

Gilles Deleuze

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

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Part 1

Deleuze: ... [As for] my categories ... He wants a chair? ... Pass him a chair.

A student: I am trying to find a chair ...

Deleuze: Isn't there an extra chair somewhere? Well no...

A student: Well, no? [*Pause*] But that's not normal.

Deleuze: Good. Yes, yes.¹ We saw the last time, here, a first large heading -- you would almost have to conceive them as insertable headings (*rubriques à tiroirs*), that is, you can add things, you can, you could create others, perhaps, but at that point, you are intervening -- the first heading which we looked at from the point of view of this parallel or this assimilation "politics-axiomatic situation", this is like a global political problem really ... namely the situations of "addition" or "withdrawal of axioms". And these two poles "addition-withdrawal of axioms" allowed me to define a first bipolarity, a first bipolarity of the "State" form, of the "State" form in the modern sense. And these two poles of the modern State were "totalitarian State-social democratic State" depending on whether the tendency to restrict axioms manifested itself or, on the contrary, the tendency always to add them did so, and this varied from place to place.² So, in that, I suppose that, unless there are some things... I almost dreamed earlier that you would complete this with some concrete examples, so I was saying: the current case of Brazil seems to me exemplary, in fact, because it exists as if in a suspended state. Are they going to choose a kind of social democratic line with the addition of axioms? Are they going to maintain the "reduction of axioms" totalitarian line? etc. Fine, sometimes it's: one tendency asserts itself here, but there, the other tendency asserts itself.

And this first State bipolarity, "totalitarian State-social-democratic State", seemed to me to respond to the "internal market-external market" relation, the tendency to restrict the axioms in which the totalitarian State fundamentally appears when it comes to organizing the collapse of the internal market or asserting the exclusive primacy of the external sector. And the social-democratic tendency tends to assert itself to prevail when it comes to constituting an internal market and placing it into relation with the external market. Fine, so, it is around the pole... no, of the "internal market-external market" relation, I believe, that we could account for the

“totalitarian State-social-democratic State” alternations or, if you prefer, "addition of axioms-subtraction of axioms". There we are, so that's what we've considered.

My second heading -- and that's where I was the last time -- as in any axiomatic, it was the problem of saturation because, however strongly, however precisely the two poles we've considered previously present themselves to be -- the tendency to add-the tendency to remove axioms, in an axiomatic -- the problem that still remains is this: does a limit exist? Is there a saturation of the axiomatic? Once again, saturation is when you cannot add axioms to an axiomatic. A single axiom can no longer be added without the whole becoming contradictory. At that point, we say the system is saturated.

Can we say that in the global system, more precisely in the capitalist global system, can we say that there is saturation? If capitalism is an axiomatic, can we speak of saturation of this axiomatic? Is the notion of saturation a concept which is not only mathematically valid when it comes to studying axiomatics, but is it a comprehensive concept, that is, that makes us understand something about the global political situation? And I was saying: our point of departure, here, is this great text by Marx on the tendency of the rate of surplus value to fall, because it is in this text that, to the maximum, it seems to me -- although he does not use that word -- Marx describes capitalism as an axiomatic, and on what basis? Namely, Marx's entire thesis is: capitalism indeed has limits, but these limits are extremely particular, extremely singular. So, what are these limits?

And I was saying: Marx's text, well, it is organized, he organizes his analysis according to several levels, and at the simplest level, it is the description of this tendential limit, namely Marx tells us: capitalism is not developed without the two elements of capital changing their relation, their proportion. Namely: the more capitalism develops as a system -- we tell ourselves: good, as axiomatic -- the more the part of capital represented by constant capital, the more the "constant capital" part of capital tends to prevail relatively over the other part of capital, "variable capital". Once again: in what way -- and here, you must grasp this very well -- in what way is this a limit of capitalism? It is because variable capital is the part of the capital invested in human labor. Surplus value -- whether this is true or false doesn't matter, I am summarizing Marx's thesis -- surplus value extorted by capital depends on variable capital.

It is under its "variable capital" aspect that the extortion of surplus value by capital takes place. Constant capital is the part of capital represented by raw materials and means of production. If it is true that constant capital proportionally tends to outweigh variable capital, what does that mean? Notice already -- which is an essential remark, otherwise... one cannot understand Marx's thesis at all -- that does not prevent the "variable capital" part and the surplus value which depends on it from absolutely increasing as capital grows, ... grows as capitalism develops. [For] variable capital and surplus value, the more capital develops, the more it [the variable capital part] absolutely increases. But what tends to decrease is the relative importance of variable capital in relation to constant capital, that is: the more capital develops ... the more capitalism develops, the more the share of constant capital tends to prevail over variable capital. So, "the tendency of the rate of profit to fall", what does this Marxist notion mean? It means, as the "constant capital" part of capital prevails relatively, well, although the mass of surplus value increases absolutely, it decreases relatively.

So, there is a limit, in that sense; there is a very special limit of capitalism. In what sense, a very special limit? We can see very well what Marx means then: a very special limit since surplus value and variable capital increase in the absolute, with the development of capitalism, but at the same time, represent in the total sum of capital a smaller and smaller part. This means that capitalism is perpetually approaching a limit, and that limit recedes, does not stop receding, as it comes closer. What is that? How to put this, it is ... it is a very curious status of the limit: hence the expression "downward tendency". What would such a limit be? Such a limit is what we must call: a transcendent limit, an "immanent" limit. It's an immanent limit. And this is the entire paradox of an immanent limit: an immanent limit is such that, in fact, as it is produced and is not encountered from the outside by the system, it is internal: the more the system approaches this limit, the more it pushes back this limit. This is like a very, very special, very singular status of the limit. It seems abstract; we're going to try to make this very ... as concrete as possible.

A student: [*Inaudible*] ... internal structure, there is a moment of explosion or a moment of fusion or ...

Deleuze: Yeah. But ultimately, it can be even more ... even more simply explained by a series, ... by an arithmetic series. I mean: one, plus a half, plus a quarter, plus an eighth, etc., etc., which has a limit and, at the same time, that limit is immanent, precisely in the sense that, the closer you come to the limit, the further the limit recedes.

So what interests me is this: what is this notion of an immanent limit, that is, a limit that is not encountered from the outside? Notice what problem this answers. In fact, all capitalism has the strongest interest in persuading us that the limits it encounters are the limits of the world, that these are the limits of resources, for example, natural resources, that they are extrinsic limits: this is always the great theme of politics. What government never ceases saying and telling us: but there is no other possible policy, really; in other words, the limits, they are external? Now we begin getting suspicious: no, that is not right; the true nature of the limit in the political system [is] that the limit is really generated by the system, as an immanent limit, that is, a limit which moves away, which recedes, as one approaches it.

Henceforth, what is this immanent limit? Where does this kind of... immanent characteristic of the limit come from? This is where Marx's second answer comes in, and this is the point I reached when we stopped the last time. This is because Marx says: well yes, the immanent limit translates a kind of contradiction at the very heart of capital; you see, analysis shifts a level here, I would say, because [in] this contradiction, it is no longer a question of... simply a relation, of a proportion, between the two constituent elements of capital: constant capital-variable capital. This is quite another thing: it is a contradiction within capital in general.

What is this contradiction? In a very beautiful page, Marx states it very, very simply; he says: well, at the same time ... at once, at the same time ... at the same time, it is capitalism which invents the idea of producing in order to produce. Capitalist production is a production in order to produce; it is a production that takes itself as an end, and why does this belong to capitalism? There, our previous analyses almost prevent us from needing to repeat the letter of the ... Marx's pages because, if it is true that capitalism works with – in relation to previous or other formations --, if it is true that capitalism works with literally decoded flows, it goes without saying that, at

that point, capitalism releases flows of production for the sake of production. Decoded production is "to produce in order to produce".

But let's accept that capitalism inaugurates economically, and with what that implies politically, this reality of producing in order to produce. It remains nonetheless, and you see that here, this is... I mean, this is almost things that... you can... that one must feel as much as understand: this means that insofar as being capitalism, that it invents and that it unleashes a force of producing in order to produce. In other words, is this so contradictory? But it is indeed at that point a contradiction internal to capital itself; it is at the same time that it invents a product in order to produce and that it is a product for capital. In other words, producing to produce is the correlate of producing for capital, and yet producing for capital and producing in order to produce are a living contradiction within the State. For if I produce for capital, that subjects production to very restrictive conditions that ... which seem to be opposed to producing in order to produce. In fact, maybe this is not in opposition, but there is at least an apparent contradiction in the double movement, in the double movement of capital: producing in order to produce-producing for capital. It remains abstract, all that. We'll... we'll see, right, but... what does that mean? In fact, it means that to produce in order to produce is something that only works at the same time as I produce for capital, since it is capital that unleashes the flow of producing in order to produce.

As a result, this is a very curious situation. So, since I will need it later, let's return to the terminology to try to situate it, that ... that we needed about quite another thing, namely, about the problem of war. But is it ... is it by chance that we need to return to that terminology right now? I was saying: there is very interesting terminology in General Clausewitz's theory of war: it is when he distinguishes between aim and objective (*but et objectif*), the aim of war and the objective of war. And the distinction comes down to telling us exactly this: the aim of war and the objective of war are not the same thing. The objective of war is what he calls, on his own, absolute war; and the objective of war is defined in a very simple way, namely, the overthrow or annihilation of the adversary: this is the objective of war as absolute war.³ The aim of war is quite different: the aim of war is the political aim, it is the political end that a State proposes to itself – some very diverse political ends: it can be for very different ends -- this is the political end that a State proposes to itself when it makes war, that is, when it simultaneously proposes the annihilation of an adversary.

And Clausewitz says: the political aim is fundamentally limited, namely it is such an aim that a State proposes, whereas the objective is absolute. The objective is absolute, but it is still very variable; why is that? Because the annihilation of the opponent varies depending on the opponent's determination itself. To annihilate the adversary, that means ... that changes completely depending on whether the adversary is identified with the enemy army or with the entire enemy population, or something else. You can have a type of war, for example, in which the overthrow of the opponent is identified with destroying the enemy army. You can have a type of war where the overthrow of the opponent is equated to "destroying the enemy population": these will be two very different types of war. In other words, when I say, "war has a variable aim and objective", well, the aim is always limited; the objective is more or less limited.

When can I speak of total war, which we found to be very different from absolute war, since absolute war is simply the objective, specifically that in whatever way you want to understand

the adversary, one proposes to overthrow the adversary, or to annihilate him, but total war is different: it occurs when the objective becomes unlimited, namely when the adversary is identified with the whole of the enemy population. At that point, the objective becomes unlimited; in fact, it is a question of annihilation in the sense of radical destruction. So, the question at the level of war is exactly this: when the objective of the war becomes unlimited, that is, when the war becomes total, don't the aim and the objective enter into a very peculiar contradiction -- the limited political aim of war and the limitless character of total war, the possibility of a contradiction?

I am saying what we find here -- and the reason for making this this overlong parenthesis -- [is] because we are going to find a problem which resonates with this one; I would say: what is the objective of capital, and what is the aim of capital? The aim of capital is to produce for capital; that's its aim. What is the objective of the capital? The objective is unlimited. Capital's objective is to produce in order to produce. It is inevitable that, in some way, the limited aim of "producing for capital" and the unlimited objective of "producing in order to produce" enter into at least an apparent contradiction. Why do I add "at least an apparent"? This is because the contradiction will obviously be resolved if there is, and if capitalism includes a means of resolving it, and a concrete means, a kind of mechanism through which it [capitalism] does not cease to resolve it at the same time as it introduces it [the contradiction]. If we discover this concrete mechanism by which it does not stop solving it [the contradiction] at the same time that it [capitalism] introduces it, we are simultaneously answering our question, "what is an immanent limit?", namely that this limit is produced by the system, but produced in such a way that it does not cease being pushed back as one approaches it.

Well, yes, yes, and that is part of the beauty, it seems to me, of Marx's text, to show us in the last point, on the third level, that there is indeed in capitalism a mechanism that is working in such a way that the contradiction between the unlimited objective and the limited aim, between "producing for the sake of producing" and "producing for capital", that this contradiction finds its solution, finds its resolution thanks to a typically capitalist process. And this typically capitalist process is what Marx sums up in the following expression: "periodic depreciation ... "periodic depreciation of existing capital and creation of new capital."⁴ Do you perhaps sense that we are getting closer, -- but we are trying to get closer to something concrete in a very, very gradual, very careful way -- we are already getting closer to something concrete? If we want to understand even a little bit, for example, about the current oil-nuclear narrative, you can see that this is the typical case of this periodic process of capitalism, namely: depreciation of existing capital-creation of new capital; this corresponds exactly! This is why, here as well, the oil crisis is not imposed on capitalism from the outside, but that it is really a limit, in the sense of an immanent limit, depreciation of a type of qualified capital-recreation of a new capital. This is absolutely necessary so that, precisely, the limit is produced as both what we keep getting closer to, and what recedes as we get closer to it. It is the process of creating a new capital on the periodic depreciation of existing capital that is going to be, it seems to me, one of the most fundamental capitalist processes.

And so, let's just try to draw a conclusion. If you understand this point, that capitalism works on precisely these two phases -- this kind of double phase: depreciation of capital-creation of a new capital -- that gives us something. That provides a status to something which is, in fact, very

maddening in capitalism, namely its powerlessness -- here, we will try to see this concretely -- its powerlessness to go into reverse. What does "to go into reverse" mean? Obviously, that cannot mean going back to... to... the ax, the flint, the primitive state, etc. ; it is not about that, but the powerlessness in political and economic choices to return even to something that would have been possible a few years before, as if, in fact, the nature of the immanent limit literally defined what we must call an irreversible arrow, an irreversible course of capitalism, which obviously causes our misfortune.

What do I mean here? So here, we must try to speak concrete; we have to start all over. If I summarize the set of notions that I am grasping in this second heading of saturation, I am saying: saturation is the immanent limit. I am saying: the immanent limit is a limit that is both produced by the system, to which the system keeps getting closer, and which recedes as one gets closer to it. I am saying: the relation with this limit, the relation of the system with this limit, defines an irreversible arrow, an irreversible course, good, etc.

And a book has just been published that I find very beautiful, so... it is... it is... and... and which seems to me to be... which concerns a completely different subject, but which seems to me to be an illustration of this subject, if I try to say concretely, well yeah, you see how it works, the immanent limit. It's a book by Robert Linhart, ... which is kind of an investigation into what's going on in Brazil right now. The book is called *Sugar and Hunger*. *Sugar and Hunger*, f-a-i-m, and has as... as a subtitle, "An investigation into the sugar regions of northeastern Brazil".⁵ There we are; I would just like to relate some points from this book, and read some passages. And my only comment would be to mark what way I need this, that is, how this is the very illustration of one of the overly abstract topics that I have just tried to develop.

Linhart tells us one thing that... he says it so perfectly that, I mean, even if we thought this, he recreates it for us... fine. It's very beautiful, the way he says it. He says this: you know, hunger, well yeah ... the problem of hunger in the world, right, hungry people, ... obviously, this is not a ... this not an exterior limit. This is what he calls "produced" hunger. In a way, we all know that hunger is produced. What am I trying to say, more confusedly, when I speak of an immanent limit? Well, this is precisely in opposition to an exterior limit; in other words, hunger is not encountered as the result of scarcity; it is produced as the result of an organization. In other words, although the word is not pretty, we must speak of a hunger, f-a-i-m, as "sophisticated" in opposition to ... or else a hunger that is not at all a hunger from scarcity; it is not hunger from scarcity at all. What is produced is hunger, there you are ..., there you are; the system produces hunger. This is ... there we have it, the ... the immanent limit. How does it produce hunger?

One must show that it [the system] produces it in the very process of its development, that capital produces hunger in the very process of its development. So, as a general idea, this is ... nil: everyone... everyone will be ready to say, "okay, fine". Every time we find a concrete, an extremely concrete analysis to make sense of these abstract expressions, this will obviously take on a ... greater importance. Well, let's take the example of sugar cane in the northeastern region of Brazil.

Here it is -- and I just need to add: this is indeed part of the process of "producing in order to produce" and at the same time "producing for capital" -- the development of sugar cane, what

does that mean? That means it's really a blind development, ok! More and more plots of land will be taken by the sugar cane: to produce in order to produce sugar. You will ask me: why? Because, at the same time ... it's at the same time producing for capital, for sugar capital. Fine. So, we produce in order to produce sugar because, by that very fact, it is the only way to produce to produce for sugar capital. What does this mean? This means that each plot of land will be planted with sugar cane. So, what does that mean? That means: development of a huge property, a large landholding. You see, to produce in order to produce sugar and to produce sugar capital, this apparent contradiction is already being completely dissipated! There is only sugar capital that can produce sugar in order to produce sugar. Everywhere you go, [it's] to make cane sugar: this is not nothing, that, because [there's] an immediate consequence – sense in what way [there's] the limit; once again I'm relating all of this to show, in a specific case, how the limit is produced from within and not encountered from outside -- because... what is going to happen, if you are in this situation?

You ... you can conceive it: this is indeed a question of developing capital, not of its creation. In other words, you can imagine that this situation, compared to the previous situation, has at least two catastrophic characteristics, two catastrophic characteristics from the point of view of the populations. First characteristic: collapse of private land plots. Ah well, yes, in ... in the early stages of sugar capital, this is a kind of stage of the big farm, but the big farm, however strict the regime -- and this was not ... and this was no party! -- the big farm still preserves for agricultural workers the possibility of small private land plots where they can grow diversified crops, a minimum, a minimum of diversified crops. The development of sugar capital -- sugar cane everywhere -- has for its first consequence, what? Monoculture.

And I am not telling anyone something that ... I am not saying, no ... I am not teaching anyone anything if I recall that one of the fundamental problems of Third World economy is precisely the capitalist misdeeds of monoculture, or of monoproduction. Why? Because it is within this monoculture already that we understand how, already, the limit is produced from within. In what sense? In the sense that all the land is occupied in the form of the large property which wipes out all that was left of the private land plots that could be cultivated by the agricultural workers. Practically they go to the city. Once again, it's not that the old days on the farm were good: on the contrary: it was... there are even positive reasons why they emigrated to the city. But, really, there is a movement that must indeed be called deterritorialization. This will be the basis for the formation of large city slums. And furthermore, any possibility of a diversified, somewhat diversified food is eliminated. Specifically, the small private land plots allowed the maintenance of a certain heterogeneity in the diet. Monoculture has a catastrophic result which is there is no longer any local possibility of a diverse food supply. The homogeneous food of the Brazilian northeast becomes, not even the absence of food; in a sense, it's almost worse -- well worse... we don't know what is the worst -- it's a kind of black bean: a starchy black bean type, the regional food there.

Here we have Linhart's text which strikes me as very ... if you follow me, it seems to me that here we grasp on the spot the constitution of ... of what I called the immanent limit. This is precisely what he calls "a modern hunger". I mean, a modern hunger is, if you will, hunger, f-a-i-m, immanent hunger; this is not a primitive hunger, or so-called "primitive". This is not a hunger that would be the encounter with shortage; this is a hunger produced by the mechanism of

modern capital. This is what he says; I'll read slowly: the text seems to me very ... very clear, right: "As I collected testimonies and data, hunger appeared to me with terrible clarity, like the material and the product of a device complicated to the point of refinement. Hunger was not a merely dramatic, almost accidental absence of available food." -- That would be external hunger; it would be "shortage" hunger, -- "... as they present it to us when they want us to believe that it would be enough to quench it by charity or emergency relief movements. The hunger of the Brazilian northeast was an essential part of what the military power called the development of Brazil". In the end, just as the limit is a constituent element of development, hunger is a de... constituent element of development.

"This was not a simple hunger, a primitive hunger; it was an elaborate hunger, a perfected hunger, a hunger in full flight, in short, a modern hunger. I saw it progressing in waves, called economic plans, development projects, industrial poles, incentives for agriculture, investment, mechanization and modernization of agriculture". -- Indeed, this sugar monoculture implies a highly industrialized agriculture. -- "It took a lot of work to produce that hunger. In fact, a lot of people were working at it quite hard. This took place in buildings, in offices, in palaces, and in all kinds of command and control posts. This hunger buzzed with purchase orders sent by Telex, with lines of credit in dollars, marks, francs, yen, with feverish transactions. They were never done going into the details of producing this hunger. Store owners, bankers, shipowners, executives, experts, businessmen had their share of this, as did an army of intermediaries, broker-dealers and consulting firms, planning institutes, and generals, politicians, police officers. Through its very characteristics, this hunger was confused with the development of the mode of production, a sugar-based monoculture, a monotony of food, a slow, patient hunger, a snacking hunger progressing at the rate of the market economy."

And in fact, he quotes the testimony -- here I... -- he quotes the testimony of a doctor who analyzes very well this type of hunger linked to a monoculture, and there you are... The doctor says: yes, with the disappearance of a ... small land plots, where an agriculture could still be maintained, ... a somewhat diversified culture, with the development of a sugar-based, very, very industrialized monoculture, "now we encounter sugar cane even in the cities, and the peasants no longer see any other food than black beans, cassava, exceptionally dried meat: no fish, no milk, no vitamins. Malnutrition during embryonic life and the first eighteen months of childhood leads to permanent mental impairment. Children are missing up to sixty percent of the brain's neurons, and this destruction is irreparable. Another consequence: the average size of peasants decreases", etc., etc.

There you have it, if you will; as the first point, I am saying that, if one understands this well... this notion of produced hunger, what Linhart proposes we call "modern hunger", the hunger which is produced by a process of development as such, we have exactly what I was trying to have you sense, to have you understand, namely this status of the immanent limit. And I would like to discover if we also have the means of giving a concrete status to the idea of the irreversible arrow, something irreversible in this movement through which a limit is produced, a limit constantly pushed back, at the same time as it is reached. For this process is terrible; I mean hunger has never been a way in which ... through which people are killed. In a way, this would be almost too good if ... if people, as they say, they ... they would die from this. There are many people who are dying of hunger, but what is terrible about hunger is that hunger also multiplies

the hungry, that is, it reproduces in this way as many as it destroys in this way. And this is indeed the process of the limit which is perpetually pushed back at the same time as we approach it and never stop approaching it.

And in fact, what is this irreversible arrow in the capitalist system? I am trying to return here to this same situation in Brazil. Here is what Linhart tells us: it is that the development of the highly industrialized sugar-based monoculture which ravages and wipes out all the small remaining plots, well, this is not yet the final word because here is the tale that he relates to us and which is very fascinating, it seems to me. It is that this sugar-based monoculture has a first major stage of development, namely, to produce sugar for the sake of producing sugar, but it does not stop there. A second big stage of development [is] sugar alcohol being used as a mixture for gasoline to make the cars run. Fine, this corresponds well to producing in order to produce: something must be done with this overproduction. The sugar market is not doing well, the global market ... So, fine, they're going to use some of the al ... the alcohol in sugar to make cheaper gasoline. Okay, so this is ... I am saying this is a second stage of development since it is no longer about large land ownership: the whole automobile industry is entering the race for sugar development.

Only what will happen? Starting from a certain proportion, sugar alcohol in relation to gasoline (here as well, this is very proportional), special motors are needed. As long as the proportion is minimal, you can still do it by ... by adapting the classic engines, the engines in classic cars. When the proportion increases, sugar alcohol in relation to gasoline, special engines are needed. So, there is a need to initiate, to build factories that will manufacture these engines, obviously, with foreign capital. This is what occurs in this region of northeastern Brazil. That involves huge investments. Here I do not need to force or develop this; I assume you understand immediately: this is the same, this is even an example of this process or this irreversible arrow that I was talking about earlier, namely "depreciation of existing capital-recreation of new capital". I am saying: sugar-based capital is undergoing a depreciation as evidenced by the global price of sugar, which, in fact, is very low. The depreciation of existing sugar-based capital corresponds to a recreation of new capital, this time in the automotive industry, which will use sugar alcohol provided that a new type of engine is built.

Result: if I take these two stages of sugar cultivation -- sugar cultivation, in a first stage of development, which destroys all the plots of land, all the plots that would have allowed the maintenance of a still diversified diet; second stage: transition to the automotive industry which will manufacture types of engine -- sense that even if I could say: at the first stage, one revolution was still enough, let's say... forgive me a random word: a "limited" (*restreinte*) revolution was still enough to bring down the sugar monoculture, for example, to reform cooperatives, to reestablish the possibility of a relatively diversified diet, etc., at the second stage, this is no longer possible. Why? Because it is the aggregate of industrial investments that themselves depend on this sugar monoculture. To reverse this will imply, at that moment, much more difficult, much more complex operations, will imply an all the more radical revolution, which, at that moment, collides, at that time, with interests that are so multiplied that it [the monoculture] risks being liquidated.

So, that means that things weren't going well before; afterwards, things are even worse. At the same time, it is.... it's the progression of this limit, if you will, this kind of very, very curious

limit, this kind of really gnawing limit, right, which makes you keep approaching it, [while] it recedes, and at the same time, it outlines an absolutely irreversible arrow. Irreversible... irreversible in what sense? Well, it will take ... measures will be needed. For example, it is obvious, it is obvious that... in order for Brazil... right, to emerge from a situation, for example, an insane situation which is the situation of the northeast, well... it will be... it will be much more difficult now, where industrial investment is caught up in this kind of movement, and has taken over from the sugar-based cultivation movement, than ten years ago. Fine. This is what I wanted to call this kind of saturation, which is a very weird saturation, since you can see that it never stops receding as one continues approaching it.

Well, then I would almost like there to be the... the counterweight, that all this analysis consisting in saying very quickly in what sense all this is hopeless, might at the same time be an analysis in the sense of... what is possible? what... what can happen? What...? And if you will, we can see very well how the stages of capitalism there unfold in this ... in the form of this step, really, a kind of limping step. I call a "limping step" this kind of limp that corresponds to "depreciation of capital-recreation of new capital". And that this is obviously at the hinge point of these two phases, of this limp, that revolutionary movements intervene ... Yes?

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: No, it occurs at the level of the global market. For example, the depreciation of sugar-based capital occurs at the level of global sugar prices; it occurs at the level of "producing in order to produce".

The student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Oh no, yes, you're right, no, no. You see, I wouldn't want to, I can't be clearer. Are there any ... So, in this "saturation" heading, I would put all these problems of limit of... as I just outlined them, yes, if you can see. Yes?

Georges Comtesse: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Georges Comtesse: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes -- [*Deleuze talks to someone near him: You are going to be there.*] -- Yes.

Georges Comtesse: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [*Interruption of the recording*] [46: 09]

Part 2

... As for this problem: how to go back onto a given state of monoculture? So I would like to read, here, precisely, in my per... in... what Comtesse has just added, ... a short passage from Linhart on the history of motors: "The day the first separate pumps for the fuel... for fuel derived from cane alcohol were installed, the populations of the northeast were condemned to a further worsening of their lot" -- that's it, the immanent limit which is perpetually reconstituted -- "As long as the limitation was to add a proportion of cane alcohol, 14% , to gasoline, there was no need to modify the motors; one could remain in a provisional state, changing policy. Henceforth, special engines are needed: Volkswagen is already producing them. Other manufacturers will follow. The third pump means a major conversion of the automotive industry and investments. No question of going back. Do you understand what that means? The condition for the cost of this new fuel not to become prohibitive is that the wages of the sugar can workers must be maintained at a level of misery. Until now, these farm workers were confronted only with a class of landowners dealing with declining economic and political movement. Henceforth, they will also clash with the powerful multinational auto companies, and sugar will devour more tracts of land, wiping out what remains of food crops. This is the hunger" -- f-a-i-m -- "of the northeast that will allow cars to roll throughout the entire country." Good, very clear, there is nothing to add, there you go. Nothing to add to all this; ... yes?

A student: [*Inaudible*] ... This isn't the first time that [*Inaudible*] ... in the 19th century, ... [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes, yes. Yes, yes, yes. Well, the coffee monoculture would be exactly... yes, I am not saying at all that this is linked either to sugar, or to recent events; it has always been a... fundamental question, and, once again, if there is among the specific problems of the Third World, there is basically this problem of monoculture, and of mono-industry! Take the case, we could almost have placed this whole analytical test, well, this insufficient analytical test that I am proposing to you, we could have placed it under the sign of... of the small country where it happened... of the small Third World country, where recently such strange things happened and which was like an exemplary case: the... the old Dutch Guiana... Suriname, that's Suriname, it's called that, Suriname, you see, this little country... it's the old Dutch Guiana, which is wedged between the old English Guiana, and the old French Guiana.

Ok, what happened there? Well, I have, I ... I want more detailed information. I'm sticking to ... an article in *Le Monde*. *Le Monde* says: there, in my memory, there is what? It's ... it's a country with about, say, five hundred thousand inhabitants. I may be wrong, but roughly: five hundred thousand inhabitants. Monoproduction: this is ... this ... you find that all the time. Monoproduction: bauxite. Fine. [*Pause*] What other characteristics? Population ... population, as in so many Third World countries -- that will interest us, we will see why later -- an extremely mixed population, since [they are] descendants of black slaves, but also descendants of a second wave, who are Indians especially, right, and who were brought in when... when... with the abolition of slavery, the... the Dutch, there, the Netherlands,... brought... a lot... of... Indian laborers. Fine. So, [it's] a population with a strong racial mix [*métissage*]. Large influx of emigration, out of the ... about half of them leave the Netherlands. Huge bureaucracy, but oddly, the bureaucracy is provided by the formerly English Guiana, by the neighboring country. A bureaucracy, because we'll see that there are specific bureaucratic problems in a third ... in Third World countries, obviously.

So, there is everything there, so that we can get our bearings: capitalist monoproduction: bauxite -- that is, really at the same time, producing in order to produce and producing for capital --; influx, influx of emigration: half of the population that leaves from the Netherlands; constitution of a typical Third World bureaucracy, provided by the neighboring country ... Curious to think of all these movements at once! Well then, there too, this is perpetually the production of the limit ... How the system never encounters an external limit, does not stop producing its limit. Okay, we'll come back to all these points. Under this second "saturation" heading, do you see anything to add or is it clear enough? Yes?

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: Yes. Yes... Yes, yes, yes. Yes, in that, you are completely right to say that, there, we retain it, that almost -- but it anticipates other topics that I wanted to tackle --, so I already remember that if you follow this kind of law identified by Marx, right, of capitalism, namely: as capital develops, the share of constant capital, that is, invested in machines, outweighs the part of variable capital invested in labor, that basically explains the status of current labor. What is the current labor problem? We note -- and here we have to ask ourselves why -- I mean: both in the Third World countries and in the central countries (*pays du centre*), what do we notice? The development... the growing development of so-called "precarious" forms of labor. What are the precarious forms of labor? Precarious forms of labor are either underground (*noir*) labor, or temporary work, [*Pause*] or, at the extreme, the increase in unemployment which means the preponderant share of precarious labor: this is the multiplication of forms of the worker's status - - temporary worker, precarious worker, all that.

Still in the same book, Linhart analyzes the forms of precarious labor. For example, as agricultural workers gradually no longer live on the land of large estates, but migrate to the slums, they increasingly assume the status of precarious workers. But at the same time, what is happening in the rich countries, in the so-called developed countries, in the central countries, for example, in countries like ours? Well, everyone sees it: it's, it's the multiplication, the increasing importance of the same forms of temporary and precarious labor, as if, here, the situation of the central countries and the situation of Third World countries were bizarrely not that much different. What is happening currently? So, one would really have to be a very, very... classic economist to say that this is an accident. It is obviously not an accident, it is not an accident linked to a moment of crisis; it is really the expression of the deepest tendency in the development of capitalism. This tendency can be stated in the following way, exactly using Marx's terms: as constant capital becomes more and more important in relation to variable capital -- you remember, "variable capital" is capital which has to do with labor --, as constant capital -- which has to do with the means of production -- takes on an increasingly greater importance, if only by automation in relation to constant capital, in relation to variable capital, the forms of labor become forms of precarious labor, forms of underground labor, forms of temporary labor. Fine. And there ...

Comtesse: Would the limit of that be, for example, the disappearance of work?

Deleuze: Yeah!

A student: And the dispossession ...

Deleuze: Oh yes, yeah.

Comtesse: ... for example, a day later, a day after [Lionel] Stoléru paraded at the Sorbonne,⁶ the next day, on Monday on Antenne 2, he declares with incredible cynicism, he declares this: if the... the workers, when the workers will be... we will cost too much, we will replace them with industrial robots ...

Deleuze: Yes? Yes, yes, yes, yes. And I am saying: what concerns you, for example, in particular in this situation? You know it well, that is, this has already been said a thousand times, but precisely what I'm trying to do is to bring together as many notions as possible that are ... that would be a little bit functional. It's that ... what about the students as students in all this? It is that the students, as the forms of underground labor, temporary labor, or so-called precarious labor develop, in all senses of the word "precarious", students are fundamentally caught, and are almost at the forefront, of this category of "precarious labor".

So... for the Third World, it has been often analyzed, especially by Samir Amin, eh?⁷ But in the central countries, to my knowledge -- and here, it is now or never to pay them one more homage -- it is not by chance that in the central countries, the first to have grasped this essential, not accidental characteristic, the first to have told us: but you know, the development of temporary labor, precarious labor, etc. is... it is not an accident in modern capitalism, it is really its fundamental tendency, this is not the crisis, it's not... it's not oil, it's not... it's... it belongs to [capitalism], fundamentally, for the simplest reasons, the easiest to explain... this is Italy. It's Italy, because, very strangely, Italy is... it's a kind of prodigious country, where the forms of precarious labor... so there we see... -- I'm preparing a topic to come, for us later --, that things are not ... they never are ... although there are irreversible arrows, this is not at all a reason to despair, because the form of erratic work has a force... it has very, very great revolutionary potential. The kind of double Italian sector, where really there ... the existence of a double sector was asserted very quickly: a kind of underground sector, of temporary sector, of precarious sector, which finally became kind of like the very condition without which the Italian economy would not work; all of this has been analyzed, it seems to me, very, very deeply by all the autonomous current in Italy, right? I mean, this is one of the main contributions in theory or in... the practical theory of contemporary labor, the contribution of Toni Negri's analyses, or in Germany, you will find that, you find that especially in... Negri in Italy... you will find that in Germany with a good author called [Karl Heinz] Roth, r-o-t-h, who wrote a recent book,... [published] with Bourgois: *L'autre mouvement ouvrier* [The other workers movement]. In France, you have several guys who have been working a lot on these precarious forms of labor which have developed in France for several years very, very ... very powerfully ...⁸

And I am preparing some more consoling conclusions for later: it is that, once again, the revolutionary potentialities of these immanent limits, one can hardly say in advance -- and that is very, very consoling -- to what extent it is the system that produces them, but to what extent they turn against the system. The Italian situation... the Italian economic situation such as "precarious work" would seem to mean that the Italian economy is reaching the extreme of such labor, but, in fact, it is this precarious labor that has become an indispensable element for the whole

economy. Consequently, the new forms of struggle that become possible ... the way in which, necessarily, the struggles henceforth go beyond the narrow framework of the company, the factory, necessarily situate their locus much more in a neighborhood (*quartier*), a region, etc. Why then does the PC, the PCI [Italian Communist Party] ... what is the difference in this respect between the labor policy of the PCI, and the labor policy... of Autonomy? This is where I think the differences become very, very concrete. Why does the PC insist on maintaining the corporate framework? Well, it's obvious, really, it's obvious. Fine. Let's move on to a third heading -- unless we take a break ...?!

Claire Parnet: Oh no, we're not tired. Are you tired?

Deleuze: No? I would say a "third heading," but you cut me off if you see any other ... you see, I want every heading to be inflatable, really, so we can add things to it. Third heading: I am still trying to apply to this axiomatic of... to create this axiomatic of politics.

I am saying: you remember that, in an axiomatic, well, the axiomatic does not itself refer to a model to be realized, but it refers to models of realization and that the whole topic that I proposed to you – a very abstract topic at that point, but which should now become more concrete --, the whole topic that I proposed was that modern States were not like archaic empires, not models to be realized, the archaic imperial model, but functioned as models of realization in relation to the axiomatic. What we will call a "model of realization in relation to an axiomatic" is a domain in which the purely functional relations of the axiomatic are realized, realized in very different ways, in varying ways. In the axiomatic example that I had given here, at a purely mathematical level, I said: well, take an axiomatic with two axioms or with three axioms that I had defined, and you see that it is realized both in the addition of whole numbers and in the composition of displacements in Euclidean space. We will say: the addition of whole numbers and the composition of the displacements in space are like two models of realization of the axiomatic, that is, two of the domains in which this axiomatic is realized.⁹

I am now saying, regarding the political situation, States -- I do not claim to exhaust their nature --, I am saying, one of the aspects of modern States is that they function as models of realization of the axioms of capital, that is, these are the domains in which the axiomatics of capital are realized. And it's through this that I answered the question: why does capitalism need the "State" form when, at first glance, it could do without, or could even reverse this form? The answer was: if capitalism has maintained the "State" form and recreated a particular structure of modern States, it is for a very simple reason: it is because [capitalism] completely changed their nature; it needed States because States provided it with the best... the best models of realization for its axiomatic. So, there you have it, so that's a relatively ... relatively simple answer. I am saying: let's accept that as a hypothesis and see where it takes us.

You immediately see that we are already led to distinguish two notions. We are led to distinguish the two notions of "homogeneity" and "isomorphy". What is the distinction between "homogeneous" and "isomorphic"? Well, I think it's obvious that "State" forms can be very different from each other. It's not about saying "all States are equal": this is not true, not all States are equal to one another. It is not a question of saying either that ... perhaps one must not say either that ... there are some ... good ones and others not good: that's not it, that's not it.

Rather, we should say: well yes, there are very heterogeneous forms of States; in other words, States are heterogeneous. Modern States are heterogeneous. We have already seen a first bipolarity "totalitarian State-social democratic State" -- it is not true that these are equal, no --. There is a heterogeneity of totalitarian States and social-democratic States, even when there is interpenetration of ... when, there are elements of one within the other ... it is not the same thing. But I am saying: States can be heterogeneous and yet be isomorphic.

What are "isomorphs"? "Isomorphs" will mean: they are both models of realization for one and the same axiomatic. So heterogeneous States can be isomorphic. A totalitarian State and a social-democratic State can be two domains of realization for one and the same axiomatic; in this way, they are isomorphic, and yet they are not homogeneous. Likewise, I would roughly say, to resume the comparison I was making, the addition of whole numbers and the composition of displacements in space are not two homogeneous domains; these are absolutely heterogeneous! These are no less isomorphic insofar as they are two models of realization for one and the same axiomatic: the same axiomatic is realized in one and in the other of the two domains.

So, I would say: there you have it, can we say that all States, even heterogeneous, are isomorphic? This abstract question can have a certain concrete interest, ... it could lead us to... to qualify things, that is, to seek the whole, to seek to determine the set of bipolarities of States modern. I was saying: a first bipolarity ... what is it that shows, roughly speaking, that one could assume a kind of isomorphy of all States, whatever they are, an isomorphy, again, without homogeneity? Well, this fundamental economic data point, namely: there is only one and the same global market, there is only one and the same global market, namely the capitalist market. For it is difficult to understand anything at all if we do not take this into account: that the socialist countries themselves are awash within a global market which is the capitalist global market. So, it is the existence of one and the same global market ... And ... -- [*Deleuze whispers to someone apparently delivering mail*] Hello ... thank you very much; ohh! ohh, this mail. Cagnard, there some more mail for you! Thank you, eh, thank you very much --. So, yes...

A student: One and the same global market ...

Deleuze: Oh yes! One and the same global market implies this kind of isomorphism of the most ... and most heterogeneous States ... and formations, of the most, State-like States. And I am saying: we saw a first bipolarity, this bipolarity which varied with the respective position of the internal market in relation to the external market, it applies above all -- I am not saying at all exclusively --, it applies above all for the States that I would call "central States" (*États du centre*). What would the central States imply from an axiomatic point of view? It would already imply a lot of questions, which I have ... I have not yet addressed at all, here, and which I am citing ... which I am citing ... which I am listing, without wanting to analyze them.

I mean: why must an axiomatic be centered? Does it belong to an axiomatic to have a center, and what? Well, for example, a center and a periphery? Are there axioms of the center and axioms of the periphery? And what would this distinction mean in an axiomatic of the center and of the periphery? And the fact is: if, for example, you refer to [Fernand] Braudel's famous analyses on the formation of capitalism, I believe that, in Braudel's texts, he insists enormously on this point: how the development of capitalism implied the formation of a center in what Braudel calls,

precisely, by creating this concept somewhat, "the world-economy" (*l'économie-monde*)? Why is the "world-economy" fundamentally a centered economy? With the essential problem that Braudel analyzes in detail: how was the center formed in the capitalist world-economy?¹⁰

Answer: why was it formed in Europe at a particular time, and why was there a kind of rivalry between southern and northern Europe, and why did the north win? The question is all the more important for us as it was in the North that, at the same time, the true forms, or the most solid, the most consistent of the "State" forms, were taking hold. This is also where the center of this world-economy was established from the point of view ... or the center of this axiomatic. And it is at the center that this first bipolarity that we saw very quickly developed: "addition of axioms-subtraction of axioms", or if you prefer, "totalitarian pole-social-democratic pole". But I am saying: aren't there other ... aren't there other bipolarities?

My first remark: starting from 1918, the center saw the imposition -- here, I am weighing my words because we cannot say that [the center] favored this, right -- saw the imposition of a second bipolarity, namely, that of capitalist States, and so-called socialist States or those called "socialist-bureaucratic". [Pause] I resume my series of questions, or my presentation of questions: can we say that socialist States, or so-called "socialist-bureaucratic", and capitalist States are homogeneous? As I am trying to bring together a certain ... a certain number of political data, if you will, since the last war, it is worth remembering that: it has been said often ... it has been said often, and many authors have developed the topic of a homogeneity, of an increasingly advanced homogenization of the so-called socialist States and of the capitalist States. One of the first to develop this topic after the war was an American named [James] Burnham, but the topic has been reexamined ... thousands of times. Fine.¹¹

What does that mean, that there would be homogeneity? Is there even a need to invoke homogeneity? A good number of authors have indeed analyzed the structures of bureaucratic socialism and thought that it was really of crude appearance, which allowed a kind of homogeneity to be discussed -- for example, it is the development of planning, it is the role of planning, it is the development of the bureaucracy, but all that, it is ... it is very vague because, each time, the question reverberates: is the so-called "socialist" bureaucracy the same as capitalist bureaucracy ... or even Third-World bureaucracy, every time there is a need for very, very careful differential analyses ...?

But, at the point we have reached, we would tend to tell ourselves rather: this question is not of much interest, because there is no need for States to be homogeneous in order to be isomorphic. At the extreme, we could -- it's not even sure that we could -- but I'm just saying: at the point we have reached in our analysis, we could speak at the extreme of an isomorphy of capitalist States and of so-called "socialist" States without this isomorphy leading to the slightest homogeneity! That would only mean that these are heterogeneous models of realization, in relation to an axiomatic which remains the axiomatic of capital. In any case, I am saying that the center has seen the imposition of a second bipolarity between the capitalist State and the socialist-bureaucratic State.

And then, everyone knows that ... it was not imposed -- that is why the words must be qualified - -: that the center organized a third bipolarity. The second bipolarity, I would call it -- you might

as well do geography, like everyone else -- I would call it: a "West-East" bipolarity. The third bipolarity which belongs to the axiomatic of capital, this time, has not been imposed; it organized this third bipolarity: it is the famous "North-South" bipolarity. "North-South", there was only a fictitious geography, right! There is only ... yes, fictitious geography. I mean ...: the South could very well be the North, what can that do? It is a vector: the "North-South" vector. It's a bit like the limit that is always pushed back: you can very well find South in the North! Well fine... why not? It does not matter since it designates a vector, an economic-political vector. And this time around, that third bipolarity is the ... bipolarity between States in the center-States of the periphery, or what is more simply called "Third World." Fine. The South vector is the Third World.

And we still have a South, right? Besides, France has its South; it has its South which is in the process of... which is in the process of being prepared, or which is starting to express itself strongly... Corsica, Brittany -- Brittany, it's the south of France, it's not going well... right, as a vector, it is the South --, good. As Giscard said, you remember, in... in... in his... in his big... in his big speech...: it's annoying, the more balance there is between the West and the East, the more things become unbalanced from North to South. And this is very important to us, because that is the production of the limit; that is our only reason for hope. Otherwise, we'd be screwed, right! Okay, so I am saying: this is a third bipolarity.

Well, my question is this: so, without even having to say it, all States... This third "North-South" bipolarity, I can say that it had two major stages: the organization of colonization, this is how it is organized, and then with the end of the colony, with the end of colonies, of colonization, the organization of a Third World by capitalism, well, States of the Third World. My question is therefore: it is not at all a question of saying all that is homogeneous! It is a question of asking the question: to what extent are all these formations and all these bipolarities ... to what extent are all these State formations isomorphic, even if they are very heterogeneous? You see, that can't ... it's a question that can only be thought about in relation to their functioning in relation to the global market.

I am returning here, and I am taking a minimum of risks without ... but without seeming to, without telling you why, that's perfect. I am taking a minimum of risks because I am trying to give, then, some very simple definitions, at my ... at my own risk and peril, of two very common notions: "mode of production" and "relation of production". I would say: well, here it is, you understand, a mode of production, for me, I mean, it's not complicated, I'm not at all trying to say things... learned, or even technical things... I would say: a mode of production is closely determined by the role of the force of labor [*Pause*] in the production system. What defines a mode of production is the style -- I am using a very vague word, on purpose --, the style, the allure of the force of... the status of the force of labor in a production system. That, I would call it ... by convention, I would call it the "mode of production". I would call the "relation of production" this time around, the status and nature of wealth securities (*titres de richesse*) in the production system. [*Pause*]

You can already see where I am going with this; I would say, at the limit -- once again, I don't think it's ... it's not that what I'm saying is deep, not at all deep, right, but it's not orthodox, I am specifying : here, I do not claim to be anyone, I am just attempting to provide a reference point

for myself, right, it's convenient for me --, I would say, at the limit, to bring together some things that we have just seen, I would say: the mode of production is always on the side of the status (*l'état*) of variable capital in the system. What allows you to define a mode of production is ultimately the status of variable capital. What allows you to define the corresponding production ratio is the status of constant capital. Not that the... not that all these notions merge, but they are linked.

Fine, on that point, with as much lightness as possible, I tell myself: well, so-called capitalist countries, what are the so-called capitalist States? These are States in which the mode of production is capitalist, and the relation of production is capitalist. What does this mean? This means that the major form of the wealth security is capital. We have seen it, we have seen it -- there, I will not go back over this; it is even the only thing on which I have truly insisted --: capital does not designate means of production; it designates property rights or wealth securities that can be invested in the means of production, which are not at all the same thing. Fine. So, I can say that there is a relation of production that can be determined as capitalist: it is when capital determines the relation of production, that is, when the wealth securities are identical to capital itself. What is the capitalist mode of production? It is when the labor force has the status of wage earners ... well, which implies capitalist surplus value -- which is not the same as feudal surplus value, or surplus value in other systems --.

So, I can say: central States are basically capitalist states, that is, the relation of production and the mode of production is capital there ... are capitalist there. What is going on, and how could one define very, very lightly, there, very ... like that, to be able to identify so-called "bureaucratic" socialism ... no, [to identify] so-called "socialists" or "socialist-bureaucratic" countries? What is that, I mean, if we ask the question: where does the capital come from? In a capitalist country, capital comes from capital, hence the famous concept of the so-called primitive accumulation of capital. And how does capital come from capital? Because, precisely, capital defines convertible wealth securities. In a so-called socialist country, where does capital come from? You see, what defines capitalism, once again, is not capital; it is the fact that capital there is the relation of production or the wealth security. In a socialist country, the wealth security or the ratio of production is not capital. However, there is capital, there is a production of capital in so-called socialist countries. So, what is the wealth security, that is, the element that will allow the creation of capital? I think it can be said: a country is socialist-bureaucratic when the wealth security, or the element which enables the manufacture of capital, is not capital, but is the [economic] plan; this is the plan.

You will ask me: how do you create capital with planning? It's no more difficult to do ... than when you create capital with capital, no more difficult! I mean... or else, [it's] *as* difficult, as difficult. But it is obviously planning which, since the Leninist period, has been the constituent element of the manufacture of domestic capital for the USSR. I mean: if the so-called "socialist State" and "capitalist State" are not homogeneous, it seems to me that it is for a simple reason: it's because one can always homogenize, if one takes things in midstream; to say, ah, but capitalism has developed lots of planning and has attached more and more importance to planning, you see, for example, the "New Deal"; and we can say... -- or look at... Hitler's Germany --... and then we can also say: and look at the socialist countries, the importance of planning. But what matters is ... it's very silly to take things as ... in a ... by isolating it from

movement. Its movement is in fact the opposite: in socialist-bureaucratic countries, it is capital that depends on the plan; I mean it is the plan that is the building block of capital. In capitalist countries, there may well be a plan, and even a relatively powerful plan on certain occasions, for example, in France, at the Liberation, yes. It is just the other way around: it is capital that is the building block for the pieces of planned production. The "capital-plan" relation changes completely in one case and the other.

As a result, in the case of so-called socialist States, it seems to me that we would be entitled to say: but, of course, no relation of production relation exists there; the relation of production is not capital, it's the plan. It's the plan which determines the relation of production, and this is not a capitalist relation of production -- once again, that does not mean that it is better: it is something different -- whereas in capitalism, whether there is a plan or not, there, the relation of production is indeed capital itself. And that does not prevent socialist-bureaucratic States from being isomorphic in relation to the axiomatic of capital, that is, they are domains of realization.

So what could I say to finish up with these... you understand, it's a kind of... -- just ignore this if that doesn't interest you -- for me, this is a kind of purely terminological outline. What can I say about the Third World States? There is hardly a problem there. I mean, there are a small number of Third World States that we can identify as having an affinity with socialist-bureaucratic States, and sometimes even like ... I don't know, ... with hopes, with certain hopes that... the USSR no longer allows us to have; I think, for example, of Mozambique, fine. But the majority of Third World States are more on the side of the capitalist states. In what sense? In the sense that the relation of production is capital there; the relation of production is all the more capital there since these Third World States favor, according to the totalitarian expression, the external sector, that is, give absolute priority to the external sector, the exemplary case, the exemplary case [being] sugar-based monoculture.

But I would say, what makes the specificity, what makes the heterogeneity of the Third World States, is that even in this case in which the relation of production is capital, the mode of production is not necessarily capitalist, not at all. What can it be? It can still be -- but I put "still" in quotation marks -- it can "still" be even more or less, more or less, slave-based; [*Pause*] or it may "still" be more or less feudal. Why do I put "still" in quotes? Because there would be a misunderstanding -- which, it seems to me, certain Marxist authors have made in this regard -- a misunderstanding "still" to be avoided. The misunderstanding is to say, yes, these are remnants (*restes*), they are vestiges (*survivances*). Yes, for example, the slave-based side, of the large plantation, or the feudal side of certain forms of Third World agriculture, or of certain modes of Third World production, are vestiges. These are what Marxists call transitional forms. The most perfect case of the so-called transitional form was the cultivation of cotton under slavery, in the slave states of America, before the Civil War.

What interests me is that at the point we've reached, I would say, this is not transitional at all. Why? I take up a remark which seems to me the basis of all of Samir Amin's research, Samir Amin being a Marxist economist who seems to me, or who seems to many people, to be one of the most important in the study, in the current state of studying Third World economies -- Samir, then, Amin, a-m-i- . One of his particularly good books, I believe, is ... is called *Unequal Development*.¹² The basis of Amin's thesis is that, far from being transitional forms, it's a

question here of peripheral forms. What does that mean, perfectly contemporary peripheral forms? These are not vestiges. In fact, “contemporary peripheral forms”, what is this idea based on? It is based on this observation, on this basic observation, namely: the economy of the Third World is a perfectly modern economy. What is typical, what is exemplary about the Third World economy? It is not an economy that has remained half-primitive; on the contrary, it is an ultra-modern economy, namely: oil installations, industrialized agriculture, of the "sugar" type or "fruit company" type. This is all an absolutely modern economy.

These are therefore not at all forms of vestiges, but they are the conditions of the axioms proper to the periphery that results in the relation of production there being completely capitalist, and so I would say -- this is why I was developing this whole terminological research that floats a little ... a little ... a little bit ... in a vacuum --, I would say: the relation of production is capitalist there, but not necessarily the mode of production. The mode of production can very well be quasi-slave-based, quasi-feudal, and not at all as a vestige, but by a nature specific to the axioms of the periphery. Why? And what would the axioms of the periphery be, which would make possible these kind of somewhat monstrous States, monstrous States in which the relation of production is capitalist, without the mode of production being so, and yet without there being that much of a contradiction?

This is why it seems obvious to me that before the Civil War, in the context of ... American slavery, that the cotton companies, that the cotton cultivation worked with a slave regime, and does not at all seem a transitional form, not at all. Not at all. This is... this is... this is a figure from the periphery. What happened with the Civil War is not at all the elimination of a vestige: it is that the entire USA has been constituted as states of the center, as states of the West, whereas some of these states were still under the “periphery” formula, before. They were centralized, they were de-per-iph-er-ized? [*Deleuze pronounces the syllables this word one by one: dé-pé-ri-phé-ri-sés*] But, you will see that the other movement also exists. I'm just saying: well obviously, what are the axioms proper to the periphery? Samir Amin offers some -- and this is what I find the best, myself, in his analyses --, in *Unequal Development*, he searches a bit: he does not use the word "axiom", but it really comes down to that. He is looking for, he indeed says that the Third World States are extremely ... themselves heterogeneous among themselves, very, very different ... He distinguishes several kinds: he distinguishes the Oriental kind, the Arab kind, the American kind: South America... well, he distinguishes four of them -- I don't remember which one is the fourth... Arab, Oriental -- and Africa, of course! The African kind, which is really very, very different.

But, very broadly speaking, the properly peripheral axioms would be: to the very high development of large landed property, why is it an axiom -- there you have it, the first great axiom of the periphery -- why is it specific to the periphery? An immediate response: if you remember our previous analyses -- there, I ... I am only reminding you ... a very quick reminder --: you remember that I tried to show how at the center -- it was only valid for the center, this, what I was saying at the time -- land rent and land ownership had been liquidated by capitalism from its inception, and that this was inevitable, that this was inevitable to the extent that the flows of forms of capital (*flux des capitaux*), the flows of capital (*flux du capital*), implied a kind of decoding of flows. It is inevitable that land rent was as an element rejected by capitalism; it was rejected by the central States in two forms, in the English form or in the French form, at the

beginning of capitalism. It was rejected in the English form of land rent, and from then on, interest in large landholdings was rejected by European capitalism in the English form through alliance with American wheat, which did not pay land rent, precisely because America, at that time, still was playing the peripheral role, or in the French form, through small peasant property. In both cases, capitalism was breaking with the land structure. And in fact, the capitalist relation of production could only emerge at the center...¹³ [*Interruption of the recording*] [92: 52]

Part 3

... large landholdings, either in the form of an outside company's properties -- the fruit company, for example -- or even locally-sourced landholdings, huge landholdings. Peripheral capitalism needs, at least capitalism applied to the periphery, needs a development of land ownership as such, whereas at the center, it has gone through a trend of eliminating land rent.

That is the first point that seems to me to be very important, and one cannot say, and once again, in my opinion, it would be a misunderstanding to say: large land ownership in Third World countries is linked to a simple vestige. It is so little linked to a simple vestige that the current data of the economy, or one point of the current data of Third World economy, namely the existence of highly industrialized monocultures, necessarily passes through this... immense land ownership, through the existence of an immensity of land ownership since, we have seen it for sugar there, since it goes all the way to eliminating all the small peasant land plots.

A second characteristic -- so here I would say is the first axiom specific to ... peripheral States, to Third World states --, a second axiom: a form of commerce, and there, I indeed believe that ... this is ... it goes to, credit for this goes to the Chinese Marxists, not current ones, the old ones, you know, who created a category or who proposed the existence of a particular economic category that they called -- borrowing the word, I believe, I suppose from Spanish --: "comprador trade". "Comprador trade", what is it? It's... it's... it's a category -- and here too I'm being very quick... there has been a lot of Maoist literature on comprador trade like... and this is in order to understand something unique to the Third World, and this is a category that seems very, very interesting to me. -- Comprador trade is a particularly ... cruel, particularly formidable type of trade that creates, how shall I put it ... very vaguely ... creates the connection between external capitalism and the rural hinterland. This is a kind of unleashed commerce, where the commercial relation then implies a very, very ... very important regime of violence and usury, where again one would want to say at first glance: oh, this is a vestige! Not at all. This is a current mode of functioning in Third World economies.

In Linhart's book, I'm returning there to a very short allusion to this comprador trade, but as it is very concrete, I will relate it: you see, the peasants ... the peasants who no longer even have any plots of land within this sugar-based monoculture -- they no longer have land plots, they can no longer cultivate, there, a small plot that would allow the diversification of food -- and they have to purchase, and they are absolutely defenseless, for example, at the shop established on the large property, and which will create the link between external capitalism, which animates the sugar-based monoculture, and the rural hinterland of the small poor peasants. And here is Linhart's text which makes it easier to understand than anything I might say: "However, food" -- a peasant explains that what he sells or doesn't is all the same, right -- "... everyone went into debt to buy

the seeds, and upon selling ... what remains of the small land plots, and at sale, at harvest which was good, no one earned anything from it. Many sold their entire harvest without managing to pay the banks, so even a good harvest pushes us even deeper into misery" -- that's what Comtesse... that's what you described earlier, right -- "It's the same everywhere: what we harvest has no value. The larger the harvest, the more hunger there is. Question: yet food is sold very expensively! Where does the difference go? Answer: to trade" -- So, this is not just any trade, this is the comprador trade. -- "This is the devil's trade here." -- This is exactly what ... what the ... Maoists call trade ... comprador trade --. "This is the devil's trade here, there is no control. The harvest lasts three months, it's a crazy time; the trader wants to buy everything at a very low price. Then he will sell it for a high price" -- this is a trade that implies this storage, eh -- "the government lets this happen (*laisse faire*). In reality, the government is only interested in export culture." That is, the government is only interested in the external sector, in relation to foreign capital, to foreign capitalism. And it is the ... the comprador trade that reaps the very profitable function, bringing immense profits, of ensuring the junction between production oriented towards the external sector and consumption in the hinterland. You see, comprador trade would therefore be a category, or an axiom, of the Third World States, and we can see right away, in fact, that here too this is not at all a vestige, right?

Let us add: a third axiom specific to the Third World, that proletarianization, or if you prefer, ... the misery, there, of... of... or the becoming of these peasants who no longer have any land plots, etc., the proletariat... proletarianization does not take place there at all in the same way as in Europe, as it occurred in Europe with the development of capitalism. As Samir Amin says, proletarianization is marginalization as well. It's inseparable from the constitution of slums. Conversely, the force, the role of peasants in this process of proletarianization is very different from that of Europe ... good. Yet another axiom that... Amin tries to... analyze: bureaucracy in the Third World, which also has a very different role, both from the role it had in Europe, or that it has in Europe in capitalist countries, and from the role it has in the so-called socialist countries. It doesn't matter, right? Anyway, I am saying that it is in the book, *Unequal Development*, that all this is analyzed most precisely.

I'm just trying to draw conclusions from this quick review. I would say: well yes, once again, Third World States, could we not define them as, in many cases, the relation of production is capitalist, but the mode of production there is not capitalist, and that this is so not as a vestige, but by virtue ... but by virtue of axioms, organized axioms specific to the periphery, organized axioms specific to this Third World? As a result, of course, political resistance movements or revolutionary political movements also have a structure or potential that is very different from those here.

What do I mean? Because, at the same time, we should add almost the opposite. It seems to me that we should at the same time *relativize* Samir Amin's theses, if I... and... but almost to relativize them to make them even more, even stronger or even more convincing, because there it is... there you are, Samir Amin tells us: the Third World economy is not at all a lagging economy; it is an extremely modern economy, once again, of the metallurgy type, huge metallurgy, petroleum, industrialized agriculture. So, the Third World economy is... it's... it's really not... I mean, it's... it's entirely distorted to present it as a "developing" economy. That's what..., that's already where there is the abominable lie. It is not at all a developing economy; it

is an economy... one cannot say that, for example, the monoculture of sugar,... in the Brazilian northeast is... the sign of an economy in the process of developing; it's a wildly modern economy! It's a ... high-industry economy, that's even why ... that's even why the situation is so tragic!

Well... I am saying this: what does that mean? We will say: what was it that allowed this displacement of a highly developed economic sector in the Third World? This is even what would distinguish, in what is called the Third World from the former colonies: in the former colonies, there was an undeveloped economy. What do we call the Third World today? There are cases, for example, Africa, it would pose ... all kinds of problems. It depends on which region of Africa. There are undeveloped areas, etc., but that is not what constitutes the Third World's acute problem. The Third World's acute problem is that it is the object of a highly developed economy, a completely twisted economy, really, a completely harmful economy, a catastrophic economy, but highly developed, highly industrialized. What allowed this transfer of a developed economy into the Third World? What made it possible is precisely our law of capital, namely that the center has reserved for itself more and more, temporarily -- it is not even certain that it will be ... that it will be for a long time --, the center reserved more and more for itself the sectors not of advanced industry or advanced agriculture, but of advanced automation. I am saying: that is one with the law of capital that we have seen. The...

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: That's it. Constant capital becomes more and more important and starts by gaining importance in the center itself. So capital, the axioms of the center, have more and more reserved an automated sector for themselves. Good. Hence the job crisis at the center, right? On the other hand, there emigrated -- and ... it matters a lot, for example, in what is called "the crisis in metallurgy", "the crisis in the steel industry in Europe", it matters enormously that a highly industrialized, highly specialized steel industry established itself in Third World countries. So wherever one is... it's... it's a situation... it's definitely part of these dead-end things of capitalism, because... it creates the kinds of holes of... crisis in Europe, and that is also the crisis economy... in the Third World! It's amazing, this stuff! -- So ... but, I am saying: we must go further. Why must we go further? You have to relativize everything, Samir Amin, because, on the one hand, I don't see any contradiction. I imagine, there would not be much a contradiction if, in a few years, highly automated sectors were established in Third World countries -- Brazil, all that... - Yes?

A student: [*Inaudible*]

Deleuze: [It's] possible; me... I don't know. Let me finish; you will say if you agree or not, because this is what I am telling myself, like that ...: it is very true that, in an axiomatic like the one we are studying, in an axiomatic of capital, it is very true that there are axioms of the center and axioms of the periphery. And I believe that the distinction of a center and a periphery belongs to the axiomatic, yes. But, as capitalism develops, I would say the center becomes more and more -- so taking up a concept that we've used often here -- the center is more and more deterritorialized, and moreover, the *centers* are more and more deterritorialized. In its own way, this is what's expressed in the idea of the importance of multinationals. This does not mean that

there is no center any longer! It means that there is a center, but that this center is less and less localizable in a territory, which might even be the USA, which might be ... London, which might be ... this place, that place. There is a kind of detachment from the center, or a detachment of the centers from territorialities, in relation to territories. As a result, centers can be realized directly on the periphery.

You will ask me: what will that change? Well, it is this alone which explains, it seems to me, the reversal of movement that we have just seen, namely that at the center, at the same time as the investment of constant capital increases, a force of labor is produced ... sorry, a crisis of labor occurs, that is, labor that passes more and more into underground forms, precarious forms, temporary forms. What does this mean? This means that we must think of, it seems to me now -- and we will be led to think of it more and more -- the Third World's existence not only as peripheral in relation to the center, but the existence of all interior Third Worlds at the center. The tendency and distribution of capitalism, which implies this "center-periphery" distinction, means that, at the same time, everything is exchanged -- the center detaching more and more in relation to the territory, being able to incarnate and be realized more and more directly at the periphery; conversely, zones of true periphery are hollowed out in the center, as if it was no longer enough to speak of Third Worlds, but that one had to assign Third Worlds in the process of being formed at the very center of the system. So there, obviously, that seems to me very ... very important for the future -- we'll see in what sense -- this formation of new Third Worlds or what we have sometimes called: "Fourth Worlds". The Fourth Worlds are the Third Worlds which are constituted in the very center because, that is, in the old territories of the center, because the center has been deterritorialized and can be realized at the very periphery.

To conclude this point, I would just like to say -- then, let's go back to my question, my third heading which was indeed "models of realization and isomorphy" -- : I can give several answers. I can say: yes, ultimately all State formations, all modern States are isomorphic with respect to the axiomatic of capital. This just doesn't mean "they are homogeneous". This simply means that it is the same axiomatic that is realized in different models. Another possible answer: no, ultimately, they are not even isomorphic. For example, the central States can be said to be isomorphic. Are the central States and the States... of the periphery, of the Third World, isomorphic? There are many things that would make us want to say "yes". I mean, there, each central State is no longer the same regime of the colony, it's true! But this was almost replaced by the isomorphism. I mean, to me, it seems obvious that if you take the large central States, each has its isomorphs in the Third World. For example, the Central African Republic regime, there, the... [Jean-Bedel] Bokassa,¹⁴ right, ... very isomorphic for France, fine. There are African States that are very isomorphic to England; there are States, as someone was saying just now, there are States that are isomorphic to the Federal Republic of Germany. Each has its own; there are some very curious isomorphic relationships, yet there is very great heterogeneity between these States.

Fine, what would that mean? Ultimately, we can speak of an isomorphy between these quite heterogeneous States, but I am saying: ultimately as well, we can very well say the axiomatic sustains a certain polymorphy. And in fact, the axiomatic of capital implies or sustains some States which are capitalist both in relation to production and through the mode of production; some States which are neither capitalist through the relation of production nor through the mode

of production, and which will nevertheless be models of realization in relation to the axiomatic of capital; and finally some States, as is typical of a number of Third World States, which are [Pause] capitalist in relation to production, and not through the mode of production. And all this defines axiom coronas (*couronnes*), distinct axiom layers, and at the same time, with the transfer of types of axioms from one point to another. Why? Because, once again, I am trying to emphasize what there is in the global economy: it is the more and more... more and more deterritorialized character of decision-making centers, namely that, ... it's stupid when one... when one thinks in fact of a kind of global government as hidden, which makes the decisions. Even the Trilateral [Commission] isn't that, it's not that.¹⁵ The decision-making centers are really more and more in a state of disconnection from the territories.

As a result, a decision that would have global significance ... we ... we will always find multinationals there, but it could very well be made in Brazil, and as a function of the State of Brazil currently. [The decision] is not required to go through the central agencies, all that, because, in a way, there has been a detachment from the center through ... [Deleuze does not complete the sentence] As a result, once again, at the same time, the center can be directly established on the periphery and, on the other hand, the old center, the territorial center, can be hollowed out by real small peripheries which arise. Fine, then, I would say: yes, the ... axiomatic, in this case -- but we discover an idea dear to mathematicians – the axiomatic sustains, under certain conditions, not only a heterogeneity of models of realization, but sometimes a real polymorphy. Once again, the whole question for us is, what is ... what in all of this provides reasons ... to believe that ... this is not screwed (*foutu*), right? Good. What time is it?

A student: Half past twelve.

Deleuze: Half past twelve? Good. Shall we keep going, or have you had enough? Eh? Have you had enough?

A student: Almost ...

Deleuze: Okay, so let's stop, ok! Fine, I... well, I'll certainly finish next time. That's good, because what's going on with ...? Ah yes! Next time, also I ask you then, after Easter, we will do something different, ok! This will all be over. Think about what you want us to do, right! Ok, we'll talk about that a bit next time. [End of the session] [1: 53: 45]

Notes

¹ The few lines of exchange up to here are located on the recording at the Bibliothèque Nationale, but not on the recordings available at YouTube (hence, neither at Web Deleuze, nor on the Deleuze Seminars site).

² As was evident in this seminar's sessions 8 and 9, and the short session 11, on the axiomatic and the four problems specified by Deleuze, see plateau 13 (on the apparatus of capture), Proposition XIII. "Axiomatics and the present day situation", *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 460-473 (*Mille plateaux*, pp. 575-590).

³ On Clausewitz and these distinctions, see *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 419-421 (*Mille plateaux*, pp. 523-524).

⁴ Marx addresses this topic in *Capital*, vol. 3, ch. 15.

⁵ Robert Linhart, *Le sucre et la faim* (Paris : Minuit, 1980). Let us note that Deleuze needs to spell out the French word for hunger, *faim*, to avoid confusion with its homophone, *fin* (the end, the goal).

⁶ Lionel Stoléru was an economic advisor in the conservative government of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

⁷ Samir Amin was a Franco-Egyptian Marxist economist, who died in 2018.

⁸ In *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 571, note 66, Deleuze and Guattari say: « A movement in Marxist research formed on the basis of the works of Mario Tonti (*Operai e capitale* [Turin: G. Einaudi, 1971]; French translation, *Ouvriers et capital* [Paris: Bourgois, 1977]), then that of Italian autonomy and Antonio Negri, whose name was to analyze the new forms of work and the struggle against work. It was a question of showing simultaneously: 1) that the struggle against work is not an accidental or “marginal” phenomenon in capitalism, but one essential to the composition of capital (the growth in the proportion of constant capital), and 2) that this phenomenon engenders a new type of worldwide struggle – workers’ struggles, popular struggles, ethnic struggles – in every domain. See Antonio Negri, especially *Marx and Beyond: Lesson on the Grundrisse*, ed. Jim Fleming, trans. Harry Cleaver, Michael Ryan and Mauriuzion Viano (South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey, 1984); Karl Heinz Roth, *Die “andere” Arbeiterbewegung* (Munich: Trikont, 1974); and the current work in France of Yann Moulier, Alain and Danièle Guillermin, Benjamin Coriat, etc.” At the same time as this seminar occurred, the US journal *Semiotext(e)* published an issue in a new “Intervention Series” entitled “Italy: Autonomia, Post-Political Politics,” *Semiotext(e)* III.3 (1980), later re-published in a new edition, *Autonomia, new edition: Post-Political Politics* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2007).

⁹ On these distinctions, see the current seminar, sessions 8 and 9 (February 5 and February 26, 1980).

¹⁰ On this topic, Deleuze and Guattari say in *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 584, note 59: “Braudel shows how this center of gravity formed in northern Europe, but as the outcome of movements that, starting in the ninth and tenth centuries, put the European space of the North and the South in competition or rivalry with one another (this problem is not to be confused with that of the town-form and State-form, but does intersect with it). See « Naissance d'une économie-monde », in *Urbi*, 1 (September 1979), pp. 3-20” (*Mille plateaux*, p. 584, note 59).

¹¹ By James Burnham, see his *The Managerial Revolution* (New York: John Day, 1941) [*L'Ère des organisateurs* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1947)].

¹² Samir Amin, *Le développement inégal. Essai sur les formations sociales du capitalisme périphérique* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1973).

¹³ On the English alliance regarding American wheat, see session 8 (February 8, 1980).

¹⁴ Bokassa was President of the Central African Republic from 1966-1976 and then emperor under the name of Bokassa I, from 1976-1979.

¹⁵ The Trilateral Commission, founded by David Rockefeller in 1973, is a private non-government, non-partisan discussion group to foster discussion, cooperation and economic development between Japan, Western Europe and North America.