in no way be abstract. But, in this thinking of choice that I call the current of immoralism, the immanent modes of existence... it is very odd, isn't it? For example, they can be very, very... in a sense, they can be even more rigorous than the moralists. Pascal is a case in point, wouldn't you say? And even Sartre, who was burdened with a kind of immoralist morality that was worse than any morality. That was his Protestant past. And I would add his atheist revision, his atheist revision. But Sartre is not only an atheist. He never quite digested his reformism. Family inheritance is a heavy and powerful thing.

So, well... what do I mean by all this? Of course, you can look for your own examples. When you hear something that seems outrageous, and this happens all the time! You just have to listen to what they say on TV... at least twice a day you find yourself thinking, "What the hell is that guy on about? What is... what he's talking about?" Yes, or in the street, in cafés, at the bar, you hear something vile, something extremely vile where the guy looks happy, he looks like he thinks he's being clever for having said that vile thing. Something pretty disgusting. And you say to yourself... What you don't do, in the name of higher values which would be those of good and evil, is say how bad what he's saying is. You take the opposite tack. You say to yourself: Let's see what mode of existence being able to say something like that implies. There is a certain degree of vulgarity, for example, there are certain phrases he uses that are extremely vulgar. You look at the guy furtively and you say to yourself in a flash, but a flash that makes you dizzy – because they say we have to love everyone – you ask yourself how this guy can... what is the mode of existence that allows him to say... that makes him capable of saying something like that? So here vertigo overtakes you, vertigo overtakes you, what is sometimes almost a physical vertigo. It's too much, it's too much. You say to yourself: "Shit, so what might he be capable of, what is someone who says something like that, even as a joke, really capable of?" At that point, it's not even dizziness anymore, it's cold sweat that hits you. Holy shit! That's it. That's it, you understand. Okay.

So I'll end with Pascal's wager. Well, it's not complicated. I was telling you... please, I'm so far behind that... What is Pascal telling us? First of all, he's telling us... that's it. You're going to wager, you're going to wager heads or tails, heads or tails... God exists. God doesn't exist. But why would we want to bet in the first place? Well, let's see.

What does this... second thing, what does this involve? It involves two modes of existence. It involves two modes of existence. Obviously, they're not two modes of existence of God. So then two modes of existence of whom? Well, the mode of existence of a man who wagers that God exists, and the mode of existence of a man who wagers that God doesn't exist. So the wager is absolutely not about the existence of God. The existence of God or the non-existence of God plays exactly the role of the term from which we started, that is to say, it constitutes the alternation, the alternation that corresponds to my first remark. But the alternative that I introduced in my second remark does not at all concern the existence of God but two modes of existence of man: the mode of existence of the man of faith and the mode of existence of the atheist, of the one who denies that a God exists, or who wagers that God does not exist. Do you understand?

Thirdly, then, what we already knew we shouldn't do – and you will see this from the text itself – is confuse... we mustn't confuse the wager – which I can say, strictly speaking, would be: Does God exist or does God not exist? – and the stake: what the wager involves, to use Pascal's term, what the wager involves are two modes of human existence.

Third level of the wager of Pascal's text. What do I have to lose? First answer... there are, as it were, two sub-levels. First answer: nothing. By betting that God exists, that is, by choosing the mode of existence of the man who believes in God, I can lose *nothing* and I have everything to win. Why? Because by betting that God exists, I don't lose my life. On the contrary, I stand to gain an infinite life. And in the text you'll see where the misunderstanding arises that leads us to the hasty conclusion that the wager concerns the existence of God. This is because Pascal speaks of an infinite life, but you will see from the context – the context is absolutely formal – that the infinite life in the text on the wager has nothing to do with God's infinity, but is the infinity of life that the man of faith gains, that is to say, the infinite life that this man gains is the Christian eternity. So I stand to gain an infinite life and I don't even risk losing the *one* life I have.

Second sub-level... I can lose nothing when I choose the mode of existence of the man who believes that God exists. I won't lose anything, yet don't I stake too much? I always have to weigh up the difference in the lose-win. What I have to lose, what I can win and what I have to stake. What do I have to stake? Don't I have to stake too much? Yes, in a way, I do have something to lose if God exists. No, that was stupid what I just said. I mean, I have something to lose if I choose the mode of existence of one who believes God exists. And what is this? Diversion... I lose diversion, and what I gain is having to bear myself for an infinite life and to rejoice in myself for this infinite life.

But, as we saw, what was diversion? It was the choice that one could only make if one said "I have no choice". In other words, by losing diversion, I lose something, but what I don't lose is choice itself. Therefore, if people knew that it is a question of choice, they would necessarily choose the mode of existence of the one who believes God exists, since this would be the only way to choose choice, and the only thing I would lose is this false choice which consists in choosing on condition of saying: "I don't have the choice". It's beautiful. It's a seminal text.

Therefore, the two questions that are usually asked regarding this text can only be answered with two dismissals, meaning that they are stupid questions. First question: How is this a proof of the existence of God? A stupid question, since it doesn't claim to be a proof of the existence of God. Moreover, it doesn't even concern the existence of God. Second question: To whom is the wager addressed? Is it for this type of person or for that type of person? Second stupid question, since the bet consists in ordering and making a typology of people's modes of existence.

So, if that's the way it is, everything's fine, there are just a few points left to consider, but they will create problems. And next time, this will be the object of our sixth remark. We've reached the following point: a typology, well... you see, up to now in terms of this typology, we've had to pass – and I insist on this enormously – *we had to pass from the alternation of terms to the alternative of modes of existence*. I believe that this is the whole genius of Pascal's text. Because there are the two, there are the two: the alternation of terms must be, in game theory or in probability theory, the alternation of terms is simply a means of leading us to the alternative of modes of existence.

So, a typology of the modes of existence. Okay, I've got my two big notions here: authentic modes of existence, inauthentic modes of existence, or the mode of existence of the one who believes God exists and the mode of existence of diversion. Okay. I have all that. But there are all sorts of other cases. I mean, isn't there, despite everything, I won't say anymore... these are questions I'm asking very quickly now because this is where we'll be starting from next time. Isn't there, despite everything, a choice for the good? We are told: it is a matter of choosing choice, just choose choice. But isn't there a choice *for* the good? What would that be? And above all, isn't there a choice *for* evil? What prevents me from saying to Pascal: But I choose precisely diversion. Or even: I will be able to overcome bad faith on condition that I go all the way, I will be able to overcome diversion, meaning, meaning... I choose the devil, I make the choice against God. Ouch, ouch, ouch, ouch! I make the choice *for* evil. Is there such a thing? That's what we have to confront.

At first glance, this doesn't appear to be a risky question, because Georges Bataille made a remark that has always seemed right to me, and to everyone else, that the worst fascists have never said: "I chose". They always said, even the highest, even the most responsible, they always said: "I obeyed". I obeyed, that is, they invoked a non-choice. You never saw a fascist invoke a choice. It's obvious that had Hitler survived and been put on trial, he would never have said: I chose, I chose to exterminate the Jews. Maybe, maybe he..., we can't make him talk. But in any case, Goering never said this, Himmler never said it. Had Himmler already killed himself or not? I don't know anymore, well, anyway, those who were tried, such as Eichmann, never said it. He said: I was only following orders, I am just a minor functionary. And as Bataille said very well, fascists generally invoke the established order, they don't invoke choice. Okay.

But let's suppose... We can think about this as a literary challenge, I have the impression that there were these unassuming little guys – those that Genet spoke so well of at the Liberation – the little guys who were firing from the rooftops who had made the opposite wager: I may lose my life, but I'll cause them grief right to the end, I'll fight them right to the end. Well. Just as there were surely, there were no doubt militiamen who became fascists, who said to themselves: I will take this killing business right to the end and I'll kill as many as I can. Let's assume that happens. Why shouldn't it be a choice? Now, what can we say about that? I will leave you with this burning question until next week. [*End of the recording*] [2:45:18]

Notes

¹ Anthony Mann was an American film director of German origins whose output ranged from *film noir* to historical epics but who is best known for a series of unsentimental westerns, often set in mountainous territory, which introduced a vertical inclination to the topography of the genre. His most famous films, several of which feature Jimmy Stewart, include *Winchester '73* (1950), *The Naked Spur* (1953), *Bend of the River* (1953), *The Man from Laramie* (1955) and *Man of The West* (1958).

² Here Deleuze is thinking about Mann's 1957 western *The Tin Star*, starring Henry Fonda and Anthony Perkins but not Jimmy Stewart. The dialogue in question, which takes place between Perkins playing a young and inexperienced sheriff and Fonda as the wily bounty hunter he admires, following a confrontation in which Perkins' sheriff is almost killed by a man he is trying to arrest, is as follows: "You pulled your gun too early / No he'd have pulled his first / You walk right up to a man, chances are he won't gunfight, because at three feet he knows he'll get hurt, maybe killed, even if he draws first. Pulling your gun, you just goaded him into trying to get you."

³ As will be seen later, the film Deleuze's student is thinking of is Henry Hathaway's *Nevada Smith* [1966], without James Stewart, but with Brian Keith and Steve McQueen. The film contains some scenes of shooting lessons but without the dialogue Deleuze describes. However, another slightly different version of this dialogue can be found in John Wayne's last film, Don Siegel's *The Shootist* (1976), with James Stewart as the doctor. The dialogue is between J.B. Book (Wayne) and Gillom Rogers (Ron Howard), who asks the question of how Book

could kill so many men: "It isn't always being fast or even accurate that counts. It's being willing. I found out early that most men, regardless of cause or need, aren't willing. They blink an eye or draw a breath before they pull the trigger. I won't!" The actor who had died recently was of course McQueen, who passed away in 1980 not long after completing his last western, *Tom Horn*.

⁴ Here the student is thinking of John Sturges' *The Magnificent Seven* (1966), the Hollywood western remake of Kurosawa's *The Seven Samurai*.

⁵ Charles Renouvier (1815-1903) was a French philosopher who considered himself a "Swedenborg of history" and who sought to update the philosophy of Kantian liberalism and individualism in terms of the socio-economic realities of the late nineteenth century. His work had a considerable influence on the sociological method developed by Émile Durkheim.

⁶ Louis Guilloux (1899-1980) was a French writer known for his Social Realist novels describing working class life and political struggles in the mid-twentieth century. His best-known book is *Le Sang noir* (*Blood Dark*), published in 1935, which some claim anticipated Sartre's *La Nausée*.

⁷ Set on a single day, towards the end of World War 1, *Blood Dark*, also known as *Bitter Victory*, centres around a failed philosophy teacher known as Cripure trapped in a provincial town in Brittany, far from the trenches but alert to senseless slaughter of the war, who gets involved in an equally absurd duel over a point of honour with a detested colleague.

⁸ Jules Lequier (1814-1862) was a French philosopher from Brittany. Lequier had a conception of dynamic divine omniscience, wherein God's knowledge of the future is one of possibilities rather than actualities. From this perspective omniscience would consist in the knowledge of necessary facts as necessary, and contingent facts as contingent.

⁹ First published in 1943, Sartre's *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology* (*L'Être et le néant : Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*) is the book in which he develops his fullest philosophical account of the idea of existentialism, exploring topics including consciousness, perception, social philosophy, self-deception, the existence of "nothingness", psychoanalysis, and the question of free will.

¹⁰ Deleuze makes an important distinction here between *classification* (classification) and *classement* (ordering, ranking) in relation to Pascal's method (Pascal himself occasionally employed the term gradation). We have chosen to translate *classement* as "order" or "ordering" rather than "ranking", which would suggest a hierarchy of value judgement not necessarily present in the idea of *classement* as it is used here.

¹¹ *Pensées* is the name given posthumously to fragments that Pascal had been preparing for an apology for Christianity, which was never completed. While it seems to consist of ideas and jottings, some of which are unfinished, it is believed that Pascal had already planned out the order of the book and had begun ordering his draft notes into a coherent form but died before he could complete the work. Subsequent editors have disagreed on the order in which his writings should be read.

¹² *The Will to Power* (*Der Wille zur Macht*) is a book of notes drawn from the literary remains of the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche by his sister Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche and Peter Gast (Heinrich Köselitz). The title derived from a work that Nietzsche himself had considered writing before he succumbed to madness.

¹³ See Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (Trans. A.J. Krailsheimer), London, Penguin, para. 160 (257).

¹⁴ On this question see Michel Serres, *Le paradigme Pascalien* in *Le système de Leibniz et ses modèles mathématiques*, Paris, PUF, 1990.

¹⁵ This reflection seems to begin in the *Pensées* from paragraph 335., op. cit.

¹⁶ In the Krailsheimer translation, the actual text reads: "Ordinary people honour those who are highly born, the half-clever ones despise them, saying that birth is a matter of chance, not personal merit. Really clever men honour them, not for the same reason as ordinary people, but for deeper motives. Pious folk with more zeal than knowledge despise them regardless of the reason which makes clever men honour them, because they judge men in the new light of piety, but perfect Christians honour them because they are guided by a still higher light. So opinions swing back and forth, from pro to con, according to one's lights." Cf. Pascal *Pensées*, op. cit., para. 337.

¹⁷ See Blaise Pascal, *Essay on Conics*, written at the age of 17, available from http://euclid.trentu.ca/math/sb/3820H/Fall-2020/Essay_on_Conics_Pascal.pdf

¹⁸ Deleuze raises these distinctions several times. See session 10 in the seminar on Foucault (January 14, 1986) and session 15 in the seminar on Leibniz and the Baroque (April 28, 1987). See also *L'Abécédaire* de Gilles Deleuze, "G for Gauche".

¹⁹ For a discussion of "either/or" alternation in cinema, see *The Movement-Image*, op. cit., pp. 111-117.

²⁰ Here Deleuze makes indirect reference to the climactic scene of *Ordet*. See note 22.

²¹ *Vampyr* (*Vampyr – Der Traum des Allan Gray*, 1932) is a horror film directed by Carl Theodor Dreyer from a script by Dreyer and Christen Jul. Based on elements from J. Sheridan Le Fanu's 1872 collection of supernatural stories *In a Glass Darkly*, the film follows the story of Allan Gray, a student of the occult who enters the village of Courtempière, which is under the curse of a vampire.

²² *Ordet* (1955), originally released in English as *The Word*, is a film by Carl Theodor Dreyer that is today considered one of his greatest masterpieces. Based on a play by Danish Lutheran priest Kaj Munk, the film concerns a feud between two patriarchs – one, Morten, the stern widowed father of three very different sons, the other, Peter, the leader of a religious sect – over the possible marriage between their offspring that leads first to tragedy and then reconciliation. It is celebrated for an extraordinary closing sequence in which one of the characters, the wife of Morten's eldest son, to appears to be miraculously resurrected from the dead by the middle son Johannes, a psychologically disturbed young man who at one point believes himself to be a reincarnation of Christ.

²³ *Day of Wrath* (*Vredens dag*, 1943) is a film by Carl Theodor Dreyer, adapted from the play *Anne Pedersdotter*, in which a young woman is forced into a marriage with an elderly pastor after her late mother is accused of witchcraft. When she falls in love with the pastor's son, she too is suspected of being a witch.

²⁴ *Diary of a Country Priest* (*Journal d'un curé de campagne*, 1951) is a film written and directed by Robert Bresson, based on the novel by Georges Bernanos and starring Claude Laydu as a sickly young priest who has been assigned to his first parish, a village in northern France, where he becomes entangled in the violent resentments of a countess's daughter.

²⁵ See session 15 of the seminar on Cinema 1, April 20, 1982. See also Gilles Deleuze, *The Movement-Image*, op. cit., pp. 112-117.

²⁶ While Johns' lithographs often explore gradations of black, white and grey, it might be said that the alternation between blacks and whites is even more central to the work of Franz Kline, though here the alternation between the two leans towards expressionist opposition.

²⁷ *Je me mets en colère* literally means "I put myself in a state of anger". The unfolding of Deleuze's subsequent reasoning beginning from this French formulation is difficult to render in English, where the most obvious equivalent would be "I get angry" or "I become angry", both of which lack the clear element of choice or decision that is implicit in the French expression, suggesting that the building blocks of concepts are also in part linguistically specific entities. Even to say "I am seized with anger" would be to go in the opposite direction from where Deleuze is heading here.

²⁸ The same translation problem occurs with *Je me mets en larmes*, although here the English "I start to cry" at least hints at the idea of choice that is present in the French formulation.

²⁹ *Divertissement* derives from the Latin *divertere* which means to turn away, e.g., turn away from a cause of worry. In *Pensées* 168, Pascal writes: "*Diversion*. As men are not able to fight against death, misery, ignorance, they have taken it into their heads, in order to be happy, not to think of them at all."

³⁰ Clearly the sense Deleuze gives to the term *detournement* here is quite different to that given by Guy Debord and the Situationists.

³¹ See Soren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, (Trans. Howard. H. Hong & Edna V. Hong eds), Princeton NJ, Princeton UP, 1983

³² See *Pensées*, op. cit. para. 136 (139)

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ On the last drink, see *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, "B for boire".

³⁵ See Soren Kierkegaard, *Stages on Life's Way* (Trans. Howard. H. Hong & Edna V. Hong eds), Princeton NJ, Princeton UP, 1988.

³⁶ See Soren Kierkegaard, *Journals and Notebooks 11, Pt. 1 – Loose Papers 1811-1843* (Niels Jørgen Cappelørn, Alastair Hannay, Bruce H. Kirmmse, David D. Possen, Joel D. S. Rasmussen, and Vanessa Rumble Eds.), Princeton NJ, Princeton UP, 2019, p. 280.

³⁷ Under Marshal Philippe Pétain (1856-1951), who was appointed Prime Minister in 1940, after Germany invaded France, the French government voted to transform the French Third Republic into the French State or Vichy France, an authoritarian regime that collaborated with the Nazi occupiers. After Germany and Italy occupied and disarmed France in November 1942, Pétain's government worked in close partnership with Nazi Germany's military administration.