A consequence of the switch that we mentioned in the first lecture, if you remember, was the incommensurability between perception and knowledge. A second consequence of that is the problem of the construction of the present. What is the meaning of this? Well, when the idea of reality as a unit disappears, what happens is that our sense of the present disappears as well; the idea that the present is something clear and stable, and 'there' to be perceived has also disappeared. One of the elements, as you can imagine, that made a strong contribution to generate this crisis is cinema, because cinema, from the beginning of the 20th century, is the cultural manifestation which establishes that the present is a very relative concept. It depends on the way that we are seeing things which gives us all sorts of varieties of the present. The present, basically, is a sort of *flou* which is changing constantly. What happened was that authors have been trying to see, and to approach that, in order to understand it. Throughout the 20th century you had plenty of manifestations to address this problem, you have people talking about the *flou* of consciousness, the *flou* of time, about the *flou* created by technology, and so on. But all of these questions, basically, are combined in one single point: that the idea of 'the present' represents a problem. The idea that we are living in a particular moment is a problem, in the sense that we cannot always combine this sense of 'pure becoming' with our perception of things. Sometimes, as you have probably been reading, there is the slogan that 'things are moving more quickly than they can be perceived', so that we cannot grasp anything. So this is the idea: that the present presents a problem, and is not something which is obvious to address, or clear to expose.

Why is this situation relevant to cinema? Because, (1) cinema is one of the phenomena responsible for this change but also (2) because cinema has a 'multiplist'

perspective, with these different approaches, and generates the sense that we are seeing something which is the past of the future and we are no longer living in the present. With this situation cinema is crucial to give us an understanding. The fact that we are no longer living in the present is indeed connected to the cinema, and in some ways a direct product of the cinema.

I have divided then this lecture in 4 parts. The first concerns Henri Bergson, a French philosopher who in my view was one of the first philosophers at all in Europe who tried to tackle the problem of the present. He perceived, at the beginning of the 20th century, the idea that the present is something more complicated than the traditional historical perspective, even for philosophy. So he wrote this interesting book, to try to understand how we can think, when we are living with so many different times at the same moment. Basically, what he describes as the present was something which can be called present of the past, present of the present and present of the future. His perspective was to say that these are not established in a sort of scale time sequentially; instead, these three types of present are all together, and this is the problem: how can we deal with all of these contemporary timescales at the same time? This is what *Matière et Mémoire* is about. Indeed, as you can imagine, the connection with cinema was inevitable, and that is why Gilles Deleuze refers a great deal to Bergson. Deleuze was a philosopher who devoted a lot of time to discussing the idea of cinema, and to understand this idea of cinema from a philosophical, analytical and cultural point of view. He wrote, at the beginning of the 80s, two great volumes of a book which remains one of the greatest analyses of cinema in Europe, and in that book he discusses in quite an extensive way the idea that Bergson put forward at the beginning of the 20th Century. So he was trying to understand this idea of flou, this idea of 'pure becoming', as a problem posed to individuals, to the knowledge of individuals, of the perception of individuals. Basically, he made a great interpretation of Bergson.   Deleuze's perspective is, in some ways very complicated, and in some ways very simple. Let me give you the simple version: this 'pure becoming', is as it is, it is absolute, and to try to change that is nonsense, as is to try to construct a system to avoid this problem; this is how they operate and we should take it as *limit* of our thinking. We have then the idea of *derivée*, that things go on and on and on. So Deleuze's perspective is that the task of philosophy is to create concepts to deal with this constantly 'pure becoming'. We need to create instruments to deal with

this pure becoming; and for Deleuze, cinema was one of these tools - or rather, more than cinema, the *cinematographical* perspective that he was describing is one of the tools. On top of that Deleuze was dealing with other subjects, but specifically working with cinema, we can say that Deleuze established that we as human beings at the end of the 20th century do not think historically any more, our head is no longer working in a historically orientated way but in a cinematographically-orientated sense. We see our surroundings in the same way as a director perceives a particular film, and this is why Deleuze is very interesting, because he starts this idea that cinema is a dominant element in our culture which gives us a language to evaluate what happens around us, but also to think about ourselves. This will be very important to us, because Deleuze's was the first solid study from a philosophical perspective which establishes this idea that cinema gives us a language that we need to understand, use and make better. And this perspective still valid in our view.

He posits also that we think spatially, no longer in terms of time. Our 'head', our culture, is grounded on space, and we approach problems in a spatial way - even if that spatial perspective includes time, because of course cinema works with time in one way or another, but the *context* within which cinematography is working is a spatial one. And that is, in my view, the most important concept, and this is why Deleuze is useful, even if you are not going to read all of his works. He has a critical perspective of philosophy over the last 100 years. He was trying to achieve a marginal or peripherical position regarding the classical historical perspective in philosophy.

Another author who develops even more these ideas is Paul Virilio, but probably he is more notorious than Deleuze because his books are directly connected with media, communication, and the idea that we are living in a media and image-orientated society, and he is therefore more easy to read, and has therefore more visibility. He has also been translated into English more. But the interesting thing about Virilio is that he explores in even more depth the consequences of this switch in terms of culture. Deleuze in one way or another makes a diagnosis and discusses the concepts. Virilio concentrates more on the consequences; he is less bothered by the diagnosis or establishing a concept, he tries to see the consequence of how our society operates. And indeed, for him, as for Deleuze, the cinematographical perspective, the idea that the way we operate in our life is grounded in the cinema, is present. Therefore, to give you an alternative description of this perspective I recommend 'The Art of the Motor'

(as article or book) which is quite representative of what I have been saying in this short introduction.   Again for the suggested reading, I have indicated the basics: the chapters from Deleuze which I think are the basic ones (1 & 4), Guy Fihman's article in the collected articles translated from French ('Deleuze, Bergson, Zénon d'éléé et le cinéma'). I think he explains in a more accurate way, the connection between Deleuze and Bergson. Then Eisman, I have indicated the French version but there is also the English one. Chapter Four is interesting because he explains these issues in a very simple way. All of them have been translated - I have indicated where I have the translation. Virilio - you are all familiar with this book, but I think chapter 4 is particularly interesting. Another author who has been working with these kinds of concepts is Jean Baudrillard who has some kind of notorious profile... maybe you know of him, so I recommend chapters 1-4 of these texts. To see how these changes can affect - or can be explored - by someone who has connection to the whole perspective, I have used Hayden White who is very interesting, because he is in between the 'Old world' and the 'New world', so he can give you an idea of the consequences of these issues. Then Paolo Virno, who I think is one of the more interesting philosophers in Italy- a book in which he specifically discusses the same problem of the present which we have been discussing. I do not believe that there has been a translation either in English or in French, so I have indicated the Italian version, which is the one I will be using, and you need to have a look for a translation. Of course there is a huge bibliography on these topics, and of course you don't need to read them all. Just let me know if you have any trouble, but I will be more than happy if you have a brief panorama of the 4 or 5 issues involved here, and that should be more than enough to approach the theme, and produce the final essay.

Recommended Reading

Paul Virilio, 'The Art of the Moteur' in James Der Derian (ed.), *The Virilio Reader* (London: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 152-165.

Suggested Reading

Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 1. L'image-mouvement* (Paris: Minuit, 1983), Chapters I and IV.

Guy Fihman, 'Deleuze, Bergson, Zénon d'éléé et le cinéma' in O. Fahle and L. Engell (eds.), *Le cinéma selon Deleuze* (Weimar: Universität Weimar/Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1997), pp. 62-85.

Gilles Deleuze, *L'île déserte* (Paris: Minuit, 2002), Chapter 4.

Paul Virilio, *La Vitesse de libération* (Paris: Galilée, 1995), First part.

Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception* (London: Verso, 1989), Chapter 4.

Jean Baudrillard, *L'illusion de la fin ou la grève des événements* (Paris: Galilée, 1992), Chapters 1 to 4.

Hayden White, 'The modernist event' in Vivian Sobchack (ed.), *The Persistence of History* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 17-38.

Paolo Virno, *Il ricordo del presente. Saggio sul tempo historico* (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1999), First part.