

was the very presence of water which allowed the bourgeoisie to be described as a monstrous organic body.<sup>12</sup> It is the water which revealed the hideousness of bourgeois bodies beneath their clothes, just as it now reveals the softness and strength of the loved one's body. The bourgeoisie is reduced to the objectivity of a fetish-body, a scrap-body, to which childhood, love, navigation oppose their integral bodies. 'Objectivity', equilibrium, justice are not of the earth: they are the preserve of water.

Finally, what the French school found in water was the promise or implication of another state of perception: a more than human perception, a perception not tailored to solids, which no longer had the solid as object, as condition, as milieu. A more delicate and vaster perception, a molecular perception, peculiar to a 'cine-eye'. This was the result of starting from a real definition of the two poles of perception: the perception-image was not to be reflected in a formal consciousness, but was to be split into two states, one molecular and the other molar, one liquid and the other solid, one drawing along and effacing the other. The sign of perception would not therefore be a 'dicisign', but a *reume*.<sup>13</sup> While the dicisign set up a frame which isolated and solidified the image, the *reume* referred to an image in the process of becoming liquid, which passed through or under the frame. The camera-consciousness became a *reume* since it was actualised in a flowing perception and thus arrived at a material determination, at a flowing-matter. The French school, however, pointed towards this other state, this other perception, this clairvoyant function, rather than assuming full responsibility for it. Other than in its abstract attempts (among which Vigo's *Taris, roi de l'eau* features), it created from it not the new image, but the limit or ultimate point of convergence of the movement-images, of the average-images in the context of a story that retained its solidity. This story was so deeply imbued with rhythm that this was certainly no defect.

### 3 *Towards a gaseous perception*

In the 'cine-eye', Vertov was aiming to attain or regain the system of universal variation, in itself. All the images vary as a function of each other, on all their facets and in all their parts. Vertov himself defined the cine-eye: it is that which 'couples together any point whatsoever of the universe in any temporal order whatsoever'.<sup>14</sup> Everything is at the service of variation and interaction: slow or high speed shots, superimposition, fragmentation, deceleration [*démultiplication*], micro-

shooting [*micro-prise de vue*]. This is not a human eye – even an improved one. For, although the human eye can surmount some of its limitations with the help of contraptions and instruments, there is one which it cannot surmount, since it is its own condition of possibility. Its relative immobility as a receptive organ means that all images vary for a single one, in relation to a privileged image. And, if the camera is considered as apparatus for shooting film, it is subject to the same conditioning limitation. But the cinema is not simply the camera: it is montage. And if from the point of view of the human eye, montage is undoubtedly a construction, from the point of view of another eye, it ceases to be one; it is the pure vision of a non-human eye, of an eye which would be in things. Universal variation, universal interaction (*modulation*) is what Cézanne had already called the world before man, ‘dawn of ourselves’, ‘iridescent chaos’, ‘virginity of the world’. It is not surprising that we have to construct it since it is given only to the eye which we do not have. It says a lot for Mitry’s partisanship that he could condemn in Vertov a contradiction for which he would not dare to reproach a painter: a pseudo-contradiction between creativity (montage) and integrity (the real).<sup>15</sup> What montage does, according to Vertov, is to carry perception into things, to put perception into matter, so that any point whatsoever in space itself perceives all the points on which it acts, or which act on it, however far these actions and reactions extend. This is the definition of objectivity, ‘to see without boundaries or distances’. Thus in this respect all procedures are legitimate, they are no longer trick shots.<sup>16</sup> The materialist Vertov realises the materialist programme of the first chapter of *Matter and Memory* through the cinema, the in-itself of the image. Vertov’s non-human eye, the cine-eye, is not the eye of a fly or of an eagle, the eye of another animal. Neither is it – in an Epsteinian way – the eye of the spirit endowed with a temporal perspective, which might apprehend the spiritual whole. On the contrary, it is the eye of matter, the eye in matter, not subject to time, which has ‘conquered’ time, which reaches the ‘negative of time’, and which knows no other whole than the material universe and its extension (here Vertov and Epstein are contrasted as two different levels of the same montage-camera set).

This is Vertov’s first assemblage. It is, first, a machine assemblage of movement-images. We have seen that the gap, the interval between two movements sketches out an empty place which prefigures the human subject in so far as he appropriates perception to himself. But, for Vertov, the most important thing was to restore the intervals to matter. This is the meaning of montage, and of the

'theory of intervals', which is more profound than that of movement. The interval is no longer that which separates a reaction from the action experienced, which measures the incommensurability and unforeseeability of the reaction but, on the contrary, that which – an action being given in a point of the universe – will find the appropriate reaction in some other point [*point quelconque*], however distant it is ('to find in life the response to the treated subject, the resultant among the millions of facts which bear a relation to this subject'). The originality of the Vertovian theory of the interval is that it no longer marks a gap which is carved out, a distancing between two consecutive images but, on the contrary, a correlation of two images which are distant (and incommensurable from the viewpoint of our human perception). And, on the other hand, the cinema could not run in this way from one end of the universe to the other without having at its disposal an agent which was capable of making all the parts converge: what Vertov took from the spirit – that is, the power of a whole which is constantly becoming – now passes into the correlate of matter, of its variations and interactions. In fact the machine assemblage of things, of images in themselves, has as its correlate a collective assemblage of enunciation. Already in the silent film, Vertov used the intertitle in an original way, so the word formed a bloc with the image, a sort of ideogram.<sup>17</sup> These are the two fundamental aspects of the assemblage: the image-machine is inseparable from a type of utterances, from a properly cinematographic enunciation. In Vertov this is clearly a case of Soviet revolutionary consciousness, of the 'communist deciphering of reality'. It is that which unites the man of tomorrow with the world before man, communist man with the material universe of interactions defined as 'community' (reciprocal action between the agent and the patient).<sup>18</sup> *A Sixth of the World* shows the interaction at a distance, within the USSR, between the most varied peoples, herds of animals, industries, cultures, exchanges of all kinds in the process of conquering time.

Annette Michelson is right to say that *Man with a Movie-Camera* represents an evolution on Vertov's part, as though he had discovered a more complete conception of the assemblage. For the previous conception went no further than the movement-image, that is, an image composed of photogrammes, an intermediate-image endowed with movement. It was therefore still an image corresponding to human perception, whatever the treatment to which it was subjected by montage. But what happens if montage is introduced into the very constituent of the image? We go back from an image of a peasant woman to a series of its photogrammes, or else we move from

a series of photogrammes of children to images of these children in movement. By extending this procedure, we contrast the image of a cyclist cycling, and the same image, re-filmed, reflected, presented as though projected on a screen. René Clair's *The Crazy Ray* had a great influence on Vertov: for it reconciled a human world with the absence of man. For the ray of the mad scientist (the film-maker) froze movement, blocked the action, in order to release it in a sort of 'electrical discharge'. The town-desert, the town absent from itself, will always haunt the cinema, as though possessing a secret. The secret is yet another meaning of the notion of interval: it now designates the point at which movement stops and, in stopping, gains the power to go into reverse, accelerate, slow down. . . . No longer is it enough to reverse movement, as Vertov did in the name of interaction when he moved from the dead meat to the live flesh. The point which makes the reversal or modification necessary must be reached.<sup>19</sup> For, in Vertov's view, the frame is not simply a return to the photo: if it belongs to the cinema, this is because it is the genetic element of the image, or the differential element of the movement. It does not 'terminate' the movement without also being the principle of its acceleration, its deceleration and its variation. It is the vibration, the elementary solicitation of which movement is made up at each instant, the *clinamen* of Epicurean materialism. Thus the photogramme is inseparable from the series which makes it vibrate in relation to the movement which derives from it. And, if the cinema goes beyond perception, it is in the sense that it reaches to the *genetic element* of all possible perception, that is, the point which changes, and which makes perception change, the differential of perception itself. Vertov thus puts the three inseparable aspects of a single going beyond into effect: from the camera to montage, from movement to the interval, from the image to the photogramme.

As a Soviet film-maker, Vertov develops a scientific conception of montage. But dialectical montage seems to be a place of confrontation, of opposition rather than an intermediary. When Eisenstein condemns Vertov's 'Formalist fooling about', this must surely be because the two directors have neither the same conception, nor the same practice of the dialectic. For Eisenstein, there is only a dialectic of man *and* of Nature, man in Nature, and Nature in man; 'non-indifferent' Nature and non-separated Man. For Vertov, the dialectic is in matter and of matter, and can only reconcile a non-human perception with the overman of the future, material community and formal communism. This helps us to reach a conclusion about the differences between Vertov, on the one hand, and the French school on the other. If we

consider the identical procedures used by both – quantitative montage, high speed and slow motion, superimposition, or even immobilisation – we see that with the French these show primarily a spiritual power of the cinema, a spiritual aspect of the ‘shot’. It is through the spirit that man goes beyond the limits of perception, and, as Gance says, superimpositions are the images of feelings and thoughts by which the soul ‘envelops’ bodies and ‘precedes’ them. Vertov’s use of these procedures is quite different: for him superimposition was to express the interaction of distant material points, and high speed and slow motion the differential of physical movement. But perhaps even from this point of view we do not grasp the radical difference. It emerges as soon as we return to the reasons which made the French give such prominence to the liquid image: for it was there that human perception went beyond its own limits, and movement discovered the spiritual totality which it expressed, whilst for Vertov the liquid image is still inadequate, failing to reach the particle of matter. Movement must go beyond itself, but to its material, energetic element. The cinematographic image does not therefore have the ‘reume’ as sign, but the ‘gramme’, the ‘engramme’, the ‘photogramme’. It is its sign of genesis. In the final analysis, we would have to speak of a perception which was no longer liquid but gaseous. For, if we start out from a solid state, where molecules are not free to move about (molar or human perception), we move next to a liquid state, where the molecules move about and merge into one another, but we finally reach a gaseous state, defined by the free movement of each molecule. According to Vertov, it is perhaps necessary to move beyond flowing to that stage: the particle of matter or gaseous perception.

In any case, the American experimental cinema was to go as far as that and, breaking with the French school’s aquatic lyricism, was to recognise Vertov’s influence. A whole aspect of that cinema is concerned with attaining a pure perception, as it is in things or in matter, to the point to which molecular interactions extend. Brakhage explores a Cézannian world before man, a dawn of ourselves, by filming all the shades of green seen by a baby in the prairie.<sup>20</sup> Michael Snow deprives the camera of any centre and films the universal interaction of images which vary in relation to one another, on all their facets and in all their parts (*The Central Region*).<sup>21</sup> Belson and Jacobs trace coloured forms and movements back to molecular or atomic forces (*Phenomena, Momentum*). Now, if there is any constant factor in this cinema, it is the construction by various means of gaseous states of perception. Flickering montage: extraction

of the photogramme beyond the intermediate image, and of vibration beyond movement, (whence the notion of the 'photogramme-shot', as defined by the loop procedure, in which a series of photogrammes are repeated with the contingent intervals allowed by the superimposition). Hyper-rapid montage: extraction of a point of inversion or transformation (for the correlation of the immobilisation of the image is the extreme mobility of the support, and the photogramme acts as the differential element, producing refulgence and great haste). Re-filming or re-recording: extraction of a particle of matter (the re-filming producing a flattening of space, which takes on a 'pointilliste' texture in the manner of Seurat, allowing the interaction of two points at a distance to be apprehended).<sup>22</sup> In all these respects, the photogramme is not a reversion to photography but rather, following Bergson's formula, the creative apprehension of this photo 'snapped and taken in the interior of things and for all the points of space'. And we are increasingly witnessing, from the photogramme to the video, the formation of an image defined by molecular parameters.

All these procedures act together and vary to form the cinema as machine assemblage of matter-images. The question of the corresponding assemblage of enunciation remains open, since Vertov's answer (Communist society) has lost its meaning. Might the answer be: drugs as the American community? If drugs have this effect, however, it is only because of the perceptive experimentation which they induce, which may be brought about by quite different means. In reality, we will only be able to raise the problem of enunciation when we are in a position to analyse the sound image for itself. To follow Castaneda's programme of initiation: drugs are supposed to *stop the world*, to release the perception of 'doing', that is, to substitute pure auditory and optical perceptions for motor-sensory perceptions; *to make one see the molecular intervals*, the holes in sounds, in forms, and even in water; but also, in this stopped world, *to make lines of speed pass through* these holes in the world.<sup>23</sup> This is the programme of the third state of the image, the gaseous image, beyond the solid and the liquid: to reach 'another' perception, which is also the genetic element of all perception. Camera-consciousness raises itself to a determination which is no longer formal or material, but genetic and differential. We have moved from a real to a genetic definition of perception.

Landow's film, *Bardo Follies*, sums up in this respect the whole of the process, and the transition from the liquid state to the gaseous state:

The film opens with an image, on a film loop, of a woman floating with a lifebouy, who waves to us at each return of the loop. After about ten minutes (there is also an abridged version), the same loop appears twice inside two circles on a black ground. Then, for a moment, three circles appear. The image of the film in the circles starts to burn, inducing the spread of a seething mould of a predominantly orange colour. The whole screen is filled by the photogramme on fire, which disintegrates in slow motion into a very granular soft focus. Another photogramme burns; the whole screen throbs with melting celluloid. This effect was probably obtained by several series of re-filmings on screen, the result being that the screen itself seems to throb and be consumed. The tension of the desynchronised loop is kept up throughout the whole of this fragment, in which the film itself seems to die. After a long pause, the screen divides up into bubbles of air in water, filmed through a microscope with coloured filters, a different colour for each side of the screen. By means of changes in focal distance, the bubbles lose their form and dissolve into each other, and the four coloured filters are mingled. At the end – some forty minutes after the first loop – the screen turns blank.<sup>24</sup>

- 3 Bergson, *L'Énergie spirituelle*, p. 920 (139) (the first page number is for the 'Centenaire' edition of Bergson's works. The second is for the current PUF edition).
- 4 Pasolini sketches out a very brilliant parallel between Antonioni, with his 'Paduan-Roman' aestheticism, and Godard, with his libertarian technicism: the difference between the 'heroes' of the two directors stems from this. Cf. *L'Expérience hérétique*, pp. 150–1.
- 5 Cf. Pasolini, *Études cinématographiques*, in particular Jean Semolué's study, 'Après le *Décameron* et *Les Contes de Canterbury*; réflexions sur le récit chez Pasolini'.
- 6 Eric Rohmer seems to have been dogged by the problem of indirect discourse. As early as the *Moral Tales*, the dialogues, carefully composed in an indirect style, are related to a 'commentary'. We refer to an article by Rohmer; 'Le film et les trois plans du discours, indirect, direct, hyperdirect' (*Cahiers Renaud-Barrault*, no. 96, 1977). But it is strange that, at least to our knowledge, Rohmer never invokes free indirect discourse, and does not seem to be aware of Pasolini's theories. However, it is indeed that special form of indirect discourse which he has in mind: cf. what he says in his article about *The Marquise of O*, on Kleist's indirect style, and about *Perceval* on the characters who talk about themselves in the third person. And, most importantly, it is not the presentation of the text in free indirect discourse, but the presentation of visual images or scenes in a corresponding mode: hence the obsessive framings of *The Marquise of O* and in particular the treatment of the image as miniature in *Perceval*.
- 7 Cf. Lotte Eisner's description in *The Haunted Screen*.
- 8 Cf. Henri Langlois' commentary, cited by Noël Burch in *Marcel L'Herbier*, p. 68.
- 9 Mitry, *Le Cinéma expérimental*, pp. 211–17.
- 10 Paul Virilio has shown the maritime origin and model of the proletariat in a text which might well be applied to Grémillon's cinema in *Vitesse et politique*, p. 50.
- 11 We are using an unpublished text of J.P. Bamberger on *L'Atalante*.
- 12 Amengual puts the question clearly: why does Vigo present the bourgeoisie in its biological rather than political and economic aspects? He answers by invoking a function of clairvoyance, and of 'objectivity' of the bodies. Cf. *Vigo. Études cinématographiques* (Amengual also analyses the high-angle shots in Vigo).
- 13 In his classification of signs, what Peirce distinguishes from the 'dicisign' (proposition) is the 'rheme' (word). Pasolini takes up Peirce's term, but introduces a very general idea of flowing into it: the cinematographic shot 'should flow', thus it is a 'rheme' (*L'Expérience hérétique*, p. 271). But here Pasolini makes an etymological mistake. In Greek, that which flows is a rheume (or reume). We will therefore use this term to designate not a general characteristic of the shot, but a special sign of the perception-image.
- 14 Vertov, *Articles, journaux, projets*, pp. 126–7.
- 15 Mitry, *Histoire du cinéma muet*, III, p. 256: 'One cannot defend montage



- and simultaneously uphold the integrity of the real. There is a blatant contradiction between the two.'
- 16 Vertov, *op.cit.*: 'The rapid shot, the micro-shot (*micro-prise de vue*), the backward shot, the animation shot (*prise de vue d'animation*), the mobile shot, shots with the most unexpected camera-angles are not considered to be trick shots, but normal procedures, to be widely used.'
  - 17 Abramov, *Dziga Vertov*, pp. 40-2.
  - 18 Cf. the definition of the category of 'community' in I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*.
  - 19 Annette Michelson, 'L'homme à la caméra, de la magie à l'epistémologie', in *Cinéma, théorie, lectures* analysed all these themes: the elaboration of the theory of the interval and of reversal, the theme of the sleeping town, the role of the photogramme in Vertov (and his increasing points of contact with René Clair).
  - 20 Cf. Marcocelles, *Eléments pour un nouveau cinéma*, 'How many colours are there in a field for a crawling baby, unconscious of green?'
  - 21 Snow films a 'dehumanised landscape', without any human presence, and puts the camera under the control of an automatic apparatus which continually varies its movements and angles. He thus frees the eye from the condition of relative immobility and of dependence on co-ordinates. Cf. *Cahiers du cinéma*, no. 296, January 1979 (Marie-Christine Questerbert: 'Operated by the machine, regulated by sound, the camera's line of vision no longer centres on the frontal, perspective vision. [The vision] remains that of one eye only, but it is an empty, hyper-mobile eye'.)
  - 22 P.A. Sitney's article 'Le film structurel' in *Cinéma, théorie, lectures* analyses all these aspects in the principal directors of American experimental cinema; notably the formation of the 'photogramme-shot' and the loop; flickering in Markopoulos, Conrad, Sharits; speed in Robert Breer; granulation in Gehr, Jacobs, Landow.
  - 23 Castaneda, *Voir*.
  - 24 Sitney, *op.cit.*, p. 348.

## 6 *The affection-image Face and close-up*

- 1 On these two techniques of the portrait, cf. Wölfflin, *Principles of Art History*, trans. M.D. Hottinger (1932) pp. 41-3.
- 2 Descartes, *Les Passions de l'âme*, § 54: 'To admiration is joined esteem or contempt, depending on whether it is the greatness of an object or its pettiness that we are admiring.' On the conception of admiration in Descartes and the painter Le Brun, the reader is referred to an excellent analysis by Henri Souchon, *Etudes philosophiques*, 1, 1980.
- 3 In English in the original.
- 4 Cf. G.W. Pabst, *Pandora's Box*, *Classic Film Scripts*, pp. 133-5.
- 5 Eisenstein, *Film Form*, pp. 195ff.
- 6 J. Fieschi, 'Griffith le précurseur', *Cinématographe*, no. 24, February, 1977, p. 10 (*Cinématographe* devoted two issues to the close-up, 24 and 25, with articles on Griffith, Eisenstein and Bergman).

# *Cinema 1*

## *The Movement-Image*

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Gilles Deleuze

*Translated by Hugh Tomlinson  
and Barbara Habberjam*

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First published in France by Les Editions de Minuit

as *Cinéma 1. L'Image-Mouvement*

Copyright © 1983 by Les Editions de Minuit

Published by the University of Minnesota Press

111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290, Minneapolis, MN 55401-2520

Fifth printing 1997

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Deleuze, Gilles.

Cinema.

Translation of: *Cinéma 1. L'Image-Mouvement*

Bibliography:

Includes index.

1. Moving-pictures—Philosophy. I. Title.

PN1995.D39313 1986 791.43'01 85-28898

ISBN 0-8166-1399-0 (v. 1)

ISBN 0-8166-1400-8 (pbk.: v. 1)

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mathematical sublime / the German Expressionist school: intensive composition / light and shadows (Murnau, Lang) / Expressionism and the dynamic sublime	40
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#### Chapter 4 *The movement-image and its three varieties* *Second commentary on Bergson*

1 The identity of the image and the movement / movement-image and light-image	56
2 From the movement-image to its varieties / perception-image, action-image, affection-image	61
3 The reverse proof: how to extinguish the three varieties (Beckett's <i>Film</i> ) / how the three varieties are formed	66

#### Chapter 5 *The perception-image*

1 The two poles, objective and subjective / the 'semi-subjective' or the free indirect image (Pasolini, Rohmer)	71
2 Towards another state of perception: liquid perception / the role of water in the pre-war French school / Grémillon, Vigo	76
3 Towards a gaseous perception / content and interval according to Vertov / the engramme / a tendency of the experimental cinema (Landow)	80

#### Chapter 6 *The affection-image* *Face and close-up*

1 The two poles of the face: power and quality	87
2 Griffith and Eisenstein / Expressionism / lyrical abstraction: light, white and refraction (Sternberg)	91
3 The affect as entity / the icon / 'Firstness' according to Peirce / The limit of the face or nothingness: Bergman / how to escape from it	95

#### Chapter 7 *The affection-image* *Qualities, powers, any-space-whatevers*

1 The complex entity or the expressed / virtual conjunctions and real connections / the affective components of the close-up (Bergman) / from close-up to other shots: Dreyer	102
2 The spiritual affect and space in Bresson / what is an 'any-space-whatever'?	108