

**Gilles Deleuze**

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

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## **Part 1**

Before we continue, are there any points arising from last time that we need to go back over? Would you like more detail on anything, or shall we continue? [Pause] Then let's continue. [Pause]

We were advancing very gently and we arrived at the idea that by pushing the 'State' form far back into time, it becomes no longer merely a question of dating it further back, but of pushing it back to a point where this 'State' form no longer even presupposes a mode of production, and instead can be considered as directly plugged into groups, no longer even into agricultural communities, but into groups of hunter-gatherers.

And this nevertheless posed a problem, because this emergence of the imperial archaic State, which no longer even presupposes an agricultural mode of production, because it itself will create that (and we have seen under what conditions – in a certain sense it is the State and the town that forms the countryside and not the countryside that, little by little, in a sort of evolution, allows townships [*bourgades*] to emerge, then small villages, then towns) ... well, this is what will preoccupy us now: a kind of emergence where, every time an explanation of the State is proposed, one says to oneself: no, that already presupposes the State.

And it seems to me that we've come gotten really stuck here here, because at the level of Marx's schema of the despotic empire, it seemed we arrived at a kind of limit. The minimum presupposed by the emergence of the imperial State was the existence of independent agricultural communities, upon which was established the overcoding proper to the archaic State. But now, we say to ourselves: actually, with the most recent discoveries of archaeology, no, that's not the case.

It seems as if the State apparatus will perpetually never stop positing itself as *presupposing itself*. So we have to try to deal with this. I would say that in any case we should even capitalize on it, so as to better fix our position with regard to possible evolutionary schemas. You can now envisage the hypothesis toward which we're moving: how to distribute a field of coexistence where everything truly coexists *simultaneously* from the point of view of social formations; where groups or so-called primitive societies, State apparatuses, war machines, the countryside, towns – all that pre-exists, in a field of coexistence.

In that case, what are the relations of tension involved, what form do they take, and how to conceive a field of coexistence? And what are the consequences with regard to our position concerning evolutionism? This is the first point I would like to briefly consider today: a kind of hypothesis about a field of coexistence of all social formations at the same time.

The application of evolutionary schemas to human societies has been put in question in various quite different ways. The principal points in relation to which this question has been posed, or with regard to which [the schemas] have been effectively put in question, are: the discovery of an increasing number of schemas, across all cases of social formation, manifesting what could be called a 'zigzag' form, contrary to processes of *linear* evolution. Zig-zag schemas are interesting on condition that the zigzag is not conceived as successive. Maybe the zig-zag is a schema that will allow us to think coexistence. For example, Russian archaeologists have worked on zig-zag schemas that put in question an over-simplistic conception of evolution, notably when they have observed that, generally or usually, nomadism must not be thought as a state of affairs preceding sedentarization, but as the opposite, as a type of zigzag.<sup>1</sup> There is indeed a passage from itinerance to sedentarity, but there are also sedentary or sedentarized peoples, sedentary cultivators, who give themselves over to nomadizing; the famous nomads of the steppes seem actually to be nomads who have become so through a process of becoming; that is to say, they were sedentary cultivators who moved to nomadizing, in a type of zigzag.

The zigzag is not the only form under which an evolutionary schema can be put in question. There is also – I'm going very quickly – the famous theme of missing stages, stages of evolution which might be present in one place, but which are absent in another place. That is interesting because it allows us to make contractions at such moments, and to move towards a field of coexistence. It could perfectly well be that in one place, there are stages that are successive, but that in another place, on the contrary, it is as if both are born into coexistence alongside each other; or the stages could be completely lacking. Finally, evolutionism has also sometimes been put in question under the form of the discovery or affirmation that there would be certain *ruptures* [*coupures*], radical breaks.

Now, if you recall the theses we encountered in previous years, there is something I would like to go over again a bit more precisely. According to the theses of Pierre Clastres, the ethnologist who died in an accident while in the middle of his work, if I sum up his principal theses, notably in his book *Society against the State*, what are these theses? I think that the innovation of Clastres's theses rests on two points. First point: he tells us that what one calls 'primitive' societies are not societies that *are unaware of the State*, they are not societies which are not *evolved* enough or not *developed* enough to furnish a State apparatus, they are rather, in the strongest and most literal sense, societies *against* the State, that is to say, societies that have set up mechanisms for the warding off [*conjuration*] of the State apparatus. There is obviously a great problem with the nature of these mechanisms of warding off because (you can already see the problem) one must have a presentiment, even if obscure – I'm not saying a clear idea – of what one wards away. What is this dread that is felt?

In a way, I think – and here I'm not attempting to make a scholarly, erudite comparison, I'm just trying to pinpoint something so that the idea becomes clearer – that Clastres took up and renewed an idea for which you will already find an equivalent in another earlier, great ethnologist, namely [Marcel] Mauss. In his famous studies on the mechanisms of the gift in primitive societies, Mauss holds the following thesis: that because the mechanisms of gifts and counter-gifts are accompanied by great expenditures, by great forms of consumption [*consommations*], and even great acts of extravagance [*consumptions*], it is like they are a means of warding off what? It's like a means of warding off the accumulation of wealth.<sup>2</sup> This is a very interesting thesis: would there be, in certain social formations, mechanisms that would have the function of warding off the formation of something? It is certainly

conceivable. But, once again, this already takes us into a great problem ... an interesting problem, which for me, it will be necessary to tackle: what presentiment, and what type of collective presentiment, does this assume relatively to what is warded off?

Let's assume that Clastres was right. Primitive societies are not societies that would be in an insufficient stage of development or evolution and which would remain incapable of furnishing a matter sufficient for the emergence of the State apparatus. Not at all! These would be societies which would make a function of mechanisms of warding off. I specify: necessarily, mechanisms of *anticipation / warding off* [*anticipation – conjuration*]. Again, there would have to be some kind of collective anticipation of what is warded off. Now, Clastres, in all his work, once again prematurely interrupted, strives above all to analyse these mechanisms of warding off. And he cites two principal ones: what is known as *chieftainship* [*chefferie*] in so-called primitive groups (in relation to which he tries to show that chieftainship, far from being a germ of the State apparatus, is on the contrary a means of preventing concentration, condensation, that is to say a means, finally, of preventing the formation, proper to the State apparatus, of the distinction *governing / being governed* – and here his analysis of chieftainship is excellent; anyone who is interested in these matters can see this point). Then, on the other hand, he assigns – and this suits us fine, or it would have done last year, because now it is no longer our problem – another mechanism. He says that what also prevents and wards off the formation of a State apparatus in the primitive societies, is *war*. The role of primitive war, according to Clastres, is precisely to ward off the formation of the State apparatus. Why? By maintaining polemical relations of antagonism between segments of lineages, between segmentary lineages. So here too what is involved is a preventing of a kind of union that would give to the State apparatus a possible matter for it, a kind of concentration. That, I would say, is Clastres's first important thesis.

You can see well enough that the second aspect immediately flows from this. The second aspect, necessarily, is this: if it is true that primitive societies are not societies which are unaware of the State – that is to say, are not developed enough to furnish a matter for the State apparatus – if it is true that these are societies *against* the State, that then makes the emergence of this thing that literally becomes more and more monstrous more difficult to explain. I say 'literally', because one could say that a monster is precisely what only manifests itself by presupposing itself, it is the apparition that never ceases to refer back to its own presupposition. Thus it becomes absolutely monstrous. How does it emerge, then? If in truth even primitive societies have mechanisms for warding off, or inhibitors, how to explain that the State gels [*prenne*]?<sup>3</sup> I say 'gels' almost in the culinary sense, when one says that 'something takes'.

And in fact we have seen that on some points, Clastres was obviously right. But what already interests me enormously – and this is why I am returning to this point – is that, maybe, at the limit, we would no longer have any reason to talk about 'primitive' societies, or assign this term at all: we would rather talk about *certain* social formations which eminently present the mechanisms of anticipation / warding off.

You can already see where I want to get to. So my hypothesis is getting more precise: my way of arriving at the definition of a field of coexistence of all social formations would be if I could define social formations no longer at all in an evolutionist manner, but through kinds of process one could call *machinic* which correspond to them, machinic processes corresponding to such types of formation. So I would say with regard to primitive societies: let's suppose that, if one joins up Mauss's data on the mechanisms of the gift as warding off

the accumulation of wealth and Clastres's data (chieftainship, primitive war as warding off the formation of the State apparatus), it becomes possible to say that there are social formations that are constructed, not exclusively (that goes without saying), but eminently, on mechanisms of anticipation / warding off.

I'd like to remind you of something we discussed in a previous year, namely: what's today called gangs [*bandes*]. I'm moving past primitives, one can get to gangs, and you can see that, perhaps, mechanisms of anticipation / warding off appear in particular in primitive societies, but they also show up in other social formations. So maybe this makes possible a typology of social formations of a new type. Perhaps not totally new. But I would say that, as we saw before, these gangs are rather curious. There are specialists on gangs today, for example, the gangs of street children in South America. There is something important in the whole problem of gangs. There are certain texts by Clastres that absolutely chime with descriptions of gangs. In gangs, there are also formations of chieftainship. There is chieftainship but nothing resembling the State apparatus. Again, I remember a beautiful text like the kind studying gangs of street children in Bogota that said<sup>4</sup>: not only do these boys die very quickly, obviously, but when they grow up, those who survive do not manage to adapt to the milieu. These are gangs of criminals, they are dangerous, totally dangerous; but they do not manage to adapt to the milieu. Why? Because the milieu is too hierarchised for them, too structured. Work it out: their milieu functions much more under the form of centralized instances of the 'State apparatus' type, whereas with gangs of street children, there are all sorts of mechanisms that function precisely to ward off the formation of a central power, a whole play of alliances that correspond very well with the texts by [Clastres].<sup>5</sup>

Anyway, I won't elaborate on that. We could say that gangs present something similar. I recall for the sake of memory that in a previous year, we tried to define a certain difference between high-society groups [*groupes de mondanité*] or mundane groups [*groupes mondains*], and groups of sociability. And we noted that high-society hierarchies and social hierarchies are not at all the same thing, and that moreover in high-society groups, there are chiefs, there are also chieftainships, there are even stars [*étoiles*], but they are not at all of the same type as in societies of sociability. So one could say, which would suit me, that primitive societies, gangs of boys, high-society groups, all go together, because they fundamentally put mechanisms of anticipation / warding off into play.

But I would say that obviously a second problem follows from this that gains great urgency from the perspective of Clastres, with regard to Clastres's theses. It is that, once again, if primitive societies, and other societies of the 'gang' type, ward off the formation of a centralized State apparatus, how to explain that it gels, that it makes its appearance, and where it appears? Alongside what? Why do I ask 'alongside what?' This is something we established last time, it's important. The secret is, of course, that not everything is the State. Why? Because the State is everywhere. I'm saying it's already there. Well, no, it is not everywhere, rather (how to put this?): it's already there at the same time as what is *not* the State. It's a field of coexistence. That will make zigzags possible, and will produce a whole typology so that, depending on the particular path, one will find oneself faced with societies defined by mechanisms of anticipation / warding off, where there will be no State – but simultaneously and alongside, other groups, which will be founded on another machinic process, on different mechanisms, will form States.

How do all these [forms] get along? And what will be the result? Well, I say: the problem that becomes more and more urgent from the point of view of a thesis like Clastres's, is this:

okay, there are social formations that ward off, they ward off the formation of the State, but again this is one more reason for asking: how to explain the emergence of the State? Should one invoke economic reasons? Clastres is very interesting for us on this point, because, in a whole chapter of *Society against the State*, he says: well, obviously not. For the same mode of production, you have what? Sometimes you have a State apparatus, sometimes you do not have a State apparatus. In other words, – I'm thinking of a page in Clastres where he develops the following theme – if you call the 'Neolithic revolution' the apparition of the State, then one cannot in fact find an economic basis for it. And this backs up all the more what we've been saying, since we've seen that there are reasons to no longer date the apparition of the State at the Neolithic, but to push it right back to the Paleolithic.

Hence Clastres was indeed forced to invoke a kind of fundamental break. On this point, he became almost structuralist. At the juncture he had arrived at, it was necessary to invoke a break. Of course, he did not content himself with simply affirming a radical break that would have brought the State, but you can see that in a way (without claiming to speak for him, since I do not know what direction his work would have taken), he was searching more and more for possible causalities of the formation of the State. Although he sought them in a very curious direction: prophetism, Indian prophetism. He became more and more preoccupied with studying certain phenomena of Indian prophetism, in which Indian prophetism would introduce – precisely *against the chiefs*, first of all directed against the chiefs – very strange consequences. Indian prophetism at its base – but one could also say this just as much of Jewish prophetism, this account is quite curious – ... In this schema, the very idea of prophetism, as fundamentally directed against the chiefs, would bring with it, or was susceptible to bringing with it, the formation of an infinitely greater power than that possessed by the chiefs. But even so this was a slightly bizarre explanation: invoking prophetism in order to take account of the State apparatus. I cite it for the record. All I can say is ... his work was interrupted.

But I ask: in what respect does Clastres, despite all the progress that he makes in this regard, remain within an evolutionist perspective? It is because, it seems evident to me, when he maintained that 'primitive societies are societies against the State, and so when the State emerges, there is a rupture', it is not by introducing a rupture that one breaks evolution. At most one introduces a mutation into evolution. This is why our own schema last time demanded on the contrary that the State should be there from the beginning. Hence I return to my theme of 'field of coexistence'. I mean to say that from a certain point of view, Clastres's theses are very fruitful for us; and yet from another point of view, well, there is a point where they no longer bring us what we are looking for.

What strikes me (along with everyone else) is the extent to which the mechanism of causality, or the causal process (and this is not what one might have expected), is somehow infinitely richer when one thinks of the sciences known as 'natural' – physical, biological – than the human sciences. I say it's curious, because it makes me think of a remark by Hegel, a good remark. He said: there is something very bizarre. One always defines 'man' as a rational being. Now, if you compare the natural sciences and history, you will see that the natural sciences have a very strong concept of rationality, and that one finds there an adequation between the real and reason – one is told of a nature submitted to laws that are the laws of reason – whereas when one approaches the domain of 'man', everything becomes a complete stew. Therefore, 'man', defined as the reasonable being, seems himself at the same time to only offer a matter delivered over to contingency, to caprices, to pure arbitrariness. I would say: one could say the same thing at the level of causality. Strangely enough, if you consider

the progress of the sciences – the progress that physics, chemistry, and biology have made, with regard to the refinement, the complication of causal [*causaux*] processes ... Wait, is it ‘*causaux*’, or ‘*causals*’? Which one? Ok, *causals*, fine.

**A student:** ‘Causaux’ is ridiculous.

**Deleuze:** ... Particularly among physicists (really I’m saying things here that everyone is vaguely aware of), where microphysics has produced extraordinarily complex schemas of causality, very important schemas of molecular causality. Biology has made progress precisely by introducing increasing complication into evolutionary schemas, and has advanced and elaborated forms of causality that are truly very interesting. If you compare that with the human sciences, the latter don’t come out well. I mean that when the schemas of causality are applied to ‘man’ one gets talk of motivation and all that, but it remains impoverished. Is it that one could not make use of these, without too many metaphors? But why couldn’t one tell oneself: but after all, why shouldn’t human matter above all be proposed as a problem for the elaboration of highly complex schemas of causality? It’s clear enough why the human sciences are so behind, you know. It’s because such fear exists of falling into finality and proposing finalist explanations that people becomes wary, and so they end up preferring to stick to the flattest kind of materialism.

I will try, not to copy, but to borrow a schema that has presided in particular over a great deal of renewal in *physical* causality. It is the schema of two waves (‘wave [*onde*]’, as in ‘undulatory [*ondulatoire*]’) or of the inverted wave. We are told, very roughly, that the coexistence of two waves is not at all contradictory, that it would be even rather be complementary. Again, I’m not applying a physical schema, I’m in the process of making, as a function of ... [*sentence unfinished*], I’m taking the term ‘wave’, which everyone knows I’m borrowing from physics, but I’m leaving aside the whole background in physics.

To make my hypothesis, I give myself a human social field. Today will be devoted to hypotheses, schemas of hypotheses. And I suppose that this human social field is traversed by a wave that I will call ‘convergent’, or ‘centripetal’. A convergent or centripetal wave traverses diverse social formations. [*He writes on the board*] You see? It converges towards what? Towards a point, a point of convergence. At the level of this point, the wave reverses itself. Trust me, eh? [*Laughter*] It’s as if I’m telling you a story, but one doesn’t see where the people are in it, and then one attempts to put the people into it. You see? You have social field traversed by a centripetal or convergent wave, converging towards a point, towards a point *x* that I do not situate yet. Is it in the field or beyond the field? No matter. And at this point, the point of convergence, the wave annuls itself, inverts itself, that is to say, becomes centrifugal, divergent [*Deleuze still writing on the board*]. This schema of two waves is to be found in physics and is well known, and what is interesting is that the inversion of the wave is not at all just a possibility. It is, as physicists say, a reality of a different order. You have the convergent wave, the point of convergence where the wave is annulled, and at this point of convergence, it annuls itself since, precisely, it is another wave that replaces it, namely a divergent or centrifugal wave.

Why is this useful for me? Consider several so-called primitive communities. You will recall that we have already encountered the necessity last time to accept that primitive communities are not at all independent from each other, but are already in relation. I had put the problem aside, but we will need to establish what type of relation there can be between these primitive communities. Here, as I rediscover the problem, all the more reason not to abandon it; but I

am not quite ready yet. What would this convergent wave be? Well, it's obvious that – and I do not think this contradicts the data, even that of Clastres – the societies (again, this is why I insisted on the following point) that possess the mechanisms of warding off State power are also vectors that tend towards the formation of a State power. I mean: they do not ward it off without anticipating it in a certain manner, without having an idea, however confused, a collective idea, however confused, that they ward off. And in fact what does that mean concretely? One can see a very simple rationale here – I am saying very simple things – that becomes absolutely concrete. The more abstract it is, the more concrete ... that is my only consolation.

Everyone knows very well that primitive societies are not societies without power. They have, moreover, all kinds of centers of power. They are full of them. This is even why they ward off, it is even through that that they ward off. If they ward off the formation of a centralized State apparatus, it is because they ward off, because they inhibit, because they prevent the resonance of, centers of power. This is the great mechanism, I think, of warding off: to prevent the resonance of centers of power. If I can say very elementary, rudimentary things: to prevent the face of the father, the face of the colonel, the face of the President of the Republic, resonating. To prevent the resonance of centers of power is not to lack centers of power. I would say that these societies are all the same traversed by a wave of convergence, by a centripetal and convergent wave. What is the centripetal and convergent wave? It is the vector that tends to make all these formations of power resonate. And for these societies, this is what must be inhibited, this is what must be warded off. Nevertheless, the vector that tends towards this concentration, it exists, it traverses these societies.

Another ethnologist very close to Clastres, namely [Jacques] Lizot, who worked on a different set of Indians to Clastres's, in a book published by Éditions du Seuil entitled *The Circle of ... Fires* or is it *Fire*?

**A Student:** *Circle of Fire*.

**Deleuze:** It's *Fires*, I think; I no longer remember.<sup>6</sup> Lizot gives a very effective presentation of a case, a very useful one for my purposes, of shamanic initiation, an initiation of a shaman. There is a convocation of all the animal spirits, the caiman [alligator] spirit, the woodpecker spirit, other kinds of spirit, all kinds of spirit, each with its own power. And there is the great shaman, the initiator ... In normal times, these spirits are like micro-powers, each with its own domain. There is one that reigns over the outside, there is another that reigns over the encampment, there is another that reigns at the frontier, one over the hunt, one over women's work. In the shamanic initiation, the great Initiator will trace lines, even if they are very fictive lines, abstract lines, between each spirit, lines that bind one spirit to another. Between the woodpecker spirit and the caiman spirit, a magical line will be traced. Then, he will obtain a kind of star which is nicely described in detail by Lizot.<sup>7</sup> There is a kind of star, and then, in the middle of the star, one plants the mast. One plants the mast. So you can see in this operation what I call, under certain conditions, the putting in resonance of centers of power.

But in this Indian society, this is precisely only at play in shamanic initiation, in very particular conditions that must not be exceeded, and again, it holds only for the initiate. If there happen to be youngsters who see the ceremony, they laugh. This [practice] did not gel within the society. Everything happens as if the point of convergence was well marked, but as either properly maintained under artificial conditions that ensure that it will not *take possession* of the social group; or else put on the outside, under the conditions of secret

initiation. You understand? So I can say: here you have your convergent, centripetal wave, and I can say that it is this that simultaneously has the two properties. This is why the schema of the wave clarifies things for me. Perhaps for some of you it makes things even more obscure, and in that case, leave it aside, no matter. For my part, it is clarifying, because I can say: let us therefore imagine this social field; here you have the convergent wave, this is what has the double property of warding off and anticipating. It anticipates the point of resonance, the central point, it is by virtue of this that it is convergent and centripetal. But, at the same time, it wards off, because if it arrives at this point, it cancels itself out. That is a very nice mechanism of warding off / anticipation.

It cancels itself in order to be replaced by what? Obviously, at the point of convergence, there is the complete inversion of the wave; and we have seen, so I can go quickly, that such an inversion of the wave exists. What you have there, on the contrary, is a State apparatus, what I called an archaic empire. And, at that moment, a true inversion of signs comes about, or what one could call ‘an inversion of messages’. An inversion of signs or an inversion of messages, under what form?

Let us return to our hunter-gatherers. They circulate wild seeds. The man of the archaic empire puts them in a bag, and that produces this perfect phenomenon of hybridization which I insisted on last time. It is through this that the archaic empire invents agriculture. But at this precise point, there is a complete inversion of the meaning [*sens*] of signs, there is an inversion of the wave. The point of the archaic empire is the point where it ceases to be an importer in order to become an exporter. This is what we will call an inversion of messages. It has received wild seeds from the hunter-gatherers; it stocks them and brings about hybridizations, first by chance, and then in a more and more controlled fashion; and at that moment, the town becomes an exporter. It imposes its own hybrids.

So there I have strictly the coexistence of my two waves, and I can say, with regard to primitive groups, that it is not at all ... [*unfinished sentence*] If you like, it is here that I would separate myself from Clastres in the final state of his work, because in Clastres, it seems to me that counter-State societies are still pre-existing societies. Here we’re back with the old settling of accounts (which I think has hardly even begun) between archaeologists and ethnologists. As long as they do not settle their accounts, nothing will work. That is to say, between the archaeologists who teach us that imperial States, imperial forms of empire, date back to the Paleolithic, and the ethnologists who continue to study groups as if the archaeological map ... In fact, in my view, no correspondence exists between the ethnological map and the archaeological map. But in our schema, it becomes relatively clear. Let us suppose that the primitive groups are traversed by this sort of convergent wave. I can say that they anticipate it, yes, they anticipate it because in effect this convergent wave tends towards a *point* of convergence that would mark the resonance of the formations of power. I can say that they ward it off. Why? Because they literally put this point beyond their territory or, when it is inside their territory, it constitutes a ritual aspect of the territory, which is a way of partitioning it off [*cloisonner*].

And, if I install myself at the point of convergence, at this very moment of the inverse wave, then I have before me a territory of empire. It is the centrifugal wave, the signs are inverted, and the village becomes an exporter to the countryside. And it seems to me that I no longer have any difficulty – well, for me, it works, I don’t know about you – in conceiving the strict coexistence of the two waves, and the inversion of the one into the other. Which allows me to say what? Well, you see where I want to get to: I was trying to give a precise definition of

social formations, but (for various reasons) without making reference to modes of production, but instead to machinic processes. Here, I have at least two of them. I would say: well, when does the State apparatus emerge? It is a type of threshold. It is a threshold of (let us use this word) *consistency*. It is the point of convergence. The primitive formations are traversed by a convergent wave, but the convergent wave, precisely, is annulled at this point of convergence. The wave, at this very moment, reverses itself. The coexistence of the two waves, that is to say: I am already defining my two types of formation – we will see that there are others – via two processes that I can call machinic processes.

I will call ‘primitive formations’ or ‘derived’ formations those which essentially present mechanisms of wardings off / anticipations. I will call ‘State formations’ those which present a phenomenon ... or rather those which present a different process, a completely different process: the apparatus of capture with the inversion of the wave or the inversion of signs.

We’ll see where this leads us. I would say that, in fact, the State apparatus is a threshold of consistency *beyond* so-called primitive groups, but ‘beyond’ does not mean ‘after’. It is already there. You see what I mean finally: The point is that primitive people have only ever existed as they exist now, that is, they have only ever existed in a state of survival, throughout history.

Well, I don’t know if this long schema makes anything clearer. I’m continuing it anyway because this will perhaps become clearer later. Immediately, I tell myself, I’ve gone too quickly, because ‘threshold of consistency’ ... As I’ll say once again, the State apparatus is a threshold of consistency *beyond* the so-called primitive groups of hunter-gatherers, but this threshold of consistency, do not deceive yourself, is already there the whole time. It must simply be said that the primitive wave annuls itself at the point of this threshold. But throughout history, in the social field, there had been the wave, and then its annulment or inversion. I find this schema enlightening, because ... not you? No? Okay. No, not at all? Fine, okay ... Maybe next time, I don’t know. Oh well! You will understand, you will be illuminated, because, I tell myself, I have gone too quickly this time. This threshold of consistency, is there only one of them? Is there only one of them? I will have to be much clearer. Is there just one of them alone? Or must our schema be further complicated?

[*Interruption of the recording*] [46:00]

## Part 2

... the States, the towns. And in fact one can see why, in the main, one can say that both imply each other. Both imply each other, but perhaps they imply each other in a more or less loose manner, to a greater or lesser extent. One cannot envisage a State Apparatus that would not include the germ of towns, and one cannot envisage towns that would not include an embryo of the State apparatus. But already the study of which one is predominant is very important here.

What reason do we have to identify the ‘town’ form and the ‘State’ form? Too many authors, too many sociologists (but happily many) attempt to locate the difference, but in my opinion it is rather the historians who have made the most serious studies of this problem, which will become very important for us. I would say: there is always a predominance at work. It is not the same solution, or it is not the same social formation, the ‘town’ formation and the ‘State’ formation. What shows us this right away? Everything! Everything. Whichever way you turn.

I can cite a whole series if you have the time. Think about it and maybe you can come up with further examples; feel free to interrupt me if you do.

What I would say is that the States were very suspicious of their towns. It is difficult to understand something in history if one doesn't see the extraordinary suspicion and tension there is between the 'town' form and the 'State' form. There's no reason why they should get on with each other. Why? Well, I'll come out straightforwardly with what I alluded to last time. It is all the same quite curious. Let's take the history of Europe. Let's very quickly sketch out a history. But I'm also once more taking up the question: how is that nascent capitalism... (it's actually quite strange) that nascent capitalism... Its birth can be discovered; that took a long while, and like everything that is born, it's already constituted at birth, just like the State. It is not an evolution. How does it happen that nascent capitalism had to pass through the 'State' form? Because that does not go without saying. Something big happened; a great coup took place.

Why would it not pass through the 'town' form? We haven't seen the difference yet. We haven't seen the difference yet, but if I ask this question, I'm assuming it might offer a hint about what that [difference] might be. In fact, that almost happened. Capitalism came very close to passing through the 'town' form. If I just give slightly more precise landmarks: between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century, where mechanisms of capitalism were already in very much in place: industrial mechanisms, financial mechanisms (again, this is not the 19<sup>th</sup> century), very advanced financial mechanisms, mercantile mechanisms, industrial mechanisms, all that is there... well, what does one see, between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> century? One sees a kind of bipolar world: the towns of the North, the towns of the South and between the two, what? Between the two: the town fairs, the famous town fairs of Champagne and Brie. There is plenty of competition. Is this the 'State' form? Not at all, not at all! There is a collapse of the 'State' form. It is not there that we find the 'State' form emerging. Think of how the great towns at this point stand up to the nascent States, for example the English State, the Norwegian State. What happened was very curious, this whole struggle between 'State' forms and 'town' forms. Now, from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century, the great economic and political power tends – I'm not saying that it happens exclusively – to pass through the 'town' form. The State will win out over it, but why? Again, this is a question.

Everything played out between the very powerful towns of the North, and the very powerful villages of the South, the Italian towns; and the fairs of Champagne which form a continuous market. That should already tell us something about the 'town' form, as we will see later. There are six big fairs in Champagne which form a continuous market, because each of the six lasts two months, so that they form a temporal belt, a continuous temporal market. Under those conditions, they contain everything within the 'town' form. The arrangements or struggles between North and South... *[unfinished sentence]*

At this point there is a State that is already rather well-formed, which is France. And France had its chance (which is very interesting, perhaps that would have changed everything), namely: capitalism could have had a French center, for the privileged situation of France relates, at this moment, precisely to the proximity of the fairs of Champagne, and there were all sorts of events related to this between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> century, during which it attempted to take control of North-South relations. But it doesn't happen at all. It doesn't happen at all, because the towns are very clever. They establish a route of towns that goes

through Germany and Italy that above all avoids France; while on the other hand, there is the maritime path from the Mediterranean to the North Sea.

One of the best contemporary historians, Fernand Braudel, puts it very well: there is a kind of opportunity, political and economic, at this moment, for the State, for the State in France, but it does not happen. The towns escape. And if I read a page of Braudel from an excellent book entitled *Civilisation matérielle et capitalisme*<sup>8</sup>, this is what he says: “Every time there are two runners [competing].” And he will even say that they are “the hare and the tortoise”, which is interesting, because you will immediately divine who is the hare and who is the tortoise: “every time there are two runners”. Both terms are interesting to me, and we will need them later on: “Every time there are two runners: the State and the town. The State usually won.” Usually the State wins, okay, but at what price? It turns out that this is indeed what happens: it’s the ‘State’ form that wins out over the ‘town’ form. “The State usually won and the town then remained subject and under a heavy yoke. On the other hand, [with] the first great urban centres of Europe, … the town that won entirely, at least in Italy, Flanders and Germany.”

I will multiply the examples. Think for example about the Absolute Monarchy in France. One might say that the French State is particularly centralized: Paris is the center. Yes ..., but no, it’s not true. I mean, historically, it is not true. Think of the extraordinary suspicion that the ‘State’ form has for the towns, and inversely, and to the extreme suspicion that the towns have for the ‘State’ form. There is a whole struggle, and I believe that one cannot even understand what is generally called ‘class struggle’ without also taking into account the struggle between the ‘town’ form and the ‘State’ form. There is an abundance of examples. How can a town be taken into the ‘State’ form? How is it that it resists? I mentioned the French Monarchy: think of the history of the Fronde. King Louis XIV will not forget what Paris is. Paris is not only a capital. If you like, the true form of the town is never the ‘capital’, because the ‘capital’ is already the town subjected to the State. But what is the true form of town? It is – one must not confuse them – the *metropolis*. And the metropolis is the town *as* ‘town’ form, whilst the capital is the town *as* subordinated to the form ‘State’. Nevertheless the true town is: the metropolises. Well, Louis XIV will never have much trust in Paris. The town, first of all, is a strange place of riots, it is a strange place of classes. As a later echo of that, think of the famous history (here I am making quite a leap, but this is for those of you heading in a certain direction) of the Commune. That great reckoning. Yes, I think the last stage in the reckoning between the ‘State’ form and ‘town’ form in France was the Commune... perhaps also with the Occupation, with the German Occupation, when they relocated... when French State relocated to Vichy, when, there was something amazing because Paris was also... and not simply, not obviously, because it could occupy, for entirely different reasons... [Deleuze does not finish] Anyway, the reckonings ...

Something else comes to mind, for those who know that aspect of history: the Renaissance. How do certain Italian towns let themselves be taken by the ‘State’ form at the moment of the Renaissance? The Renaissance, that would be a fundamental moment. From the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, one could say that everything happens through the towns; the ‘town form’ resists. The ‘State’ form is not going strong. But then how do the Spanish towns, for example Barcelona, allow themselves to be taken by the ‘State’ form? Every State, every ‘State’ form, has its own procedures for disciplining the towns. So there would be the Spanish case, then there would be very particular cases, as with Florence with the Medicis. The Medicis take hold of the town and submit it to a very strange ‘State’ form. But with regard to Italy, one will have to wait a very long time, and they still they have problems with the ‘State’ form now, very particular problems which have a whole history.

Now I leave this whole aspect of Europe, even though it appears very important to me. Indeed, I would say that in capitalism, it was the 'State' form that ended up winning. But that did not happen straightforwardly. It could have been the 'town' form. Are you following?

I can add all sorts of examples. The confrontation ... Take Islam, how can one think of Islam independently of the 'town' form? It's obvious. And what is Islam plugged into? It will simultaneously lead its fight against and conduct agreements with two great 'State' forms, which however it certainly does not take as model, on the contrary. The tension is such that, every time you have a town or towns that prosper, you have to ask yourself which State it was nourished by. Venice, the growth of Venice, is a veritable anthropophagy of the Byzantine Empire. There are oppositions, enormous historical tensions, between the 'town' and 'State' forms. With regard to Islamic towns, I can point you to a book in which many of these themes are developed: *Les équipements de pouvoir* [*The Equipment of Power*], published by 10/18, a book by [François] Fourquet and [Lion] Murard.<sup>9</sup> They develop many aspects of the relations between town and State, but precisely (they make no secret of it) through an appeal to Braudel. I think that among the historians, it is Braudel who has gone furthest in the analysis of all this. Now, the towns of Islam, of Islamism, are not in the desert, but they do also have relations to the desert. We are talking about Medina and Mecca: Mohammed at Medina and Mohammed at Mecca. This is a system of towns. It is fundamentally a system of town dwellers [*citadin*], in which the towns are separated, to speak schematically, by the desert. And the relations of this Islamic ensemble with, on the one hand, the Persian Empire, and on the other hand the Byzantine Empire, are decisive; the whole domination of Islam will be a victory of the 'town' form in relation to the imperial form.

Okay, is that all? No, let's go back again. Let's try to understand and get more of a feel for how the 'town' form is not the same thing as 'State' form. Let's go back to the period between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century. You can see that so far we've got Islamic towns, towns of Northern Europe where capitalism is elaborated, Southern towns, the Italian towns, where capitalism is also elaborated, the town-fairs of Champagne. Well, to the North, there is a community of particularly powerful towns, known as the Hansea, the Hanseatic community. The Hanseatic community does not strictly have any 'State' form. It has been extensively studied, and the documents are very precise: no 'State' form. It has colossal power, it groups together a number of towns, linking together between sixty and a hundred and sixty towns that meet in so-called general assemblies, but most of the time, they do not attend, only about a third of them [the towns] attend these general assemblies. They fight England, and they impose law on the whole of the North. They have no functionaries. They do not have any juridical personality. They don't have an army. Neither functionaries, nor army, nor juridical personality: this is not a 'State' form.

I won't try again to define the two forms. I would say: it's obvious that it's not the same thing. Let us go back once more; I'm just trying to amass materials. There is an article by Francois Chatélet which I like immensely. In it, Chatélet puts in question the formula current in antiquity: the City-State [*l'État-Cité*]. One talks of City-States. This would in effect be a way of making out that there are two kinds of State, City-States on the one hand, and then territorial States on the other. Maybe one can say that at some level, but maybe it's more valuable to say something else: why not openly say that cities are *not* States? There is no reason to identify both powers. Once again, a primitive society without a State is full of power and of formations of power, but that doesn't make it a State apparatus from the point

of view of the typology we are seeking to map out. Athens is not a State. The Athenian city, that had nothing to do with the State. And Chatélet did something which seemed particularly interesting to me, he said: there is an idea proper both to the city and the town that is not at all an idea of the State, and that is the idea of a power of magistrature. The magistrate would have been an invention of the town. It's true, you'll see. Yes, the Hansea have *magistrates*. They are of the 'chamber of commerce' type. In Venice, there is also a chamber of commerce. The State, for its part, invented the 'functionary' form. There is bureaucracy in both cases. There is a bureaucracy of the town and a bureaucracy of the State. But I do not believe at all that the functionary and the magistrate are the same thing.

What is more, throughout Athenian history – and this backs up Chatélet – in the whole of Classical Athens, there is an absolute will to *ward off* ... But wait, what d'you know, perhaps our mechanisms of anticipation / warding off are at play here too. Perhaps the 'town' form in its own way wards off / anticipates the 'State' form, but in a totally different way than with so-called primitive groups. You can see that this will greatly complicate our schema already, because primitive groups ward off / anticipate both the 'town' form and the 'State' form. But the 'town' form, in a completely different way, also wards off / anticipates the 'State' form. And the State, for its part, will capture – being an apparatus of capture, it will capture – the primitive groups, and in a completely different way, will also capture the towns. One would then have a very rich milieu of coexistence for explaining tensions, struggles. Why point this out? And why go back to ancient Athens? Well, in order to precisely to verify that, in fact, from antiquity onwards (some very good writers make this observation) there are two systems that must not be confused: a *city-town* system and a *palace-temple* system. For example, Crete is truly an empire. There is a Cretan empire. Knossos is truly an imperial system, it is a temple-palace system, palace-temple. With the Myceneans, who in a certain way took their model from Crete, one feels that there is a shift, that it is no longer that. The Greeks themselves did not know. I would say: there are empires, there are indeed archaic imperial formations in Greece. Yes, okay. Mycenae: yes, of course. With Crete at the horizon, etc. And yet one can feel that there is something else going on there. It is much more like a 'city' system already. There is a nice text by Vernant where he compares Knossos and Mycenae, and says: but it is very different, it has a similar air, but it is very different, it is not the same system.

Take another, more basic example: what is known as the Babylonian empire, as compared with the Egyptian empire. The Babylonian empire is not an empire. Ultimately, I would say, trying to make a diagnosis, it is not an Empire, it is a network of cities. It is a network of cities. It is not possible to understand Sumer, for example, unless one already sees it as truly an urban system. Whereas Egypt, that is an imperial system, it is an archaic imperial system. Then you will say to me: yes, but there are towns from the moment there is Empire and there is the embryo of Empire from the moment there is a town. Yes and no. Because everything changes, depending on whether the town is a concretion of empire or whether the appearance of the State apparatus is an extension of the town. Everything changes depending on the dominant factor.

I recall a very beautiful text by Braudel that says: how to explain – it is very curious, he says – that the Orient has always been a *rebel* material within the urban system. He gives two great examples: India and China. There, the towns never develop themselves, they are completely subjected. Why do they rebel against the urban system? It doesn't catch on, the urban system in the archaic East. And why doesn't it catch on in the archaic Orient? Obviously because the town only develops as a dependency of the palace. In India, there is a

caste system that will be profoundly resistant to the urban organization. In China, there is a system of partitioning that means that the towns are completely subjected. Subjected to what? To the imperial form. In the East – roughly, very schematically – one could say: yes, if the town does not catch on, with regard to the question posed by Braudel, it is because what dominates is the form of the temple-palace – think of the old plan of Peking. Peking truly developed as a direct dependency of the palace. There, you truly have the subjection of the towns to the ‘State form’. And that was the Oriental solution. All the solutions are good; but it was essentially because of this Oriental archaic solution that our famous despotic empires are known from Marx onward as ‘Asiatic empires’, even though one finds them elsewhere.

But, it is at the same time – and I insist on the coexistence ... Where is the ‘town’ form invented then, leaving aside Europe in the 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century, which is already very late? Where is the ‘town’ form invented? We can reply straightforwardly: it is the Mediterranean, it is the Aegean world, they are the ones who invented the urban world, the world of cities: the Pelasgians, the Carthaginians, the Athenians, along with very different peoples, like the Phoenicians, very different peoples that will organize the urban world, the ‘town’ form, the ‘city’ form. And why? Without doubt, because they can. They can, why? Because – and this then becomes very curious – the imperial apparatus of capture, as we have seen, captures what? Would that not be the wild seeds of the hunter-gatherers? And then it tries to capture the towns, once the towns exist. But the towns, what do they capture? Recall that in its archaic form, the Empire constitutes a stock, and that it is from this same stock that hybridizations will come. The Aegean world in a way precisely profits from the Oriental stock, it profits from the imperial stock, whether it be through pillage or through haggling, that is to say in trading. It will develop its own solution, the urban solution with its network of commerce. So everything happens as if, at this point, the ‘town’ form escapes the imperial archaic form, the form of the State; except that the State, after a very long, long history, overtakes the town, gets hold of it and redisciplines it.

I imagine you will have all sorts of examples in mind of another nature, so if need be next time we can return to this. I would just like to move in a slightly more conceptual direction. Let us suppose that the ‘State’ form and the ‘town’ form, at the limit – if you accept the disordered mass of examples I have just cited and my invocation of Fernand Braudel ... Well, how might we distinguish these two thresholds, conceptually speaking? The threshold ‘town’ and the threshold ... [*Deleuze does not finish*]? The threshold State–town, earlier on I called that the ‘threshold of consistency’. But here the difference is that in fact there are two thresholds. There are two thresholds, not just one of them. The ‘town’ form, we could say – let us invent words, since we need to do that here – we will say that it is a threshold of *transconsistency*. The ‘State’ form, I would say that it is a threshold of *intraconsistency*.

Okay, you will say, isn’t there something ... [*He does not finish*]. Secondly, I would also say, which comes to the same (and in their book, Fourquet and Murard have shown it very well): *the town* is an absolutely empty notion. What exists is always a network of towns. The town is fundamentally in communication with other towns. There is no ‘Lübeck’, there is Lübeck in relation to some town, to another town, constituting the Hansea. There is no town in Islam, there is the set of Islamic towns in their relation with the empires; and their relation is composed of violence with the Empires. There are also towns that are not ‘capitals’, but are stock-market metropolises. There is London, there is New York, etc. It’s always a constellation, a network in the form of a constellation. You see, that’s what I mean when I say: this is a phenomenon of *transconsistency*. And in fact, what is the constitutive act of the town? The town is a process – and now let us take up this word again here, it is useful to us, it

is through this that there is a phenomenon of transconsistency – it is a very special process of *deterritorialization*.

I mean that the town deterritorializes itself. What does that mean? Here, in every case, it is necessary that the word has a rather concrete sense. The deterritorialization of the town is the fact that the town, in one way or another, is separated, detached from its backcountry. What is the most famous case of this? The great commercial towns. The way in which the great commercial towns are not only unstuck from their backcountry, but annul the backcountry. They don't know it. They are turned towards something else. Towards what? Towards their own network, towards their own circuit. For any town, there is something that enters and something that leaves. The town is a set of entries and exits. This is why I say 'transconsistency' and not at all 'intraconsistency'. Here, Braudel and others have insisted too much on the town-road relation. It is the network of towns. This is why a town can never be thought alone, separately. A town is fundamentally in communication with another town. How does deterritorialization show itself? It shows itself above all in the towns that throw themselves into the maritime adventure. Whether it be Carthage, whether it be Athens, whether it be Venice later on. Venice is the extreme case, since it does not even have a *terra firma*. It is only later that Venice changes and embarks on its famous conquest known as the 'conquest of *terra firma*'. This is also a fragility of towns: it is absolutely as if they are planted, diverted from their hinterland. It is obvious that, in the case of attack, they cannot count on any help from the backcountry.

No matter; I might give the impression of saying that from this point on, every town is a trading town, but that's obviously not the case. I would say: every town implies a network of some nature, whatever this network might be. In Greece, for example, there is a whole network of sanctuary towns. The circulation of the epic, from the Homeric epoch onward, implies a network. The circuit can very well be commercial, but it can equally be religious, it can be military, it can be whatever you like, that's not what's important. Without doubt, in the case of trading towns, it is particularly visible, but, so as to anticipate an objection, I'm not saying at all that every town has to trade: I'm saying that every town exists in a network with other towns, and that this is what makes it a phenomenon of transconsistency. Which comes down to saying what? It involves a town establishing, in relation to other towns (which does not imply wars, but which does not exclude wars between towns), circuits of deterritorialization. Circuits of deterritorialization on which, obviously, something reterritorializes itself: the commodity or else the cult object – it is not necessarily trade – or else the book, it could be anything. To put it in a different way, I defined the town as an instrument of polarization in a necessary relay with other towns. It is an instrument of polarization. It constitutes circuits. It only exists through what enters into it and what comes out of it. It is inputs and outputs, and the coexistence of inputs and outputs. And in order to regulate the inputs and outputs, there are magistrates. It is a bureaucracy of networks.

You can see why I say that the 'State' form is totally different. The 'State' form is a phenomenon of intraconsistency. Everything happens as if in this case you would isolate a certain number of points. You isolate a certain number of points on a territory. A town has no territory, that is not its problem. Again, Venice has no territory, Venice has circuits. On its territory – it doesn't matter whether the territory is natural or artificial, natural frontier or not, that's all quite secondary – [the 'State' form] isolates a certain number of points. These points can be towns, if it has learned how to master them, at least relatively. But entirely different things are involved as well. These are agricultural enterprises, these are linguistic traits, moral

and cultural traits, whatever you like. And the ‘State’ form is what assures the *resonance* of these points that it holds on its territory.

In other words, but without stating the prevalence of one element or the other, if you give yourself a network of towns for convenience sake (you could start with the opposite, and proceed through the ‘State’ form), the ‘State’ form will come to *isolate* a certain number of point-towns, putting them in resonance with points of another kind than ‘town’, making the whole resonate. It is through this that in the ‘State’ form there will fundamentally be the resonance of formations of power. And the ‘State’ form, for its part, will also be a process of deterritorialization, but in a completely different way. I would say that the deterritorialization of the town (which fundamentally belongs to the town: in the town, one deterritorializes oneself, it is a form of deterritorialization) ... well, in the town, one deterritorializes oneself, how to put this, *dynamically*. It is a dynamic deterritorialization, which consists precisely in cutting oneself off from the backcountry. The ‘State’ form is a static deterritorialization, and is no less profound for that, no less powerful; on the contrary. In what sense is it a static deterritorialization? It is because, for the play of territories occupied by so-called primitive groups or by gangs, for the play of *territorialities* of gangs, the ‘State’ form substitutes what? Something that is fundamental to it (we’re returning here to something talked about it in previous years, in relation to [Paul] Virilio’s studies): the fundamental act of the State is the establishment, or laying out [*aménagement*] the territory. This means laying out the territory. That is to say, it is the superposition onto the territorialities of lineages, onto territorialities-lineages, of a geometrical space. It is the geometrical reason of the State. This is a completely different type of deterritorialization. This time, the territory becomes object; there is deterritorialization because the territory is treated as object. It is upon this that State as laid out bears. Or, if you prefer ... But what time is it?

**A student:** Noon.

**Deleuze:** Noon? To explain everything, here’s a very bad metaphor: visualise what in music are called melodic lines, you know, horizontal melodic lines. You can mark points on these melodic lines that will constitute counterpoints. I would say that the horizontal lines are the network of towns. And then you have harmonic cuts, which are vertical and define chords, chords on the horizontal lines. The vertical cuts are the plannings of the State, the ‘State’ forms. This metaphor, a very bad metaphor, has one merit, which is to make visible the tension of the ‘town’ form and the ‘State’ form. How does the kind of melodic line of the towns tend to escape the cuts, the vertical cuts of State, and inversely, how do the vertical cuts of the State tend to break the kind of circuit operating in the network of towns, and under what form do they break them? Well, by making a fundamental differentiation emerge between an external market and an internal market. That is an affair of State. It is an affair of State. The distinction between an internal market and an external market is not an invention of the town. What is the affair of the town is the constitution of a market. Yes, that’s right. Whether it be a religious market, or a market of ... whatever.

So you see I have four formations. Already. We’re making progress. I have the so-called primitive formation. I will call ‘primitive formation’ whatever rests on the mechanisms of anticipation / warding off. (What I’m looking for is a kind of social typology where everything coexists). I will call ‘State formations’ formations that rest on the transversal, vertical apparatus of capture, apparatuses of capture which obviously bear on both the primitive territorialities and on the network of towns on the other hand. Third, I will call ‘town formation’ instruments of polarization that are constitutive of circuits. And all this

coexists: the States come to cut and recut the circuits, the circuits traversing the States, etc. So you see, I have therefore: mechanisms of anticipation / warding off, apparatuses of capture, instruments of polarization ... All that is necessary to make a world.

Obviously, something else is necessary. What I still need is something that has always existed; again, one did not have to wait for capitalism for such a thing. One did not have to wait for capitalism for formations that can be called 'international'. I don't see anything else that is needed for a social typology; in any case, it's enough for me. They're called 'international', and this is not a particularly apt phrase; what does 'international formations' mean? Without doubt, those formations that span all the preceding formations, which traverse them, which straddle everything, which pass everywhere, which traverse everything. One didn't have to wait for capitalism for that, as we saw last year with metallurgy, with prehistoric metallurgy, or, more precisely, Neolithic metallurgy. So let us look for a more satisfying word, since 'international formations' does not mean the United Nations, it does not mean the League of Nations; it means: those formations whose proper object is to traverse or reunite the preceding heterogeneous social formations. Let us search for a word. There is a word that seems fine to me and which is still employed today: we could call them *ecumenical* [*œcuméniques*] formations. "Ecumenical", because what is the ecumene? It is the inhabited world. The formations that traverse the inhabited world are not at all homogenizing formations, and this is why there is something so specific about them. Take a great commercial company, what do we have there? It is completely segmentary, it has segments that lead back to some State apparatus, to some State. Take for example, the great companies at the birth of capitalism, or take, following the example we analysed last year, what happens in the metallurgical process with the blacksmiths who prospect, the blacksmiths of the caravan, the nomadic blacksmiths, and the sedentary blacksmiths. This is why guilds of blacksmiths are so mysterious: what you have there is an oecumenic formation. It necessarily passes through, or has a sector, of gang. Think about the great commercial companies: they have sectors of gangs that are truly terrible. Take all of that: there are segments of gangs and then segments of States.

Think about the great discoveries: what's so amusing about all these voyages is that the theme of the confrontation of States and towns, the two forms, emerges at the same time. In the great expeditions, you have sectors of gangs, with veritable bandits. You have at one end the King of Spain, then you have Christopher Columbus; it's bizarre, he's a very strange man. And then you have the primitives coming into this, in what form? As exterminated? Not always. In the form of those to be exterminate? Agreements occur. What role do nomads play in the great commercial process? There is a nomadic segment. And what if they are not in agreement? I would say that an ecumenical formation never proceeds via homogenization. It doesn't happen. It is a social formation of a very particular type in the sense that it is, on the contrary, astride heterogeneous formations. And it is this that gives it the power we're calling 'ecumenical'; meaning that it works everywhere, that it has a universalist pretension. The universalist pretension is never a pretension to homogeneity, not at all. Take the case of Christianity; what constituted the ecumenical pretension of Christianity? What made it present itself as the religion of the ecumene [*l'œcumène*], regardless of how unlikely this proposition was? It is in part this aspect. And in the case of Islam, one should also see how that came about. But in the case of Christianity, it is at the one and the same time that it becomes the religion of Empire, and that it completely integrates a strong State apparatus... [Interruptiion of the recording] [92:06]

### Part 3

... I say that the universalist pretension of a social formation comes fundamentally from its capacity to digest heterogeneous social formations. In a certain way, this is obvious. I mean: doesn't it happen in the same way today? I'm posing an objection to myself: doesn't capitalism proceed toward a kind of homogeneity? And there would be the tendency to say: yes, of course, starting from specific examples. I mean: the notorious ethnocides that have not been lacking ... The great theme of the ethnocide of so-called primitive societies. At a more obvious level: the way in which capitalism did not serve as support for the developed Empires. The 1914-1918 war marks the end of the two great developed Empires, namely the Ottoman empire and the Austrian empire. Why did it not serve to support it? Finally, that was no longer possible, it could not work.

There is a fascinating history here, because this is at the basis ... or rather it is a very important factor in Palestinian history, in the contemporary history of the Palestinians. This is the period of the British mandate, in the course of which Zionism was constituted, alongside the first purchases of land by the Zionists, the first purchases of Arab land by the Zionists. Now, the British mandate, for a while, tried to continue to function on the mode of the Ottoman Empire. That could not last long, it could not. It could not. I mean by that: the most elementary exigencies of capitalism mean that the Ottoman empire was not ... [It] was an element, in the sense in which earlier we said that there are elements, there are milieux that rebel against the 'town' form. The developed Empire is not at all a good formula for the development of capitalism.

So, at first sight, one will tell oneself, with regard to all sorts of cases: well, yes, homogeneity does indeed come about. The homogeneity of States does indeed transpire. But in fact, this does not at all seem to me to be the case. Maybe later we will be able to make further distinctions in these matters, but I do not believe that there is a tendency to the homogenization of States. What is true is that there is a single market. Capitalism brings with it the existence of a single global market. Perhaps one should see if it was like that before, but I don't think so. The existence of single global market, perhaps this is a fundamental characteristic of capitalism, since, as you know well, there is no specifically socialist market. In turn, once it is said that there is a single global market, one can say that from that moment all States play the role, within certain limits ... how to put it? I don't know, I'm posing a question ... Perhaps one could say that all States, whatever they are, in relation to the unique global market of capitalism, play the role of ... what?

Let's look for a word. Let's say (quickly, without reflecting too much on the meaning): *models of realization*. One could say – and now we use a mathematical metaphor – that they are at most *isomorphic*. Again, one can doubt that the socialist States are isomorphic to capitalist States. But it is possible to say that Third World States or certain Third World States are isomorphic to the States of the center. One can say things like that ... maybe. You will see later that I'm posing a question here. But, in any case, even if one assumes a certain isomorphy of States is necessary in capitalism as a function of the global market, this isomorphy does not at all imply homogeneity. Not at all. What is more, we will have to wonder whether, in capitalism, it is not possible to distinguish two things, namely: capitalism as mode of production and capitalism as relation of production. What might indeed be homogeneous – and I am not even sure about this – are the States where capitalism is realised as mode of production. But capitalism can very well be effectuated as a relation of production without being realised as a mode of production. It can be in a full sense the dominant relation

of production and still reconcile itself with modes of production that are not specifically capitalist.

For example, I think that one of the modern authors who has gone furthest in precisely these analyses and especially in relation to the Third World, is Samir Amin. Now, Samir Amin says something that interests us a great deal from the point of view we have arrived at. In all his books, he continually maintains the following thesis: *there is no economic theory of international relations, even when these relations are economic.*<sup>10</sup> There is – and nevertheless Samir Amin is a Marxist, and a very scrupulous Marxist (I say ‘and nevertheless’, I wrongly said ‘and nevertheless’, because this position is actually very Marxist indeed) – no economic theory of international economic relations, of international relations, even when they are economic. Why? Because international economic relations allow different modes of production to intervene, even if capital is the relation of reproduction. And there is no economic theory of different social formations. It is therefore the heterogeneity of the social formations that will guarantee – which will not at all contradict, but which will guarantee – the specificity of the final social formation I considered, namely the oecumenic social formations. So that here you have a field of perpetual coexistence.

Think about what we call an artistic movement. An artistic movement, what is that? In what sense is it oecumenical or international? You will find ‘State’ forms in it, you will find ‘town’ forms, you will find gang-forms in it, you will find its ‘primitive’ forms. Every artistic international formation literally has its Black art, literally has its State power, literally has its own bandits. It has the lot. Take the period of Cubism or of Surrealism. For the whole of this very agitated period, Dadaism is a whole history of urban networks, with its own urban gangs. When Surrealism arrives, it is truly the capture of towns. André Breton takes himself for a statesman. [Laughter] Fine, it’s one of the forms. The Surrealist form is absolutely distinct from the Dadaist form. The discovery or exploitation of so-called primitive arts at the same time, all that is how oecumenism always proceeds.

You will find all the formations there, each at work in each other, overlapping. You have to know what segment you are in, alongside which struggles, abominable struggles, amongst all these formations. That, therefore, is what I call a field of coexistence. If you have understood me, it is now quite simple. One accepts ... But next time we’ll see what you think of all this, because I’ll talk much less next time. What time is it?

**A student:** Quarter past twelve.

**Deleuze:** Quarter past twelve, okay, I will finish soon. So we can accept all that: the coexistence of all these formations. You see that I have a place for five; if you can find any more, perfect. So: the formations centered on anticipation–warding off, on the apparatus of capture, on instruments of polarization, on ... [Response to comments] What? Slower? Ah no, I don’t find five, I only find four. But no! I had five of them! One of them has disappeared.

**A woman student:** Yes, there were four of them.

**Deleuze:** There are only four?

**The same student:** Yes, five minutes ago, there were only four of them.

**Deleuze:** Oh, okay, good, then there are no more than four. Okay, it doesn't matter.

[*Laughter*] As a consequence: what we call primitive groups do not exist; there are simply formations of anticipation–warding off. State apparatuses do not exist, there are apparatuses of capture. Towns: they don't exist, there are networks, that is to say instruments of polarization. International formations don't exist, there are oecumenic formations. And you see: it is always a catastrophe when without precaution one projects one form onto another; it is extremely irritating. For example, there are those who have a tendency to say: ah, global financial policy is all elaborated by one group, the Trilateral [Commission], or whatever. Not at all! Not at all! It is not that it is any less dangerous, but it is obvious that one cannot project the 'State' form onto the oecumenic form. Not at all. Just as one cannot project the 'town' form onto the 'State' form. Not at all. That's not right, on the contrary, we must make a typology that is very very ... [*unfinished sentence*]. If we want to understand the extent of our misfortune, we must realise that the enemy is multiple, there is not just one. You don't have to say that there is someone who decides what the dollar will become, precisely not. The ecumenical formations never dominate their machines. And the sphere of domination of State apparatuses doesn't stretch that far.

So if you accept this schema, you can see exactly where we are now, we can no longer go back. We have said 'all this coexists': fine, but under what form? How is it possible? How is it possible and above all, how can one go onto conceive (one must start from zero, at the point where one is; and ultimately I would like this to become a more concrete history) – how can one conceive those primitive groups that simultaneously anticipate and ward off? The State apparatus is already there, but for their part, they are not it: they anticipate it, but above all they ward it off. They will allow themselves to be captured, or they are already captured by it; they have a sphere of autonomy that is very ... But what do they do? In fact, I would say that for the State apparatus itself to be conceivable, it is necessary that the primitives, that the so-called primitives, have all kinds of relations with each other, that is to say, that they already have relations of exchange. In so far as primitive groups do not yet include the State apparatus – or do not include it as far as they are concerned, rather – it is necessary that they exchange things.

On what basis? Although we might seem to have completely changed the problem, this will be our problem next time: on what basis, and how, to conceive the life of two primitive groups in relation to each other? Once it is said that we deny in advance as without basis what the ethnologists call the autarchy of these groups, namely: that each of these groups be self-sufficient? We say: no, that's all impossible, all of them were in coexistence for a simple reason: if State apparatuses already coexist with primitive groups, it goes without saying that primitive groups, in one way or another, are in relation with State apparatuses, of which they are wary like the plague; and they are already in relation with other primitive groups, even if only through the intermediary of State apparatuses. Now, it is with regard to this issue that I would like you to reflect on something for next time.

The point we have arrived at, if we go back to zero, is this: we need a new theory of exchange, applicable to exchanges that could be called, in quotation marks, 'primitive exchanges'. How are primitives able to exchange something?

Well, funny enough, this makes me think of one famous theory in political economy. In manuals of political economy, we are often told: there are three theories of value (three, preferable to four). There is a well-known theory that goes under the name of the 'labour theory of value', where value is explained in one way or another through labour. That is the

classical theory. This is above all not the Marxist theory, because, whatever the way in which Marx takes it up and renews it, his novelty does not lie there. Classical political economy is founded on labour-value. And then there is another utility theory of value: what determines the value of something is its utility and not the labour that is incorporated in it. This is the 'utilitarian' theory.

And then there is a peculiar theory known as 'neo-classical' or 'marginalist', which says: well, it is neither one nor the other. Value is neither founded on labour, nor on utility, but on *marginal* utility, hence the expression 'marginalism'. So I would really like to ask those who already know political economy to go back a little over the histories of marginalism.

'Marginal utility', when one reads about it, is very simple: it is the utility of the *last* object. It is the utility of the last object. So one will say, for example, that marginal utility in exchange is the comparative utility of the last object exchanged. Why do they introduce this idea of the last? The marginalists have a fundamental, essential importance in the history of political economy, such that all neo-classicism is marginalism. It's the theme of the last one, the last as determinant of the value of the object of exchange. The last object exchanged: what does that mean? We must try to give an account. I have been too abstract today, but I would just like to conclude on the following point, so that you can think about it for next time. I would say -- or shall I leave it, because I would prefer to wait until next week when you'll have re-read your manuals, or at least I hope there will be a small number of you who will have consented to do that? -- ... Because I tell myself, let's try something different. We can say that it's a question of method, fine, marginalism... If you have to take the baccalauréat, and you have as subject 'what is the last one?', you can say: that's good, now I have to use marginalism. If you know nothing about it, you can also say, well ok... You'll make limited use of it, but to work your way through this, one should never rely on anything too technical.

I was just talking about 'the last one'. Funnily enough, you just have to go to the café to get ideas. [Laughter] Let's forget about marginalism, and think about 'the last one'. Imagine three guys in café: "Go on, this is the last glass!" That might not seem to have any relation to what we're talking about, the marginalists, but I'm not sure about that at all. One of the guys says: "This the last glass! This is the last!". The other says: "No, no, really, I ..."; then the others make fun of him: "Ah, you're scared, mate! You think you're going to get grounded!" There is a type of collective evaluation, a kind of collective agreement about the last one, and the *value* of the last one. Another example: one of the most abominable things in the world, a domestic scene. We could have three scenes like that. One in the café ... Four scenes: we'll have the marginalist scene, preceded by three more concrete scenes. The scene in the café: the last glass. The domestic scene: "You're not going to have the last word!" Or rather: "I'm going to have the last word!"<sup>11</sup>

Strindberg: "I will have the last word!", "No, you won't have the last word!" What is last word in a scene? And how about the last love? What is the last love? With that domestic scene... But you really have to immerse yourself in this; I bet you the marginalists are not saying different from what the guys are saying in a café. It is prodigious! There is something quite peculiar in the domestic scene, which makes it so distasteful. For both [persons], there is a situation of exchange, they exchange words. Both of them have a certain *evaluation*, in my opinion, an evaluation of the point at which one should go no further. What is this point at which one should go no further? Because everything happens as if the domestic scene was like a bath. They have their scene and come out of it all fresh. Everyone else is bewildered, anyone who witnessed it (because generally, it is done in public); they're bewildered and say: "Good God, what's going on here?", but at the very moment the spectators or listeners crack,

the scene suddenly becomes peaceful: it's finished! It's over, but you know it's going to happen again in half an hour. [Laughter]. Just when you think 'that's it', it starts up again. Thus we have a series. In each case, there is a type of evaluation: don't go too far, because ... There is an evaluation of the last object which, in this case, is a word.

And that is what interests us: it is that from the beginning, the domestic scene comprises *both* the evaluation (at least approximative, by each party) of the last word beyond which things would go too far, *and* the necessary time taken to attain the last word. For one doesn't want to arrive there too quickly, because then the domestic scene would not function. For the last glass, you could say that from the moment of the first glass in the series, there is a double collective evaluation, a collective evaluation of the last glass (after how many?) and of the necessary time (one must neither stay too long, nor not long enough, at the café). My question is: is there not in fact in primitive exchanges an evaluation of the last that would be fundamental in the act of exchange? Do you see? But it would be good to pass through some precise and concrete examples to show this.

And are the marginalists saying anything else when they say: it is the last object, it is the value of the last object, the marginal object, that fixes the value of the whole series? The banker [Albin] Chalandon<sup>12</sup>, who hides fewer things from us than Prime Minister [Raymond] Barre, said recently: you know, with saving oil, everyone knows they're being lied to. It is quite normal that value should be fixed by the cost of production of the last object. In the case of oil, what is the cost of production of the last object? It depends on the next, on anticipated future [discoveries] of marine oil. Do you see? The rise in oil prices is deeply connected with discoveries of marine oil. That there is a rise in oil prices as a function of the value of the last object – it goes without saying that sand oil has every reason to get itself in line. This is a mechanism one learns about in elementary manuals of political economy: that with regard to the cost of production of a given object, costs of production align themselves with the highest cost of production. Of course, there are regulatory mechanisms that intervene, etc. But Chalandon gave this incredible speech, saying: but it is obvious that oil was underpaid. The countries, the States of the center, yes, the States of the center, have always underpaid for oil, and now it's over. But it's over because oil will align its cost of production to the production of marine oil that will enter into the price. So it's another coup by the English, eh?<sup>13</sup> We are told that it's a coup by the Arabs, but it's not, it's a coup by the English. Yes, it's them, it's them. The fault lies with the English. There you go. Okay, the next episode next time. [End the session] [1:55:28]

**Notes** [Except where indicated, all notes were established in 2020]

<sup>1</sup> In *A Thousand Plateaus* (ATP 430), this view is attributed to Mikhail Griaznov, in his *The Ancient Civilizations of Southern Siberia*, trans. James Hogarth (New York: Cowels, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> As Marcel Mauss asserts in *The Gift*, trans. Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen & West, Ltd., 1966), "Nowhere else is the prestige of an individual as closely bound up with expenditure, and with the duty of returning with interest gifts received in such a way that the creditor becomes the debtor. Consumption and destruction are virtually unlimited. In some potlatch systems, one is constrained to expend everything one possesses and to keep nothing", 35; and "The extravagant consumption of wealth, particularly in the potlatch, always exaggerated and often purely destructive . . . Not only are valuable goods thrown away and foodstuffs consumed to excess but there is destruction for its own sake . . . [but] such mad losses and destruction of wealth, especially in these potlatch societies, are in no way disinterested. Between vassals and chiefs, between vassals and their henchmen, the hierarchy is established by means of these gifts", 72.

<sup>3</sup> In French, *prenne*, the present subjunctive of *prendre* [to take], can be used in a culinary sense; for a dish to 'prenne', a certain ingredient or combination of ingredients is necessary. There appears to be no direct English equivalent.

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<sup>4</sup> In *A Thousand Plateaus* (ATP 358), the text is identified as Jacques Meunier, *Les gamins de Bogota* (Paris: Lattes, 1977); cf. p. 178.

<sup>5</sup> Reference furnished with our gratitude by David Lapoujade, *Sur l'appareil d'État et les machines de guerre* (Paris : Minuit, 2025), 102.

<sup>6</sup> Jacques Lizot, *Le cercle des feux. Faits et dits des Indiens Yanomami* (1976); translated by Ernest Simon as *Tales of the Yanomami: Daily Life in the Venezuelan Forest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>7</sup> There is no reference to a ‘star’ [étoile] in the passage in Lizot’s book on the planting of the mast (*Le Cercle des feux*, pp. 127-133; cf. *Tales from the Yanomami*, pp. 95-98), although the shaman is said to “draw on the ground imaginary lines that radiate all around [the mast]” (133/98).

<sup>8</sup> Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme (XVe et XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1967); translated by Miriam Kochan as *Capitalism and Material Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1974), p. 398, translation modified.

<sup>9</sup> François Fourquet and Lion Murard, *Les équipements de pouvoir: Ville, territoires et équipements collectifs* (Paris: 10/18, 1976); first published in *Recherches*, 13, 1973.

<sup>10</sup> “Since the theory of relations between different social formations cannot be an economicistic one, international relations, which belong precisely to this context, cannot give rise to an economic theory” (Samir Amin, *Unequal Development*, trans. Brian Pearce (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), p. 146; cited in ATP 566, n. 23.

<sup>11</sup> Deleuze refers to the “last glass” in the Spinoza seminar 3 (9 December 1980), in Cinema 2 seminar 21 (24 May 1983), and most extensively in *L’Abécédaire*, “B as in ‘Boire’ [Drinking]”.

<sup>12</sup> Albin Chalandon (1920-2020) co-created the Banque nationale de Paris in 1952 and went on to occupy various ministerial positions in the 1960s and 70s, before becoming director of the oil company Elf-Aquitaine in 1977.

<sup>13</sup> Presumably a reference to British discoveries of North Sea Oil in the 1970s.