

Gilles Deleuze

Seminar on the Apparatuses of Capture and War Machines, 1979-1980

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Part 1

... Out of pure, unorganized material... uh... and I really wanted you to organize something on this theme of the lament and its role in both the arts and in history. So, is there no one who could... who might... [present] in my place... Anyone? [Pause] You really aren't very cooperative. [Pause] Alright, so we'll just drop that, huh. I was hoping ... [Pause]

On what we did in the last few sessions, are there any problems, are there any ...? No? My most skillful appeals are still ... [Laughter] Fine. Well, that's too bad, because I don't have much to say today, so ... Okay, well, let's go ... Does anyone want to talk? [Laughter] Ah la la ... Good. Well. Aaahh.

What we saw in the last few sessions is ... -- I'm not managing... I'm not managing to say it concretely enough... -- it's a certain comparison, a certain description of types of assemblages. And how is it within our subject, this comparison, this kind of descriptive study? It's really description at the point we've reached, describing types of assemblages. And what I am taking from our subject -- "what is the State apparatus?" that is, "what kind of assemblage does a State mean? » -- what I am taking from this and what I insist on -- because it seems to me a little bit [inaudible word] -- is that we have managed to distinguish these two assemblages -- they are not the only ones; there is an endless list of assemblages -- but, uh, those two assemblages that we're mainly concerned with at the moment, namely an assemblage consisting of a territory-code combination and an assemblage consisting of quite a different combination, land-overcoding (*surcodage-terre*). And we saw that land was always in... within a certain gap with the territory, just as overcoding was a completely different operation from that of codes. And it's on this that I would like to ... uh ... I don't know, I would like to back up a little bit, because it seems to me very, it seems to me ... at the same time, I'm not managing to express this concretely enough, and I feel that there are all kinds of concrete applications.

I am saying: we spend our time in our lives, or long moments of our time, in the regime of the territory-code assemblage, and either collectively or personally, we spend a lot of time coding territories. And what mattered to me was that a certain number of notions were necessary to define that assemblage. And as we saw, what are these notions? It was the idea that a territory assemblage, a territory-code assemblage is defined by its exercise. It is an exercise assemblage, that is, when one arrangement exercise is completed, we start over elsewhere by changing territory. As a result, this is an itinerant assemblage; this is the assemblage of itinerance. In

previous years, we have seen, we have tried to distinguish between nomadism and itinerance. These are not the same at all. But itinerance is indeed the state of one who *follows* a territory flow by passing from one territory to another according to codes. So, an exercise assemblage or an exercise of assemblage ... -- but an exercise of assemblage is only valid in this type of assemblage: exercise assemblage -- well, an exercise of assemblage is defined precisely by: as long as I stay within this territory. And then afterwards, I don't change the assemblage, I carry my assemblage into another territory.

As a result, a second point [is], every assemblage of this territory-code type, with corresponding assemblage itinerance, with the corresponding itinerance, will be defined by what was called a *limit*. In a territory, the assemblage is truly serial, and the series is defined by a limit.¹ This limit, as we have seen, is the *final* object, the final object, what was called in marginalist terms, the marginal object or the last receptive object. Receptive as a function of what? Well, as a function of the assemblage. I mean, beyond this final object, there are, of course, other objects, only they could not be captured, they could only be invested if we changed the nature of the assemblage. So, in this territory assemblage, it is always stretched towards its limit, towards the evaluation of the final object and, at the same time, it conjures the beyond, that is, something that would still be *after* the object which could only be grasped in another assemblage.

So, I chose some stupid examples like the last drink, the final word, the last drink in the cafe, that is, the marginal drink, the final word in a discussion, in an argument, in a domestic argument. Uh... I think, to make this even clearer, if you will, I am selecting an example in which this seems very, very obvious to me, the assemblages, for example, Proust's assemblages in *In Search of Lost Time*.

Proust has an idea, like that -- I am not saying that this has a universal value; it is valid for him, really -- he has an idea; in the end, this is within the domain of love. Every love pursues in a certain way its own end (*fin*), its own ... It *repeats* its own limit. Fine, that's an idea, it's beautiful... uh... that's how it is, he lives like this. He explains very well that, for example, his love for Albertine, from the start, does not cease repeating the end of this love. So, it's not a repetition of the past; it's like a kind of pro-repetition. So, every love is oriented towards a series, a series which is defined by a limit. This limit is the rupture, the end of this love. And this love, at its most vibrant moment, well... in its own way repeats the approaching rupture. Fine. He's sad, eh, he's sad, but finally Proust was difficult to live with. Fine. So, there we can see, I would say: this is an assemblage exercise. Moreover, the same love can involve several exercises. For example, in Proust's case, there are two successive loves for Albertine, for the same person, eh? Fine. You see what I would call an assemblage exercise. It implies a certain territory. It occurs in certain places; Albertine is linked to places, all of that. And this series, the Albertine series or the two Albertine series, are oriented towards the limit. [*Pause*]

So, it's each love that is serial and, once a love has reached its limit, well, the narrator of *In Search of Lost Time* switches to another love, for example, from the first love for Albertine to the second love for Albertine. You see? So, each time, the assemblage exercise is defined by a series oriented towards a limit. And then, there is... -- but we must not say that it comes after: all this

surprisingly coexists -- there is like another dimension, another dimension where Proust has more or less the presentiment, and has the presentiment more or less vividly, that there is another assemblage which is being constituted at the same time. And what is this other assemblage? This is the assemblage of his work (*oeuvre*) to be completed. This time, it's more of a romantic assemblage; it's, let's say, an artistic assemblage.² Fine. He tells himself all the time: "oh yes, uh ... I'm wasting my time ..." -- Time lost is also time he wastes, right? -- "I am losing/wasting my time with Albertine". He says, "I should work, I should take up my work ...", all that, as if it were another way of assemblage. Maybe the two aren't mutually exclusive, maybe they can coexist, but that's another mode of assemblage.

And a very bizarre revelation will occur; he tells himself at one point, in his love for Albertine: "Hey, I'm going to marry Albertine. Well yeah, I'm going to marry her," he tells himself. He tells himself: "No. I have my work to complete." It's not that these oppose each other; he could do his work and marry Albertine, why not? No, it is..., but what interests him is that it is not at all the same type of assemblage, that when he tells himself, and when he has the revelation, it is not enough not to tell himself, he tells himself this all the time: "Ah my work, I am going to do my work". Only, as he does not know how to do it or pretends not to know how, but, at the moment when he has the revelation of what his work will be, and he tells himself: "There, I have it", at that moment, he switches to another assemblage. This is what we called the *threshold* and no longer the limit. The limit is what separates one assemblage exercise from another assemblage exercise, the assemblage remaining of the same type. The threshold is quite different: it is the passage from one type of assemblage to another assemblage.

And, if I defined my serial or territorial assemblages previously itinerant assemblages, we saw the last time that the other type of assemblage is only a relative dualism, it is only a relative distinction. The other type of assemblage was, in fact, quite another thing. It was an assemblage that was no longer defined by the itinerant relationship of a code and a territory such that a territory is exhausted by a series oriented towards its limit. In that case, I am defining the aggregate of the itinerant assemblage. But this is an entirely different kind of assemblage; this time, it is an assemblage in which the coexistence of exploited territories, the simultaneity of exploited territories, constitutes a land (*terre*), therefore is radically distinguished from the territoriality of itinerance, [*Pause*] and where this aggregate ... -- it is no longer a matter of a series, so it is a matter of an aggregate of territories exploited simultaneously; what I am saying applies to agriculture, but would also apply to any other domain, the territory not being fundamentally an agricultural territory; it can be, but it doesn't have to be -- this time around, there is an aggregate of territories exploited simultaneously, and this is what defines a land.

And, at the same time, this aggregate consideration, this coexistence of territories, will no longer refer to a code of itinerance, but to an overcoding of sedentarity. And it is there that we discovered the assemblage that corresponds to the "State apparatus" as opposed to the assemblage of itinerant groups. In other words, there it was no longer an assemblage of limits, it was an assemblage of thresholds. And this assemblage of thresholds -- and I am saying: it coexists with the other assemblages; it is not the same type -- I cannot say: we go from

assemblages of itinerance to State assemblages, no. We have seen, in the social field, there is a kind of play of coexistence of all these assemblages.

So, if I try to define it according to the results of the last time, this "State apparatus" assemblage as we have it for the moment, let me be clear: it is indeed what we called, from the beginning, "archaic Empires". These are archaic Empires and, I remind you, we have seen that the dates of these archaic Empires, according to the results of archeology, must be pushed back more and more. This is not even, as was believed, from the middle of the Neolithic; it is really at the very beginning of the Neolithic and even must result from the Paleolithic, that is, uh..., if you will, they are formed between 10,000 and 7,000 BCE. Finally, "they are formed" ... according to the traces that we have.

How can I define them? Well, from our results the last time around, I think, you have to bring in, to describe ... if I wanted to describe this "archaic Empire" assemblage, I would need two dimensions. In one dimension, this assemblage has two aspects. It implies a comparative space, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it implies a point of appropriation which we called monopolistic appropriation. And these two aspects, in all areas, manifest themselves: a relative space of comparison and point of monopolistic appropriation. And we saw the last time that the second aspect, the point of appropriation, was deeper, that is, in fact was determined. The space of comparison assumes the point of appropriation.

And, as I did not indicate it in this form, I remind you, in fact, of the various aspects in which we found this. We saw that these archaic Empires seemed to involve what, first of all? A comparison of the territories exploited simultaneously, that's the comparative space. Land arises and develops, unfolds as a comparative space of territories. So, it is no longer the successive territories of itinerance where, once one territory gets exhausted, I move on to another territory; here, there is a comparison of territories which will be constitutive of the land. We have seen for the so-called differential rent (*rente*) that the differential rent was precisely this ancient mechanism resulting from the comparison of simultaneous territories.

But we have seen that this comparative space, namely this comparison of the simultaneous territories which constitute land, assumed a point of monopolistic appropriation, this time the absolute ground rent (*rente foncière*), and which is or which defines the right of the despot insofar as being the eminent owner of all the constituent territories of this land, the despot, the eminent owner of the land of which the communes subordinate to the Empire are only possessors. So, there you have both aspects perfectly: a space of comparison, a point of appropriation.

In the second aspect which is no longer the land, which was labor, you have the comparison of activities which implies a comparative space, the comparison of activities between them under the regime of labor, and you have the point of monopolistic appropriation, namely: surplus labor or the fact that the worker owes a duty (*corvée*) in the form of public works, owes the despot a duty. And we have seen in what sense, here too, the point of appropriation was primary in relation to the space of comparison, namely surplus labor was primary in relation to labor to the

point that one can only speak of labor in regimes where there is a special category of surplus labor, namely public works.

And then, at the level of a third dimension, at the level of money, we had encountered the same result: a space of comparison in the form of market money, a point of monopolistic appropriation, in the form of tax-money. Now, what mattered a lot to us, and what I really want to insist on because, I don't know..., I don't know, that seems good for us, here too, it is the point of appropriation which is primary, namely: the market use of money obviously implies the issuance, creation of money, and the creation of money is strictly inseparable from the operation of taxation. So, it is the tax which is, there, primary in relation to the commercial use of money; it is taxation that creates money. And it is not by chance that the State apparatus thus defined, from the archaic Empire, implies in its main determinations the issuance of money.

So you see that, if I need so many dimensions, it is because I would say that, vertically (*en hauteur*), if you will, the two tiered determinations of the imperial apparatus is: the tracing or development of a comparative space and a point of monopolistic appropriation. And as horizontally (*en largeur*), this outline will unfold as three -- horizontally, I don't know ... yes -- in three privileged segments, the *land* segment, the *labor* segment, the *money (monnaie)* segment, and, in each of the segments, you will discover comparative space, point of appropriation, the point of appropriation being decisive in relation to the comparative space, namely, in the land segment, in the uh... labor segment, and in the... er... money segment.

As a result, for those who uh ... uh ... have been working here for ah ... for a longer time, we can attach ... even if it means making ... [*Deleuze shifts direction*] What matters to me in such an apparatus is that, obviously, you have these points of appropriation, these sectors, these three great sectors, the apparatus of capture ... I was saying: the imperial apparatus as apparatus of capture obviously has three heads. It has three heads: land, labor, taxes. So, at the extreme, you have three points of appropriation, appropriation of the land by the despot, by the great Emperor, the appropriation of labor in the form of surplus labor, the appropriation of money in the form of a tax. And it is appropriation that is creative. Okay... oh! But, I would also say: it is not three points of appropriation, because the characteristic of this apparatus of capture is to create resonance together, and the three heads of the apparatus of capture resonate and precisely constitute the public figure of the despot, the despot as being at the same time the great landowner, the eminent owner of the land, the eminent contractor of public works, and the great imposing banker, that is, the creator of money.

So, I can say that in such a system, everything is public. This is what I wanted you to understand. Everything is public by definition. There is absolutely no private sphere. As Marx says when he describes this type of Empire, you basically have communes which are overcoded by Empire; communes can have collective possession of territories. The despot is the eminent owner of the land, but insofar as being a transcendent unit of the communes. The despot's functionaries -- namely the soldiers, the bankers, euh... the scribes, the contractors, etc. -- can receive tenures, delegations of property, but these would be functional tenures, that is, they are not private owners at all, no one is a private owner. The whole system is a public system.

This is what and this is how, at the beginning of this year, we were trying to define the notion of machinic enslavement. Like [Lewis] Mumford says, like Mumford says, it's a mega-machine, which is a huge machine. It's the first mega-machine.³ This is the first mega-machine; everything is public in the system, and see that you can really define it as a mega-machine, an enslavement machine in the sense that it is an apparatus of capture with three heads, the three resonating heads. And, at no moment can I assign a sphere that surpasses the public. This is a public apparatus.

Yes, I am adding, in order to create the link, therefore, with the research that we had undertaken over an entirely different year, you recall that, in this, with two years distance, I don't remember, maybe more, perhaps more, it interests me that we are discovering something which, from a completely different point of view, gives us confirmation if necessary. I recall, for those who were not there at all, that over one year, we dealt with a notion which was that of face.⁴ We asked ourselves: what precisely is a face? And we told ourselves: well, there you go, a face is not a personal thing. In fact, there are societies which include faces, and there are societies which do not include faces. A face is a system of, uh... collective functions, of social functions.

But maybe there are very different types of faces. In particular, maybe, for example, the famous stories..., the... the so-called primitives and their reactions when presented with photos, maybe that doesn't mean much, because: what are they reacting to? Are they reacting ... uh ... are they reacting to the magic of the photographic apparatus or indeed are they reacting to something quite different? Namely, there is still something quite insane about this abstraction of the face in our societies. It's very weird ... Maybe so-called primitives, maybe they don't have a face, that is, it's something else, something functions ... these are groups without faces; maybe they have a head, eh? A head is not the same thing as a face... uh... not at all. I don't mean that they only have bodies, but maybe the face is some kind of crazy abstraction. In what case and how did this sort of transformation from head into face come about? And what is the use of our face socially?

Well, it's obvious that... uh... it's obvious that it's very difficult even to talk about the role of language in societies if we do... if we don't take into account the fact that all language is indexed on a face . All the stories about the signifier, we don't see very well... we really don't see what these can mean if they are not indexed on the face. Hey, ... uh ... how ... language is not the abstraction that some linguists maintain. "Hey, he doesn't seem in a good mood today"; "Oh, he doesn't look like he's in good shape," uh ... When I entered this room with the demented wish that you were going to present something, eh, I told myself: "hey, are they going to talk?", I am saying ... well, then ... uh ... You, you react: "he is going to give us a hard time again", all that, fine. All that is very indexed onto faces, but what is this kind of... literally, this kind of erection of the face in some societies and not in all of them?

Fine. Why am I bringing this up again? It's because, at that time, we had tried..., since, assuming that the face is not at all a personal thing, that it is really a function of certain groups, which therefore fulfills certain social functions, we wondered which machine it depended on. And we told ourselves: to create faces, it's not so complicated, right? To create faces, the first way to create faces is what? And we had looked into this, and we had arrived at a kind of very abstract

machine of the face, and this abstract machine of the face was exactly ... we told ourselves: well yes, that does not provide a concrete face, but if I try to identify a kind of abstract diagram of the face, it is ... I'm satisfied with two elements: black hole, white wall. A black hole is displaced onto a white wall. So, that doesn't resemble faces, but rather, this is the abstract diagram of the face.

Since then, I had not yet consulted these documents, I don't know if ... Since then, in any case, this has been very ... I am thinking of a book that recently appeared, a wonderful gift book because it is full of beautiful, beautiful reproductions. This is a book by a guy who has become and has developed into and now has really become a specialist in a tiny little area, namely protective scrolls in Ethiopia. This is a very special thing, the protective scrolls in Ethiopia. The protective scrolls in Ethiopia are things on... parchments; it's a kind of popular magic, very, very popular, right, among poor farmers, but at the same time has... some very literate predecessors. This is a very curious thing. I refer you to the book called, yes, *Protective Scrolls in Ethiopia* or *Magic Scrolls*, I don't know ... *in Ethiopia*, published by Le Seuil, the author being Jacques Mercier,⁵ and, therefore, on parchment there are drawings. Obviously, the Byzantine influence is very great; if you remember the Byzantine faces, you see, that is what was called the frontal face. What is the frontal face? Well, before anything, it's: one black eye, two, okay, by repetition, but not just two, it can be four, it can ... On the protective scrolls, they put eyes everywhere, and this is what will determine.... This is the essential act. And Jacques Mercier confirms this, right? What will determine the whole rhythm, it is not at all the decorative patterns that will unite the eyes, it is this swarming of black holes. Two, four, infinite ...

And you have the surface of the parchment, the distribution of black holes and, from there, the constitution of faces with, as they say, "ember eye" (*oeil de braise*). If you remember the last Negus, the last Negus obviously had a court of magicians, and this court of magicians made him extremely formidable. And, if you remember the eyes of the last Negus [*inaudible word*], as they say, ember eyes, except that the embers are not black, but sometimes ... it can be red eyes. And these eyes are precisely the eyes of the Ethiopian tradition of Solomon, namely the eyes of the angel or the devil. And here, we can see this system of the imperial face very clearly. The Byzantine face is still a great stylization of the imperial face; it is the face seen frontally, namely "a black hole which moves on a kind of white surface". Why am I recalling this? Because I am saying: this is in fact the public face; everything is public in the archaic Empire. Everything is public without merit, because there is no such thing as a sphere of "private life" yet. Everything is public. And, the formula or the illustration, the illustration of this apparatus of capture is exactly that: the point of monopolistic appropriation that is displaced within a comparative space.

So there, for my pleasure -- that's why I was going back over all this -- for my pleasure, euh ... from a completely different horizon, it seems to me that we find a confirmation, there, of what we had studied regarding quite another matter, concerning the face, that the imperial apparatus of capture, with its two components -- point of monopolistic appropriation, space of comparison, such that the point of appropriation is displaced within the space comparison -- is graphically expressed ... no, not graphically, is expressed plastically in the form of the despotic face seen frontally, namely the black hole of appropriation as you still find it in the Byzantine face, in the

Ethiopian face, in all kinds of faces marked by an imperial tradition. And it is the "black hole-space of comparison" that will constitute the public face of the despot. You understand? [Pause]

So, what seems very important to me, once again, is to see the sense in which, at the same time, the apparatus of capture, this imperial apparatus of capture, might have assigned to it particular aspects or others, but in some ways, all of these aspects resonate together. What I am stressing is that our analyses during the last session showed us how, in each aspect, you had these two dimensions, these two fundamental dimensions, the point... the point of appropriation, the comparative space in which the point is displaced -- once we've said that it is the point of appropriation which is displaced within the comparative space -- it is this point of appropriation which is constitutive of the comparative space. It constitutes it by tracing it and displacing itself. And, we have seen it for the land rent, we have seen it for public works, we have seen it for money-tax. As a result, once again, tax is the monopolistic appropriation of currency which will become marketable within the corresponding comparative space, but it is at the level of tax that the money is created.

So... uh... everything is fine, ok. So, what I would like... you understand, if you find it useful ... for one another, all that, but I ... euh ... in this ... within this precise outline, well, I will not go any further, because that I do not see ... But, if, in your own work, ... euh ... in fact, whether this might be research ... euh ... in the last session, I appealed to you to think about the subject of the lament, but, it would be necessary here to link, in fact, these productions, for example: the technical production of the face, the archaic Empire as being the producer of a ... of a type of face, the despotic face which, once again, is the face seen frontally with its two... with its two black holes, at least, and its... its kind of space of comparison. And then... uh... or else that according to which you see as well at the level of land and land rent, or at the level of tax and merchandise, if indeed one can say this for other eras, if we can say this ... euh ...

I raised the question, here, can ... can we say this as well for the Empires of the East as for the Greek Cities ... -- for the Greek cities, it seems very true, indeed for everyone Aegean, that money has an origin in tax and not in... and not in the trade -- Is this also true, then, of the Eastern Empires? For me, I believe this is true, once again, for a very simple reason which is that, in all archaic Empires, trade is above all over-coded, that is, it is the Emperor who has the exclusivity over trade, at least for foreign trade. Henceforth, the way in which, for example, I am thinking of the compartmentalization of trade in the Chinese Empire, of the entire effort of the Chinese Empire to overcode trade, to prevent it from having its autonomy, it really is, it's an object..., in relation to the Emperor, it's an object of a monopolistic appropriation. Henceforth, even for the East, it seems to me that the market value of money is subordinated to the issuance of money, which occurs only on the basis of taxes. There is no control of trade without taxes.

So, we would have to look in entirely different directions. So, we have Eric Alliez [with us] who is working on something... euh... very interesting and that I do not at all know, which is mercantilism, which therefore refers to entirely different regimes, but in the case of mercantilism... euh... what relations might we find between... mercantilism... this is at the same time an economic theory and a practice, especially a practice which was very important in

Europe and which gives a certain relation, which establishes a certain trade-tax relationship. What type of relationship? And would that confirm our analysis there? Don't you want to talk on this, don't you want to?

Eric Alliez: [*Inaudible answer*]

Deleuze: But in its inspiration? No? No, no, as you wish, eh, as you wish. I mean, if ... because it's very complicated, you understand ... For at the same time, trade is divided precisely in its comparative space into internal trade and foreign trade, but also taxation is divided into direct tax and indirect tax. The two dualities obviously do not correspond at all. Indirect tax seems very interesting to me, indirect tax, because it would allow something perhaps to be seized that direct tax is hiding. Direct tax is not constitutive, any more than rent. Direct tax is a bit of the rent type; I mean it doesn't enter into determining the price of a commodity. But indirect tax enters into determining the price. So, I am not saying at all that indirect tax maintains the secret, but indirect tax allows us to understand much better in what sense tax is a condition presupposed by trade. It is at the level of indirect tax that, here, in our modern societies, one could discover a link according to which one could confirm that the commercial relationship presupposes taxation. [*Pause*] Yeah ... [*to Alliez*] Yeah, you'd rather ... uh ... talk about it some other time.

Eric Alliez: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: Okay, you see? You see?

George Comtesse: [*inaudible*] a question?

Deleuze: Yes!

Comtesse: [*Inaudible words*] these three heads of the Empire, the Emperor as owner of the land, the entrepreneur, the banker [*inaudible words*]... Would [*inaudible words*] push this limit back, the face as limit, the face, which would reject the analysis of the machinic assemblage [*inaudible words*] desire of the Emperor. [*inaudible words*] That is, what is -- the question I'm asking myself is this: what is the despot's assemblage of desire so that he might become owner, entrepreneur, banker?

Deleuze: I understand your question, yes ...

Comtesse: [*inaudible words*] We could ask the same question again after Marx: the analysis he makes of Capital, in the three books of *Capital*, what is ultimately the desire for, not that Capital induces, but what is the desire from which Capital itself is deduced?

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes. There, I say..., I say it really sincerely, because I am not at all sure that I am entirely right, and I am not at all sure that you are, so... But the fact is that we always collide, you and me, upon the same difference, that is, if we translate that into ... as a reproach, not... for more convenience, the constant reproach that you make to me is not going far enough. You say to me: "there is still something else, after what you are saying, which must account for desire". And I -- so I really don't say that I am correct -- it's like a sort of irreducible difference between us, because every time that... you intervene, I have that same feeling. And I myself will reproach you, conversely, for always reintroducing a kind of transcendence, by demanding something

other, yet again, which would take account. Because, for me, if you will, once I've described an assemblage -- and if you grant me that an assemblage description is not ... is a particular type of description -- but once I have described an assemblage, describing the assemblage means showing exactly what kind of, literally -- this word has been used on other occasions -- what kind of abstract machine the assemblage realizes. Suppose I say: the face assemblage, well yes, it realizes the following abstract machine: black hole-white wall, point of appropriation-space of comparison. Once I've said that, I don't feel the need to say anything anymore, because it seems to me that desire is never, in any way whatsoever, behind the assemblage. Desire, for me, is solely and exclusively what puts the different parts of the assemblage into communication; that is, it is what makes it pass into the assemblage, or it's the co-functioning of the ... [End of tape] [46: 43]

Part 2

... abstract machine, but the assemblage as the realization of a machine is desire, right? To say that one would still need something else which takes account, for example, of the despot's desire once that, or of capital's desire, once one has described the Capital assemblage or the archaic Empire assemblage, for me, literally... euh..., I mean uh..., if you will, me... uh... me no. I am no longer following any of this, because it seems to me to reintroduce a kind of transcendence.

Comtesse: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: I understand that we do not understand each other.

Comtesse: [*Inaudible words*] We can't just say "desire is what causes to circulate [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: You see. Yes we can; I am not mistaken, Comtesse. You are indeed telling me...

Comtesse: [*Inaudible words*] that desire is reduced to making the assemblage function, for example, imperial or capitalist, which is not the same thing anyway.

Deleuze: For me, yes, it is. For me, yes, it is. Desire means: it works.

Comtesse: Do you think that the imperial assemblage is the same thing as the capitalist assemblage?

Deleuze: Why are you making me say that, since this is not at all the... well, it's not the same desire. No, our difference is not there.

Comtesse: Okay, so ... only ... only, in the imperial assemblage and in the capitalist assemblage, we can ... we can speak perhaps -- this is a strong hypothesis -- we can perhaps speak of an assemblage of desire which would not at all be transcendent to the imperial assemblage or to the capitalist assemblage, but which would analyze a very functioning of this assemblage and which, however, would allow one to speak of an assemblage of desire as assemblage, as what precisely assembles Empire or Capital. So, it's not at all about the ... about the ... let's say the detour of a

transcendence that I am asking this question or making this interrogation, because transcendence, I don't give shit about it.

Deleuze: Hey! Don't get rude! [*Laughter*] No, you understand, I am telling myself: so, you are asking for something more. Once again, I come back to my reaction; you have to manage to develop it because, when you demand, and as long as it remains in the state of this proposition, "something more is needed", I am telling myself: this "something more" -- I am telling myself that, by a nervous reaction -- I am telling myself: this "something more", either it's going to be a simple abstract transfer of the assemblage, like a simple ... a simple repetition, or else it will be something which goes beyond the assemblage and which, literally, is transcendent. You are telling me: no, that's not it at all. So there, I am saying: it would be necessary... you would have to develop it within a specific case... euh.... Am I betraying your very statements by saying that you claim a dimension of desire which, one way or another, differs from the assemblage itself? That's not it, eh? ... you see.

Comtesse: [*Inaudible words*] to analyze it starting from the functioning of the assemblage ...

Deleuze: But how does it differ from it?

Comtesse: The question is very simple: what is the assemblage of the despot's desire so that, precisely, the despot is this owner of the land, this contractor for major works, and this banker, precisely, who... with the tax [*inaudible words*]...

Deleuze: Do you mean that these determinations of desire exist before the assemblage?

Comtesse: No.

Claire Parnet: No, of course not.

Comtesse: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: So, it's that ... it roughly responds to what we call "abstract machine". In fact, the assemblages realize abstract machines. But I don't see how this is an assemblage of desire; I mean, you say constantly: assemblage of desire that you distinguish therefore ...

Comtesse: ... of this assemblage of desire, you, you offer an element of the assemblage, that is, you offer the "face" element, it is not certain ... it is not certain that the element or the face component which is effectively a component of the assemblage of desire immanent to the imperial arrangement would be the entire assemblage of desire. That's the question.

Deleuze: Ah yeah, there, no..., the face is an element, in fact. I offered other elements: the earth, etc. ... Your objection, it seems to me, has a completely different meaning; it does not consist in telling me: you are reducing everything to the face element because that would be false, since I introduced the money element, the earth element, the element etc. ... My question is exactly this: here, here is an expression which is sometimes used by economists, so there, we would take a current, classic expression: desire for money. For me, "desire for money" is an expression that only means one thing, namely: define the assemblage in which a particular kind of money is created having a particular function. If I manage to describe this arrangement, I have said what

the corresponding desire for money is. It seems to me that you are telling me: no. No, you have to define the desire for money in another way. I've got that right, haven't I?

Comtesse: Not ... not necessarily [*inaudible words*] it is desire that makes ... the assemblage of desire; this what we start from for there to be desire for money, that's what the meaning is. That is, desire for money is effectively the desire to create money [*inaudible words*], it is a desire ... it is a despot's desire, but it supposes the assemblage of despot's desire. [*Inaudible words*] For example, I am taking... I am taking... I am referring, for example, to make myself better understood, to a book which is, which appeared a year or two ago, I believe, well, I don't quite agree with this book, but it's one of the directions, one of the lines of... [*inaudible words*]. It's Alain Grosrichard's book called *The Fiction of Asian Despotism*.⁶ So, this book presents itself as a book of sometimes fictional analysis, but it has the interest and the merit, even if it remains in an interpretation at the end of the book [*inaudible words*], even if it remains within an interpretation in terms of the phallic signifier, therefore a Lacanian interpretation, nonetheless it has the merit of posing the problem of an assemblage of the despot's desire that would not be reduced quite simply, that we could not reduce everything simply to the exercise of the despot's power, that is...

Deleuze: Mmmh, the question is a bit elevated, Comtesse. Are you distinguishing...? [*Deleuze does not finish the question*] Listening you, I have the impression all the time that you want to distinguish between despot's assemblage of desire and despotic assemblage.

Comtesse: Yes, because you are talking about the power of the despot, the despot as owner, as banker, that is power, eh? Power refers to surplus labor... or else to the work of others [*inaudible words*], but that is not enough. We cannot simply analyze the assemblage of Empire as the assemblage of power. There is perhaps a conjugation between an assemblage of desire and an assemblage of power which would not be at all separable, not at all dissociable, but, precisely, the difficulty of which would be to show how that works, it can work together.

Deleuze: Listen, power, there, we'd on about this, uh, I suppose, both of us, but you are making me say, then, in your turn, things that I am not saying. I have never defined the assemblage as an assemblage of power; I define it as an assemblage of desire. In the despot's case, what does that mean? That means: for the despot's power to exist, what must have already been imposed? Land, work, money, face etc., this is not a closed list. Okay, so here, we can ... But what interests me is not that aspect at all; what interests me is that precisely land, money, face do not pre-exist. So, there is a creation of the land in distinction from territories. There is a creation of work in distinction from activity, from activities. There is a creation of money in distinction from trading (*échanges*), marginalist trading. When I linked these determinations to their creation, on my own account, I believe that I have taken the operation of desire into consideration. The phenomena of power only flow from it and flow from it secondarily, in my opinion, it seems to me. So, I don't define the assemblage at all as a structure or a device of power; I define it as an assemblage of desire. And, once again, what matters to me in the history of land is that, as soon as the land is established, it is a source of rent. That defines an interest as well as a power, interest and power of the owner. Good. But, as soon as the land is constituted, it is a source of a rent, but it is not

this interest that will make it possible; this interest assumes that there is land and, more simply, the itinerance of territories.

So, my question specific to the assemblage of desire is: how is land constituted in distinction to the territory? And there, that's neither the interest, nor an exercise of power that will account for that. What will account for that is a passage from one type of assemblage to another; it is an entire organization that takes off in relation to the territory, which implies a kind of lift off in relation to the territory and that I have tried to define. So once there is land, yes, there is rent. But if you will, for me, what one could almost call poetic acts of assemblage, namely real creations are by nature always primary in relation to the practical determinations of assemblage of the interest type and power type. So, that's why I have no need to seek a ... something extra, whatever way that you understand 'extra'. [*End of tape*] [59: 18]

Part 3

Deleuze: ... Is that clear, at least? I think it's very clear. You wanted to say something.

Claire Parnet: Yes, that is to say ...

Another student [*perhaps Hidenobu Suzuki*]:⁷ I would like to talk about a Japanese writer who precisely explained something about the origin of the State in Japan. But this is a book that rejects all materialistic theories about the origin of the State, so it explains the common illusion or common phantasm. The author used Japanese myths and tales as documents ...

Another student: [*Inaudible, but given the answer, he seems to ask the name of the writer*]

The first student [*perhaps Suzuki*]: ... The author's name is [Takaaki] Yoshimoto -- so he was using Japanese myths and ethnological tales. [*Inaudible words*] is that the origin of the state is not located in materialistic conditions, but located in, how to say, in types of mental, psychological illusions. And this author, Yoshimoto, is greatly influenced by Freud, but he rejects Freud to the extent that he says there is the difference between the type of psychology which is based on the sexual relation and collective psychology. There is the difference. So, we cannot speak in the same way of the sphere of the collective and psychology based on the sexual relation. So, in this sense he rejects Freud's theory. But in any case, he explains the origin of the Japanese State as being based on the types, on the germinal forms of common illusion which ultimately form the State as a mental object. So, what we talked about earlier, it seems to me to correspond a little to what this author said, that is, explaining the origin of the State like the seeds of mental illusion, and I would like to know whether Deleuze rejects this domain of the origin of the State as something transcendent or not.

Deleuze: Well, I'm a little ... a little ... overwhelmed (*abattu*)...

The same student: Because when you mentioned the magical capture, it immediately reminded me of [*inaudible words*] to the extent that you are talking about the magical aspect of capture anyway.

Deleuze: And yes, and yes, but this is very ambiguous ...

Claire Parnet: I would like to ask a question too.

Another student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: What? What are you saying?

The student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: The Japanese author is like Hume? Uh ... I don't know ... [*Laughter*] I don't know ... [*To Parnet*] You wanted to say something, right?

Claire Parnet: I wanted to ask you, finally, when you say: this capture means that, for example, when we are born, we are already caught, that is, we are already within it, is it that thing which causes it to function, are you speaking of it in the same way as desire, well, that makes this assemblage function? That is, because desire makes the assemblage function, is this when desire makes this assemblage function that, precisely, when we are born, we are already caught?

Deleuze: Uh, both. This is indeed because desire is completely immanent in the assemblage, that is, desire is not something which, which precedes.... There is no desire other than assembled or assembling (*agencé ou agençant*), this is the same, saying that it is assembled or saying that it is assembling, but there is never a desire for something which already would not be given. So that's one thing. Uh... When I say, this apparatus of capture necessarily functions, necessarily it functions, since we are already in it, what does that mean? It means exactly, once again: this is a capture operating on certain kinds of aggregates. This is why I needed to define the corresponding assemblage as an assemblage of aggregates and no longer as serial. This is a capture operating on certain kinds of aggregates. And you cannot define these aggregates without the apparatus of capture already intervening there, the apparatus that will operate on them. So, this is obligatory. This simply means that, in the assemblage, it is indeed desire, which is the circulation, that is the operation of circulation itself, without which there would be no assemblage.

Parnet: Yes, but, since ... this particular assemblage, that is, the despotic one that you were talking about, well ... uh ..., when you defined, when you spoke of land, you said that it was a relationship between land and an over-encoding of land...

Deleuze: and a territory, yes, and an over-coding of territory.

Parnet: But, the overcoding, doesn't it... doesn't it also... In the end, for me, when Georges [*Comtesse*] is talking, well, that's what I understand, but I don't know if he would agree, doesn't this over-coding, doesn't it... also intervene in the way in which desire allows parts of the assemblage to come together. ...?

Deleuze: Of course it does, in this case. In the case of an assemblage of over-encoding, it does intervene, of course. It is strictly everywhere in the assemblage. It is everywhere.

What bothers me more is, of course, where there is a great ambiguity, it concerns what you just said [*the Japanese student*], what bothers me greatly is that in all the outlines that I am proposing, there is never any reference whatsoever to any sort of "illusion", euh ... or even "mental reality", none at all. So, when I followed Dumézil in using the notion of magical capture, that did not at all refer to a domain that would be one of beliefs or illusions. Not at all. "Magic" was a convenient and temporary word to distinguish this type of capture from other types of capture. We would say, for example: yes, there is a war capture, but it is not at all the same as a State capture. And lo and behold, in mythologies -- but these I do not consider to be illusions either -- we hear about a certain type of knot, a link, which is called the magic link, but which also has its name in archaic Roman law, as we have seen, the *nexum*, n-e-x-u-m, which corresponds exactly to that, this sort of magic knot.⁸

So, for me, "magic" was the provisional word, since I could not yet, at that time, define the nature of this link; it was only a provisional word to point out that, be careful, this was not a knot operated through the violence of war, it was something else, it was another type of link. So, subsequently, we progressed, but I would also say, at that time, if we want to talk about magic, I would say that the currency, land rent, tax money and labor are magical determinations. At that point, I would say, there is indeed an objective determination of "magic". The objective determination of magic is when, in fact, you define an operation on an aggregate, but at the same time, you cannot define the aggregate without having already placed the operation into it. There, we locate a kind of knot which might be called "magic", but in fact, it is perfectly objective in such an assemblage. You will say to me: but this is contradictory, an aggregate such that one cannot define it independently of the operation which bears on the aggregate. I would say: no, this is not contradictory, since it's not at all a question of a universal definition; it suffices to define precisely the assemblage that makes this possible. Yeah ... well ... yes?

Another student: [*Inaudible remarks*]

Deleuze: Yes ...

The student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yes, here, not only are you not mistaken, but you are even right... uh... [*Laughter*] I mean: it goes without saying that, from the perspective of the archaic Empire, the aggregate of possible functions of the face is not all exhausted. Moreover, the corresponding art, this archaic Empire and the art which corresponds to it only create or assemble -- it comes to the same thing - - only assemble a certain type of face to the point that when you say: but, all the same, there are other functions of the face, obviously yes, apart from this assemblage, there, that is, with this, you are completely correct, and, in fact, it's not hard to ask the question, good. Even if what we are saying is suitable for this frontal face with the black hole and the white wall, well, finally, there are other types of face, and these other types of face, by what do they define themselves? Well, already by a famous figure, a completely different figure of the face; it is from the moment when faces, which then become several, several faces are placed into profile. Several faces in profile, that absolutely does not correspond... [*Deleuze does not finish*]

Uh, I insist on this; it is that a method like the one we are looking for, a method of analysis of assemblages, immediately allows us to exclude ... If someone says to me: but what are you doing with several faces in profile? Notice, all of a sudden, that interests me all the more since I tell myself right away: faces in profile can be in a position of allegiance to one another. For example, a seated king and then a knight coming in and then the king has the face at two thirds, the knight has the face at ... a quarter, I don't know what, and one pledges allegiance to the other. I need only describe such a piece of assemblage to know that it is not a despotic assemblage. This is not a despotic assemblage. Why? Well, like that, because it suits me, okay. *[Laughter]* The despotic face isn't... -- but you can tell the words are quite rich; we have already distinguished, for example, we should not confuse the despot of the archaic Empire with the tyrant of the Greek city; no relation. We will not confuse ... the tyrant of the Greek city with a current dictator, all that is ..., it's ... or we really mix everything up. -- What I defined as a despotic face, and, there, you are completely right to say it: ok, this is absolutely a question of an example of assemblage, a type of face, it is this frontal face and which has no interlocutor or which doesn't have any..., any..., respondent described, indicated. The Byzantine face sees you frontally; it is you, you are the external spectator who is its respondent. What shows this? It is precisely that all the Byzantine depth is between what you see and you who are seeing.

When, on the other hand, you find yourself facing an assemblage, the assemblage can be very compelling, for example, well ... uh ... there is Christ and the apostles, there is a king and subjects. I can say, it's anything that you want, but it's not a despotic assemblage. It can be a monarchical assemblage, it can be an assemblage ... In any case, it belongs to a whole other world. The proof is that, at that moment, the depth will be integrated into the relationship of one face to the other. It will no longer be between the face seen frontally and you who are looking, as in ... as in a Byzantine work; it will be completely integrated into the work. This won't allow us to say that this is progress; we will say that it is a whole different assemblage.

So, the interesting cases for ... as to the question you are asking is: Aren't there some extraordinarily mixed cases, straddling over them? Obviously, there are. I mean, let's take the long history, since, in this matter of the face, there, which I was summarizing, Christ had a fundamental role from the pictorial point of view, from the plastic point of view. If you take... er... the face of Christ, you have... -- first of all, it all depends on at what moment, but let's even say the crucified Christ -- you have almost Byzantine Christs, that is, where, there Christ still participates in an archaic imperial face. There is God the Father behind Christ. But Christ keeps all kinds of elements of ..., all kinds of Byzantine elements. Then, there, Christ is like a spinning platform; we also see that with Christ appears a completely different type of face, and all the transitions from one to another, notably..., already, the face of Christ is a little turned away or completely in... completely in profile, at the limit, and therefore, is put into relationship with other faces, without this excluding, once again, the relations of allegiance, the relations of command, but these are no longer despotic relationships, they can be relationships of another nature.

Once again, the question is not whether it softens; it does not soften... uh..., but, it's a whole different type of face. The year we were considering the face, I don't know which [students] were

there, but, there, I am recalling it to jog our memory, we chose the example of a painting which is very well commented by a critic. ... uh ... critic named Jean Paris, a painting by El Duccio uh ... which shows Christ and two apostles and which is precisely a hinge painting, a spinning platform painting, because one of the apostles still has a face in the Byzantine tradition and it is precisely the one who face frontally, while Christ and the other apostle are already in a relationship with a face in profile, with a face turned away, turned back, turning towards the one, and one towards the other, which precisely marks a completely different painting technique, that is, which emphasizes that depth is no longer between what I see and myself who is seeing, but that the depth is integrated into the pictorial elements of the painting. And there, it is in the same painting that you have an element which gestures toward the Byzantine tradition and another element which gestures toward the future of painting which is readying itself, namely the integration of depth and new perspective.⁹ So, on that, absolutely, I completely agree with you. Good. Well, then, therefore, let's continue. What time is it?

Answer: Ten to twelve.

Deleuze: Ten to twelve?... What? Yes?

Another student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yeah ... I regret to say again that, for me, this problem absolutely does not arise, because you would have to know what "for him" means. Either you use "for him" in a sense... in a very, very indeterminate sense, and, at that point, it's still too vague, or you really mean: "for his own person". Now, the despot possesses no person. "Despot" designates only a public office. So, to say: the despot would seek, for example, seek power for him? Uh ... It seems to me, at the limit ... "for him" is an empty expression in such an assemblage. There is no "for him". The question we are now colliding with is, in fact: when will a category of the "for oneself" (*pour soi*) type arise? When does this category of "for oneself" arise, which obviously implies a private sphere? As the despot is a public function, as he reigns over communities that only exist collectively, there is absolutely no "for oneself", there is no private sphere; it is an arrangement that excludes any private sphere.

So, I am saying: at this level, "despot" refers exclusively to... -- it seems to me that Marx and even Engels say it very well in their text on the Asiatic Empire -- it is not at all a person who takes power; it is rather more of the type, if I try to summarize everything: you cannot define, for example, the land function in its difference from the territory function without, as a correlate of the land, there being a despotic function. But this is not a person; it's a function. So, he has no "for himself" at all, any more than the civil servant has any "for himself". Hence, when I say: everything is public, I mean: the municipalities own the land collectively, the land. The despot is the eminent owner, but not "for himself", that is, it is his very function which defines the unity, the transcendent unity of the territories simultaneously considered. Each territory is occupied, let us say, by a municipality which has collective possession of it. The despot is absolutely no different, is absolutely not a distinct person, with the following function: the unity of the territories that constitute the land.

He is not a person at all, he has no "for himself", so he does not seek a "for himself", nor power "for himself". First of all, power, well -- I have never mentioned power in this, it's not at all, the assemblages that I'm trying to describe, these are absolutely not power apparatuses. -- Power flows from it. Power always flows from it, and it follows secondarily, but it is a particular kind of power. Functionaries, for their part, as representatives of the despot either at the level of the land, or at the level of money, or at the level of labor, entrepreneurs, bankers, owners, are not owners for themselves; they are solely functional owners. It's insofar as they are functionaries of the despot that they have the benefit of a particular plot of land, or rather of the income from such land worked by the communities, owned by the communities. So, it is like a kind of public property with three floors: municipal possession of the territories, eminent property of the despot, delegated property of the functionaries. But, at no time is there the least private landlord about whom you could say: this is a "for himself".

A student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Are functionaries the eyes of the despot? Yes, it is the multiplication of eyes, yes. As in... as in the Ethiopian parchment, we start with two eyes, and then we... they swarm. So, you've got things with four eyes... four eyes, eight eyes... "eight" eyes... uh... eight eyes [*Laughter*], twelve eyes, etc. then they swarm everywhere.

Another student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: What?

The student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: The?

The student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yes.

The student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Face-landscape, it is... it is... it is... yes, it is of the same type as..., it belongs to these correlations, of these changes of assemblage, finally, of these..., no, of these ... Uh, if we admit that, in fact, there may very well be a head and even a human head that is not constituted along the mode of the face, in the same way, there are milieus ... there are milieus and even human milieus which do not necessarily constitute landscapes. So, uh... it is perhaps in the same assemblage that the heads are erected into faces and the milieus erected into landscapes, and, in fact, it is obvious that the transformation of milieus into landscapes involves precisely what we will call planning (*aménagement*), regional planning. In this sense, we could say that the first transformation of milieus into landscapes is done with public works. There is no landscape if there is no public works. It is public work that constitutes the milieus into landscapes.

So there, we can see very clearly that it can be in the same way that the body-head system is transformed or produced from the face by entering into a new assemblage, and it is at the same time that the milieus produce landscapes under the action of public works. If you will, I would

say: ultimately, yes, uh... the birth of the landscape is something... it is, in fact, when we build pyramids in the desert, [that's] an entire development of the desert, there, which will transform the desert from milieu into landscape. Currently, the transformation of milieus into landscapes, well, this has been completed for a long time, but it continues, it continues, it is perpetually recreating itself. You see? But I don't think you can define ..., in this sense, there is an obvious correlation between face and landscape.¹⁰ It belongs to the same assemblage. ... Yes?

Another student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: I can't hear you.

Student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Ah, certainly not!

Student: [*Inaudible words*]

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, yes, but, uh ... you understand, then, take the example of Kafka. I am saying that in an analysis based on assemblages, things are extremely, uh ... complicated, because it is obvious that in concrete reality, everything is mixed up. You have assemblages which are the concrete assemblages which are always mixed. Simply, they have dominant aspects. In Kafka's themes, for example, in Kafka's themes, we can see very well where the mixtures are. But, precisely, if Kafka is so modern, it is because he refers to other assemblages, he refers to current assemblages, he does not refer to ... assemblages as archaic as those about which we are speaking for the moment.

But still, if ... I am choosing an example, a uh, well-known example, it is *The Great Wall of China*. The Great Wall of China typically describes the construction of the Great Wall of China under the supposed conditions of an archaic Empire. However, his answer to a Kafkaesque pattern that you find very often is the pattern of the pyramid, the pattern of the pyramid or the tower. You remember, in *The Great Wall of China*, there is the construction of a tower in the center, a tower that will never be completed, which is very, very weird. I would say: this pattern of the tower or the pyramid surrounded by a wall, it is very precisely the archaic imperial model. So, it intervenes within Kafka. But what Kafka doesn't stop... -- he doesn't say it, obviously, because he has too much art, it's not his job to say it -- he does not cease showing that this model functions so little that, on the one hand, if I take the... Kafka's texts literally, sometimes he tells us: this model has... never has been completed and will always remain unfinished, because they moved on to something else. To what? He will express it. Or he says: it's true, it exists, but only if one only looks from a distance. It only exists if one only looks from a distance, because, as soon as you get closer, you realize that it's a whole different assemblage.

So, Kafka's first theme: yes, it exists, but it was never completed; it was replaced by something else; it is the Great Wall of China. Indeed, the nomads came, etc., etc. Where did they come from? They are already there before we understood how ... The Emperor ... the Emperor of China is no longer the despot since he is reduced to hiding behind his shutters and curtains, while in the square, while in the town square, there are the nomads who camp out and their carnivorous

horses which are eating the meat. It's beautiful. [Laughter] Good. There you go, this is a first note on Kafka.

A second note on Kafka: This is only true from a distance, you can see that both, uh ... are ... Why is it only true from a distance? There is the great example of the castle. From a distance, K sees the castle, and the castle corresponds absolutely, from a distance, to the archaic imperial model: a great tower... uh..., a kind of pyramid... uh... a celestial bureaucracy, the despot's functionary, etc. But the closer K gets -- and in fact, he can't get any closer, so it gets even more complicated than that -- the more he realizes that what he took from afar for a castle or for some sort of bell tower or for a tower is in fact an aggregate of small huts connected to each other in length. The text is magnificent, this sort of optical transformation of the castle into a sort of..., an aggregate of shacks that are even more disturbing.

Okay, so let's not get into the "what does that mean?", but finally, for convenience, let's say: what does that mean? It's that, understand, we are already in a whole different assemblage. Kafka simply situated himself at the crossroads of the two. It is no longer the tower-pyramid assemblage; it is the assemblage, this time, [of] corridors, endless corridors horizontally and no longer a transcendent tower vertically. And when Kafka... -- but you know... uh... who, you know, was a specialized bureaucrat, a great bureaucrat, right, that he occupied important bureaucratic functions -- Kafka never stopped wondering, there, very... -- this is not symbolism, he never created symbolism -- he reflected on the modern conditions of bureaucracy.

Uh... I'm not saying that his work holds... boils down to that, but it was one of... one of Kafka's most pointed subjects of political reflection. Well, what is he telling us? He was the first, to my knowledge -- and long before sociologists specializing in bureaucracy -- he was the first to identify the current forms of what one might call neo-bureaucracy. And neo-bureaucracy is not a pyramid-like bureaucracy at all; it's a bureaucracy of corridors, it's a bureaucracy of segments, a string of offices. In *The Castle*, you have the admirable character, Barnabas, whose dream is to become a messenger, at the bottom of the bureaucracy; he asks for a very small post. And he goes from office to office to office to office, in a straight line, horizontally, and he tells the story of his passage, etc.¹¹

The same move as for the castle, you have it in *Amerika*, in an extraordinary text where Kafka describes -- but then it takes an art to arrive at that description -- in which, if you will, as the description advances, our reader's eye is like in a kaleidoscope; it's the scene that changes, and yet it's the same scene. He describes the castle, uh... not the castle, he describes a house... uh... which is the house of... his uncle, the house of the hero's uncle and, again, at first, we believe that it is a kind of pyramidal house and everything happens as if, as the text unfolds, everything occurs as if the pyramidal house was laying on its side, becoming a kind of corridor which stretches out the rooms. Everything changes. This, I would say, is the transition from the old archaic imperial bureaucracy to the neo-bureaucracy, to modern bureaucracy.

And that's what struck me about Kafka. If you will, why did a movie guy like Orson Welles so fully, so fully grasp Kafka's meaning? Because this only works with encounters, all of that. It's not because Orson Welles read Kafka better than, than others; it's not because he reads better

than Marthe Robert, that's not why.¹² Reading better is a matter of talent, it is not a question of... uh... [*Deleuze does not complete this*] But, what explains the encounter... er... the Orson Welles-Kafka encounter? It's not complicated. Suppose, I don't know, that even Kafka only read... that Orson Welles only read Kafka late in life. How did he function before, Orson Welles? It's very weird. Whether they were phantasms or not, what were those things that were his very own? His very own things are not complicated; he had like two ... two dynamic directions that he placed into all his films, but with all the expressive variations you want. He had two main themes, that is, he must live frantically. What are his two main themes? And technically, in the cinema, obviously, that produces something different than in writing. And, to each film, you can assign techniques of camera perspective, techniques ... er ... really optical techniques.

His first major theme was space, vertical space (*en hauteur*) ... so, that can occur ... yes, space that flees vertically. And his other great theme is a longitudinal line of flight. The dominant space, if you will, by schematizing both, the dominant space of imperialisms is the longitudinal line of flight. If I choose films by Welles arbitrarily..., not arbitrarily in quality, but films like that, at random, it is obvious that, from his first films onward, these two spaces enter, or these two spatial elements enter into incredible combinations. I mean, the beauty of what he gets out of these, of these two great axes of space, it's ... it's fantastic.

If I take a film that is not by Orson Welles, the famous *Third Man*, in which we see that he was not content just to act, but that he obviously inspired the film, that he inspired the images... that it's signed Welles. This is not complicated; it is the extraordinary life and skill, it is not copying, so he had to get involved, through which you find combined the images of great Viennese hotels all vertical with a spiral staircase or the *Third Man's* Ferris wheel, if you remember, which then defines a space, in fact, which is going to be the space of imperial domination, because that's where Orson Welles at one point thinks about eliminating his buddy by throwing him off the Ferris wheel. So, these spaces, all at great height and dominance and then the space of the sewers which graze the earth, and which will define a longitudinal line of flight of the *Third Man's* hero.

If I take *The Lady from Shanghai*, think about the contrasting value... I mean, what is lyricism, lyrical values in the cinematographic image? You find the whole theme, for example -- uh, I haven't seen it for a long time so ... -- there is the whole theme of ... uh ... of the space of heights, for example, Rita Hayworth who is diving ... who plunges completely from the top of a rock, there... the dive corresponds, it refers completely to the Ferris wheel of the *Third Man*. And then, you have longitudinal space; there is a beautiful image in *The Lady from Shanghai* in which I no longer know who is running; there is a beach where there are kinds of cabins or motels that look out onto a wooded pathway. There are all these people are coming out of ... their holes, their little houses, coming together while something is going on in the longitudinal pathway, and this appears like a kind of movement of flight.

In, uh, in *The Trial*, the way in which he manipulated that space, for example, if you remember the scene of the little girls running and the painter... uh... of Titorelli and the perverted little girls, the way they run into a kind of... space that is really formed by a sort of hedgerow, a kind of very long openwork box, and they run laughing, shouting, and it's a kind of flight,

movement... it's very, very fast, very beautiful. And, conversely, there is the whole tribunal space which is very ambiguous, since, also seen from a distance, it looks like a space of heights, but, as soon as one approaches it, it's clear that this is not the case; it's like rooms strung together one after the other.

So, there, you have..., and there, we have introduced what I would like us to start developing today: that introduces this kind of passage from one bureaucracy... When one of the great specialists on China... er... on archaic China, namely [Etienne] Balazs, b-a-l-a-z-s, names his book -- or his [*inaudible word*], I don't remember -- *La bureaucratie celeste* [*The celestial bureaucracy*], that means something.¹³ It means: this expresses the bureaucracy of the archaic Empires. And this archaic bureaucracy, in my opinion, is easy to account for with the categories that we have tried to identify. It is this bureaucracy of heights, it is the construction of a pyramid, a pyramid, if you will, whose summit would be the despotic function, the base would be the communities occupying the different territories -- notice that the top overcodes the base, that is, the aggregate of the territories compared -- and the... the sides... the sides of the pyramid would be the different aspects of the civil service. In our case, it would be more of a trihedron, you can imagine; we could always find a fourth, a fifth, a fifth side, etc.

So, there it would be fine. Today, it goes without saying that our bureaucracy has retained something of this aspect. For example, it thrills me greatly that at the time of ... at the start of the Soviet revolution, when the Futurists embarked on some truly great bureaucratic projects, namely the plans, plans for ... er ... architectural plans for ... uh... the central committee, for... this, that, they again adopted, even if it meant... -- that did not prevent what they were doing from being very, very creative -- they again adopted the large model of the tower by introducing into this ... [*Deleuze does not complete this*], and at that time, the tower projects flourished. But one can think that, at the same time, other bureaucratic elements were developing their seeds and introducing a completely different space.

And furthermore, if I come back to Kafka's *The Castle*, to be done with this, perhaps you remember that the castle is only a castle in appearance and seen from afar. As soon as you approach, it looks more like a series of hovels. But, if you remember, moreover, the castle functionaries do not carry on their activity -- so it seems, as far as can be discerned -- do not carry out their activity in the castle itself, but go into a hotel, and the functionaries at the hotel... the hotel then, from near or far, is no longer a castle at all, it's a row of pitiful rooms, and it is there that the real business gets done. In other words, the hotel vertically has replaced the castle horizontally, which means, at the most ... at the simplest, if you will, there is indeed a new bureaucracy which passes through the contiguity of the offices, the horizontal contiguity of offices, and which is no longer the celestial bureaucracy, which is a bureaucracy of a completely different type. So, despite everything, it's great, it's ... that doesn't keep it from ... whatever you want ... Any mix can occur.

If you take a huge architectural ensemble today, a modern one, for example, in America... uh... you could very well have the CEO at the top of the tower. Ah, that's aaah ... At that point, he takes on the old office of despotic Emperor. There we are... Uh... One of Kafka's jokes -- I hope he didn't do it every day, because it would have been monotonous -- it's: he worked, you know,

in a kind of large social insurance center of the Austrian Empire. When he... in Prague. When he walked into the foyer, right, he would make the sign of the cross, the cross, he who was a Jew, he made the sign of the cross, and he genuflected to show that this was it, the Temple of... [*Deleuze does not complete this*] It must have been frowned upon, it must have lowered its rating, [*Laughter*] but... uh... well, that's the call to the celestial bureaucracy.

But, at the same time, the power centers -- to speak of powers there, as they are swarmed ... when there are powers, for me, they are by nature swarmed within assemblages; they never require ... they really are quite secondary determinations. -- In a modern bureaucratic assemblage, the centers of power are much more in the relationship of an office to the adjoining office than in the hierarchical, vertical relationship. And, where Kafka, really, has been, once again, had understood everything beforehand, is that when modern sociologists deal with bureaucracies -- in particular, there are many Americans who work on bureaucracy -- they show this very well, how the contiguity of offices undermines ... -- of course, all of this gets rediscovered, the cause is the same -- but, if necessary, undermines, it's like a double grid, the orders, the hierarchical orders which go from the highest to the lowest, there is a whole relationship of offices contiguous with each other that, if necessary, will implicate not a force of resistance or inertia in relation to orders coming from above ... [*End of tape*] [1: 45: 58]

Part 4

... a dislocation from one office in relation to the other in which the order is transformed horizontally, where the order that ... not only, there is the transformation of the order according to the hierarchical scale from top to bottom, but there are modulations, modifications when one passes from one office to another, such that a file ... You must consider the double path: the celestial path, the celestial circuit of the archaic imperial bureaucracy, from top to bottom, and the longitudinal path from one office to another. It's not the same bureaucracy. And yet, it can be the same people participating in both. But, you see, we are at the border of two different assemblages. So, it's onto this point that we almost were connecting. If you grant me this, whatever your agreements or disagreements might be ... What time is it?

Answer: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: What?

Answer: Twelve twenty.

Deleuze: Twelve twenty, so we'll finish soon. If you grant me this description of the despotic imperial assemblage, just this once you will grant me this, even though I haven't said much about it yet, it's not at all the same thing as the tyrant of a City, not at all the same as the dictator of a modern State; there's no relation. Once again, the despot has been defined as being exclusively a public function under the conditions of this archaic Empire assemblage, and we attempted to describe this assemblage

Well, once again, I am summing everything up in negative form by saying: but on this point, there is neither "for oneself," nor a private determination. So we collide... -- we can translate it

in... er..., in an almost evolutionary form, but we remove from it what is evolutionist therein – we collide with the question: so then, where can the “for oneself” of private property come from, which will nevertheless be fundamental in the... in... in the entire State apparatus? We began by describing a State apparatus assemblage that does not include any determination of private property. All property is public there. In fact, municipal possession of territories, despotic ownership of land, delegation of ownership to functionaries: there is absolutely no private owner in this. The functionary enjoys ... income or tenure only insofar as being a functionary, that is, through the function he performs, but not insofar as being a person.

So, that becomes a real problem: where can private property come from? Well, if you will, to proceed well, to proceed in order, I would say: we have, in principle, we managed to define very broadly a State apparatus assemblage under the category of the archaic Empire. Everything that we then discover is going to be revealed as varieties of the State apparatus. Will these varieties be or are they evolving? We leave that question for the moment. No doubt, for more convenience, we will act as if they were evolutionary because it is more convenient in expressing ourselves, but I completely set aside the question of knowing whether there has been a historical evolution or if it is something other than an evolution.

And the question is: where can private property come from? Once we've said: we have as a point of reference ... it's that our States, and as far as our memory goes back, since we do not have the memory of archaic Empires ... uh ... as far as our memory goes back: well, States function within a type of assemblage that operates a mixture of public and private. So, where does the sphere of "for oneself" come from in States? Where does the sphere of private property come from in States? And this is the question I asked last time, and although we've considered all of its aspects, we don't see yet.

If I am summarizing the entirety of this: who can have, here, both an interest in private property - I am indeed saying "interest" -- or find a power in private property, once it's said that the desire for private property is going to be something else, since the desire for private property is but one with the emergence of private property in a new type of assemblage, the type of assemblage we are looking for? But nobody can; at first glance, nobody. I am saying: the despot's entire interest, once the imperial assemblage exists, his entire interest is to continue within that assemblage. For the functionary, it's even clearer. The functionary receives income from the land granted to him. This land is used by the municipalities. The municipalities give the functionary an annuity (*rente*) in kind and in work. It is obvious that the functionary insofar as being a functionary has no interest in transforming such a regime, since, moreover, this regime is the basis of his existence as functionary. It would be suicide. As the author I was quoting said, a specialist in the Chinese Empire, as [Ferenc] Tökei said: it is conceivable that functionaries might become little despots, that is, create despotic domains, ... uh ... separate, autonomous, but absolutely inconceivable that they would become private owners. It is as if they are being invited to overturn the very basis of their social existence. So, neither the despot, nor the functionary, nor the member of the municipality who, as a member of the municipality, has possession of the territory, absolutely no one, in such a system, has an interest in private property.

Where can that come from? So, this is what I was saying: this article or this text by Tōkei seems very good to me, because it answers..., I said it the last time, well, it tells us something very curious, it seems to me. He tells us: well you understand, it's not difficult, we have to find... -- it's almost, there, a... a very important methodological point; the text is very, very well done, by Tōkei ... -- he said: we would have to find someone, a social character who, at the same time, is part of the archaic Empire and is not encompassed therein, an excluded yet included character. Excluded people in the pure state, that's not difficult: these are outlaws, outcasts. But someone who is both caught up in the archaic Empire and yet not included within it, what can it be? It is neither the despot, nor the functionary, nor the member of a municipality, nor even the slave. For the slave is like everything in the archaic Empire; it is what Marx called, rather than private slavery, in opposition to this, he called it generalized slavery. And generalized slavery is simply the fact that municipalities as municipalities, that peasant municipalities as municipalities, had slaves or else the fact that there were slaves delegated to functionaries, that is, function slaves, attached to one function or another. So, here again, this is public slavery; it's absolutely not the private slavery of the ancient City. This is why we speak of the archaic Empire in contrast, among other things, with the ancient City.

So, who? Whose interest is it in? That will not be enough to explain the birth of private property, but, if we manage to show that there is indeed a type of collective character who is both caught in the archaic Empire and not included in the Empire, we will have something like a possible hypothesis. And the answer that I find very beautiful from Tōkei is: well yes indeed, it is the slave, but the freed slave. It's the freed slave. What does he mean? The freed slave arises as ..., which is a product of the archaic Empire, but is produced in the archaic Empire and is not encompassed by it. He no longer has social status. He is produced in the archaic Empire as without-status (*hors-statut*). If I dared to say this, I would say: he is produced with the overcoding, but as uncoded. Indeed, the freed slave, this is awful; he no longer has any status and, as Tōkei says -- that's why, the last time, I followed up on the problem of lament and the elegy -- he's the one who initiates his lament, and the Chinese elegy begins with this collective movement of freed slaves.

Fine. Let's extend the "Tōkei hypothesis"; let's extend the hypothesis. He says: is it by chance that it is the freed slave who will become a private owner? And not only will he become a private owner, but he will become a master in the dual fields of commerce and crafts; if you prefer, of market currency and business, private property, private enterprise? Moreover, it is the freed slave who, in China, will bring the first seeds of private slavery, that is, he will have the right to bond his slaves to himself in a private capacity, especially for metallurgical work, for mining work. Fine. This is a very odd story.

That should make us think of something, and here, it is not by chance, of course, that Tōkei is a Marxist. Because, in Marx, there is a remark that he does not invent since Marx is not a specialist in Roman history, and that he draws from historians of Roman history of the 19th century. This is the following story: we are told that the Roman plebs have a long history and that, in particular, the plebs were an essential factor in the demise of the old Etruscan royalty which was quite ..., the old Etruscan kingship, was very much of the pattern and type of the archaic Empire.

Well, the plebs supposedly were an essential factor in the destruction of the old royalty for the benefit of the Republic.

And how is the plebeian distinguished from the patrician in archaic Rome? He is distinguished in this way: the patrician is a member through lineage or through community; he forms the Roman people, *populus romanus*. The Roman people, above all, is not the plebeians; it is the patricians. And how is he defined? He has the right to exploit, the right to exploit the public domain which the Latins call: *ager publicus*, a-g-e-r, the field, *publicus*. The patrician is the member through lineage or community who has the right to exploit the *ager publicus*. You see? [Pause] There is no private property at all, to the extent that it would be a fundamental misunderstanding to say: the patricians were the rich who had private property. History has taken quite other paths. They have the right to exploit the *ager publicus* which remains the property of either the community or the property of the King, the eminent property of the King, whatever you want. This is a model outline. It's a schematic of... archaic Empire, or itinerant community, at the extreme; it's a mix of them both.

The plebeian, first of all, who is he? All historians agree that all or part, at least in part, plebeians are freed slaves. Not only so; they are also conquered foreigners, whose territory has been conquered, uh... it's also people who are, uh... who have arrived, migrants, etc., but everyone says that plebeians are partly freed slaves. And, as freed slaves, they are excluded from all public rights. Excluded from all public rights, that's essential. We find exactly the freed Chinese slave and the Roman plebeian. There, there is a great identity of status. They are excluded from all public rights in exchange for what? They and they alone have the power, as they say in Roman law, to assign ownership of the *ager publicus*. They assign ownership of the *ager publicus* to the extent that they are excluded from public property, that is, to the extent that they do not have the right to exploit *ager publicus* like the patricians. What does that mean, they assign ownership of the *ager publicus*? This means: they receive in compensation a parcel of the *ager publicus* by rights. It is not necessarily from the existing *ager publicus*; they are granted a part not yet exploited, for example, a piece of land, of which they are private owners. [Pause]

And we only find the same figure for the freed Chinese slave, whatever the difference in the contexts, namely, it is the plebeian who has the legal possibility of becoming the private owner of a plot of land, who has the legal possibility to get involved in trade and to manage enterprises, in particular, metallurgical. If you will, it is at the level of the freed slave or the plebeian that the triple privatization takes place. You will tell me -- I am specifying so, uh ... so that there really is no mistake here -- you will tell me: but freed slaves, that already assumes the existence of slaves, and slaves were private property. I remind you that's not the case. The freed slave assumes public slaves, slaves of municipalities or slaves of functionaries who are freed after a long process and who are without-status, who had status as long as they were slaves, a public status, but who become without-status. And it is, it is these freedmen who will become at once private owners, small private owners of plots of land, small entrepreneurs, small merchants, almost in ... outside the mesh or under the mesh of imperial overcoding. In other words, they are the ones who will cause the flows of private appropriation to flow in contrast with the archaic pole of public appropriation.

While it is the Chinese freedman, whether it is the Roman plebeian, that, at that moment, there is a germ that will work through the States, the archaic States, namely a kind of phenomenon which both grows from within and escapes imperial overcoding. And we can see very well ... You will tell me: but it's still weird, this kind of accident where it is the Empire itself which produces [this]. It is this totally bizarre character, in fact, and who throughout history is obviously aggrieved, namely, he is both in the Empire, but he is produced in the Empire as excluded through the overcoding of Empire. He has no social status. And it is at this level that privatizations begin to take shape, and then the history will ... will precipitate the course, will precipitate the pace.

So, in fact, it should be said that this is not surprising, because if you take the two assemblages that were our starting points – first, the code-territory assemblages, the assemblage of itinerance; second, the overcoding-land assemblage, the assemblage of archaic Empire -- could we not say this, that imperial overcoding necessarily entails – this is a possible hypothesis -- necessarily entails as a repercussion, as a correlate, some decoding of flows? At the same time as it overcodes flows, a kind of decoding occurs as a countermove. As long as we were dealing with a territory-code type of assemblage, the territorial flows were ... were relatively coded, with relative flexibility. An imperial overcoding apparatus gets introduced that will overcode all of these codes and overcode all of these territories turning them into land. Suddenly, these now overcoded streams, well, a part or several of them, tend to escape. And, when the land is overcoded as public appropriation, at the same time the land flow partially tends to decode. When activity is overcoded as public works, a flow of land tends toward being partially decoded. When money is overcoded and therefore created in the form of taxes, a monetary flow tends to be decoded. And it is these decoded flows that will constitute the flow of private property, the flow of private enterprise, the flow of private commerce.

And that would remain completely unintelligible if we could not assign a type of collective character who is precisely on the hinge of this overcoding and decoding of flows. If you will, when flows get overcoded,... uh, we must always remember that "decoding" does not mean a flow whose code is encompassed; on the contrary, it means: a decoded flow is a flow whose ... It is a flow which is no longer encompassed within its own code, which is no longer contained in its own code, which escapes its own code. In fact, one can assign within the archaic Empire the point where the overcoded flows tend through compensation to be decoded, and this point is this point of the plebs or of the freed slave. There you go, well... yes... [End of tape] [2: 08: 30]

¹ On this point, see *A Thousand Plateaus*, plateau 13, pp. 439-440 (*Mille plateaux*, pp. 548-549).

² On the "final love" in Proust and "the work to be completed", see *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 438-439 (*Mille plateaux*, pp. 546-547).

³ On Mumford and the megamachine, see session 2, 13 November 1979.

⁴ These are certainly the sessions that took place during 1975-76 for which a great number were conserved thanks to filming that Italian television RAI-3 undertook at approximately a dozen meetings, with the transcripts and translations presented here under the heading *A Thousand Plateaus I – Deleuze at Paris 8* (Video Links). These

sessions and subsequent one no doubt were developed by Deleuze and Guattari into Plateau 7, “Year Zero: Faciality”, in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

⁵ Jacques Mercier, *Rouleaux magiques éthiopiens*, Ed. du Seuil, 1979; *Ethiopian Magic Scrolls*, trans. Richard Pevear (New York: Braziller, 1979); see *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 533-534 note 14; (*Mille plateaux*, p. 224, note 12).

⁶ Alain Grosrichard, *Structure du sérail : La fiction du despotisme asiatique dans l’occident classique*, Ed. du Seuil, 1979.

⁷ The majority of transcriptions into French and corresponding translations into English were made possible through access to the recordings available from the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), then through the Paris-8 *Voix de Deleuze* site, faithfully produced over nearly a decade by one participant in Deleuze’s seminars, Hidenobu Suzuki. According to François Dosse in *Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives* (Columbia University Press, 2011), Suzuki “becomes an institution all to himself”, to whom Deleuze would refer colleagues if they weren’t able to attend one of the sessions. I should note that, first, that 1979-80 is the first year of Suzuki’s recordings, and second that, if this is indeed Suzuki speaking (which I am suggesting given how close he is to the microphone), this is one of his rare interventions in Deleuze’s seminar.

⁸ Deleuze refers to *nexum* several times in *A Thousand Plateaus*, in relation to Dumézil, p. 552 note 1 (*Mille plateaus*, p. 435 note 1), and in the context of the link or knot, p. 460 (*Mille plateaus*, p. 575).

⁹ Deleuze provides this reference – Jean Paris, *L’Espace et le regard* (Paris : Le Seuil, 1965), I.ii – in *A Thousand Plateaus*, 184-185 (*Mille plateaux*, p. 227).

¹⁰ Deleuze develops the landscape concept and the face-landscape contrast in three plateaus in *A Thousand Plateaus*, plateau 7 “Year Zero: Faciality”, notably pp. 170-190 (*Mille plateaux*, pp. 211-214, 218-230); plateau 10, on becomings, and plateau 11 “1837: Of the refrain”.

¹¹ On *The Castle* and bureaucracy, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 213-214 (*Mille plateaux*, p. 260-261).

¹² The French critic Marthe Robert wrote *Alone like Franz Kafka* (*Seul comme Franz Kafka*, Calmann-Lévy, 1969).

¹³ Balazs’s *La bureaucratie céleste* (Paris : Gallimard, 1968) is apparently a revised and updated edition of an earlier translation in English entitled *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy; Variations on a Theme*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964). Translated by H. M. Wright. Edited by Arthur F. Wright.