

urbanism. Its aim is to allow its problems to enter into consciousness and political policies.

From the theoretical and practical situation of problems (from the problematic) concerning the city, reality and possibilities of urban life, let us begin by taking what used to be called a 'cavalier attitude'.

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Industrialization and Urbanization

To present and give an account of the 'urban problematic', the point of departure must be the process of industrialization. Beyond any doubt this process has been the dynamic of transformations in society for the last century and a half. If one distinguishes between the *inductor* and the *induced*, one can say that the process of industrialization is inductive and that one can count among the induced, problems related to growth and planning, questions concerning the city and the development of the urban reality, without omitting the growing importance of leisure activities and questions related to 'culture'. Industrialization characterizes modern society. This does not inevitably carry with it terms of 'industrial society', if we want to define it. Although urbanization and the problematic of the urban figure among the induced effects and not among the causes or inductive reason, the preoccupation these words signify accentuate themselves in such a way that one can define as an urban society the social reality which arises around us. This definition retains a feature which becomes capital.

Industrialization provides the point of departure for reflection upon our time. Now the city existed prior to industrialization. A remark banal in itself but whose implications have not been fully formulated. The most eminent urban creations, the most 'beautiful' *oeuvres* of urban life (we say '*beautiful*', because they are *oeuvres* rather than products) date from epochs previous to that of industrialization. There was the oriental city (linked to the Asiatic mode of production), the antique city (Greek and Roman associated with the possession of slaves) and then the medieval city (in a complex situation embedded in feudal relations but struggling against a landed feudalism). The oriental and antique city was essentially political; the medieval city,

without losing its political character, was principally related to commerce, crafts and banking. It absorbed merchants, who had previously been quasi nomadic and relegated outside the city.

When industrialization begins, and capitalism in competition with a specifically industrial bourgeoisie is born, the city is already a powerful reality. In Western Europe, after the virtual disappearance of the antique city, the decay of Roman influence, the city took off again. More or less nomadic merchants elected as centre of their activities what remained of the antique urban cores. Conversely, one can suppose that these degraded cores functioned as accelerators for what remained of exchange economies maintained by wandering merchants. From the growing surplus product of agriculture, to the detriment of feudal lords, cities accumulate riches: objects, treasures, virtual capitals. There already existed in these urban centres a great monetary wealth, acquired through usury and commerce. Crafts prosper there, a production clearly distinct from agriculture. Cities support peasant communities and the enfranchisement of the peasants, not without benefit for themselves. In short, they are centres of social and political life where not only wealth is accumulated, but knowledge (*connaissances*), techniques, and *oeuvres* (works of art, monuments). This city is itself '*oeuvre*', a feature which contrasts with the irreversible tendency towards money and commerce, towards exchange and *products*. Indeed, the *oeuvre* is use value and the product is exchange value. The eminent use of the city, that is, of its streets and squares, edifices and monuments, is *la Fête* (a celebration which consumes unproductively, without other advantage but pleasure and prestige and enormous riches in money and objects).

A complex, but contradictory, reality. Medieval cities at the height of their development centralize wealth: powerful groups invest unproductively a large part of their wealth in the cities they dominate. At the same time, banking and commercial capital have already made wealth *mobile* and has established exchange networks enabling the transfer of money. When industrialization begins with the pre-eminence of a specific bourgeoisie (the entrepreneurs), wealth has ceased to be mainly in real estate. Agricultural production is no longer dominant and nor is landed property. Estates are lost to the feudal lords and pass into the hands of urban capitalists enriched by commerce, banking, usury. The outcome is that 'society' as a whole, made up of the city, the country and the institutions which regulate their relations, tend to

constitute themselves as a *network of cities*, with a certain division of labour (technically, socially, politically) between cities linked together by road, river and seaways and by commercial and banking relations. One can think that the division of labour between cities was neither sufficiently advanced nor sufficiently aware to determine stable associations and put an end to rivalries and competition. This urban system was not able to establish itself. What is erected on this base is the State, or centralized power. Cause and effect of this particular centrality, that of power, one city wins over the others: the capital.

Such a process takes place very unevenly, very differently in Italy, Germany, France, Flanders, England, and Spain. The city predominates and yet it is no longer the City-State of antiquity. There are three different terms: society, State and city. In this urban system each city tends to constitute itself as an enclosed self-contained, self-functioning system. The city preserves the organic character of community which comes from the village and which translates itself into a corporate organization (or guild). Community life (comprising general or partial assemblies) does not prohibit class struggle. On the contrary. Violent contrasts between wealth and poverty, conflicts between the powerful and the oppressed, do not prevent either attachment to the city nor an active contribution to the beauty of the *oeuvre*. In the urban context, struggles between fractions, groups and classes strengthen the feeling of belonging. Political confrontations between the '*minuto popolo*' the '*popolo grosso*', the aristocracy and the oligarchy, have the city as their battle ground, their stake. These groups are rivals in their love of the city. As for the rich and powerful, they always feel threatened. They justify their privilege in the community by somptuously spending their fortune: buildings, foundations, palaces, embellishments, festivities. It is important to emphasize this paradox, for it is not a well understood historical fact: very oppressive societies were very creative and rich in producing *oeuvres*. Later, the production of products replaced the production of *oeuvres* and the social relations attached to them, notably the city. When exploitation replaces oppression, creative capacity disappears. The very notion of 'creation' is blurred or degenerates by miniaturizing itself into 'making' and 'creativity' (the 'do-it-yourself', etc.). Which brings forth arguments to back up a thesis: *city and urban reality are related to use value. Exchange value and the generalization of commodities by industrialization tend to destroy it by subordinating the city and urban reality which are*

refuges of use value, the origins of a virtual predominance and revalorization of use.

In the urban system we are attempting to analyse, action is exercised over specific conflicts: between use value and exchange value, between mobilization of wealth (in silver and in money) and unproductive investment in the city, between accumulation of capital and its squandering on festivities, between the extension of the dominated territory and the demands of a strict organization of this territory around the dominating city. The latter protects itself against all eventualities by a corporate organization which paralyzes the initiatives of banking and commercial capitalism. The corporation does not only regulate a craft. Each enters into an organic whole: the corporate system regulates the distribution of actions and activities over urban space (streets and neighbourhoods) and urban time (timetables and festivities). This whole tends to congeal itself into an immutable structure. The outcome of which is that industrialization supposes the deconstruction of existing structures. Historians (since Marx) have showed the fixed nature of guilds. What perhaps remains to be shown is the tendency of the whole urban system towards a sort of crystallization and fixation. Where this system consolidated itself, capitalism and industrialization came late: in Germany, in Italy, a delay full of consequences.

There is therefore a certain discontinuity between an emerging industry and its historical conditions. They are neither the same thing nor the same people. The prodigious growth of exchanges, of a monetary economy, of merchant production, of the 'world of commodities' which will result from industrialization, implies a radical change. The passage of commercial and banking capitalism as well as craft production to industrial production and competitive capitalism is accompanied by a gigantic crisis, well studied by historians, except for what relates to the city and the 'urban system'.

Emerging industry tends to establish itself outside cities. Not that it is an absolute law. No law can be totally general and absolute. This setting up of industrial enterprises, at first sporadic and dispersed, depended on multiple local regional and national circumstances. For example, *printing* seems to have been able in an urban context to go from a craft to the private enterprise stage. It was otherwise for the *textile* industry, for mining, for *metallurgy*. The new industry establishes itself near energy sources (rivers, woods then charcoal), means

of transport (rivers and canals, then railways), raw materials (minerals), pools of labour power (peasant craftsmen, weavers and blacksmiths already providing skilled labour).

There still exist today in France numerous small textile centres (valleys in Normandy and the Vosges, etc.) which survive sometimes with difficulty. Is it not remarkable that a part of the heavy metallurgical industry was established in the valley of the Moselle, between two old cities, Nancy and Metz, the only real urban centres of this industrial region? At the same time old cities are markets, sources of available capital, the place where these capitals are managed (banks), the residences of economic and political leaders, reservoirs of labour (that is, the places where can subsist 'the reserve army of labour' as Marx calls it, which weighs on wages and enables the growth of surplus value). Moreover, the city, as workshop, allows the concentration over a limited space of the means of production: tools, raw materials, labour.

Since settlement outside of cities is not satisfactory for 'entrepreneurs', as soon as it is possible industry comes closer to urban centres. Inversely, the city prior to industrialization accelerates the process (in particular, it enables the rapid growth of productivity). The city has therefore played an important role in the *take-off* of industry. As Marx explained, urban concentrations have accompanied the concentration of capital. Industry was to produce its own urban centres, sometimes small cities and industrial agglomerations (Le Creusot), at times medium-sized (Saint-Etienne) or gigantic (the Ruhr, considered as a 'conurbation'). We shall come back to the deterioration of the centrality and urban character in these cities.

This process appears, in analysis, in all its complexity, which the word 'industrialization' represents badly. This complexity becomes apparent as soon as one ceases to think in terms of private *enterprise* on the one hand and global production statistics (so many tons of coal, steel) on the other – as soon as one reflects upon the distinction between the *inductor* and the *induced*, by observing the importance of the phenomena induced and their interaction with the inductors. Industry can do without the old city (pre-industrial, precapitalist) but does so by constituting agglomerations in which urban features are deteriorating. Is this not the case in North America where 'cities' in the way they are understood in France and in Europe, are few: New York, Montreal, San Francisco? Nevertheless, where there is a pre-existent

network of old cities, industry assails it. It appropriates this network and refashions it according to its needs. It also attacks the city (each city), assaults it, takes it, ravages it. It tends to break up the old cores by taking them over. This does not prevent the extension of urban phenomena, cities and agglomerations, industrial towns and suburbs (with the addition of shanty towns where industrialization is unable to employ and fix available labour).

We have before us a *double process* or more precisely, a process with two aspects: industrialization and urbanization, growth and development, economic production and social life. The two 'aspects' of this inseparable process have a unity, and yet it is a conflictual process. Historically there is a violent clash between urban reality and industrial reality. As for the complexity of the process, it reveals itself more and more difficult to grasp, given that industrialization does not only produce firms (workers and leaders of private enterprises), but various *offices* – banking, financial, technical and political.

This *dialectical* process, far from being clear, is also far from over. Today it still provokes 'problematic' situations. A few examples would be sufficient here. In Venice, the active population leaves the city for the industrial agglomeration which parallels it on the mainland: Mestre. This city among the most beautiful cities bequeathed to us from pre-industrial times is threatened not so much by physical deterioration due to the sea or to its subsidence, as by the exodus of its inhabitants. In Athens a quite considerable industrialization has attracted to the capital people from small towns and peasants. Modern Athens has nothing more in common with the antique city covered over, absorbed, extended beyond measure. The monuments and sites (agora, Acropolis) which enable to locate ancient Greece are only places of tourist consumption and aesthetic pilgrimage. Yet the organizational core of the city remains very strong. Its surroundings of new neighbourhoods and semi-shanty towns inhabited by uprooted and disorganized people confer it an exorbitant power. This almost shapeless gigantic agglomeration enables the holders of decision-making centres to carry out the worst political ventures. All the more so that the economy of the country closely depends on this network: property speculation, the 'creation' of capitals by this means, investments of these capitals into construction and so on and so forth. It is this fragile network, always in danger of breaking, which defines a *type* of urbanization, without or with a weak industrialization, but with a

rapid extension of the agglomeration, of property and speculation; a prosperity falsely maintained by the network.

We could in France cite many cities which have been recently submerged by industrialization: Grenoble, Dunkirk, etc. In other cases, such as Toulouse, there has been a massive extension of the city and urbanization (understood in the widest sense of the term) with little industrialization. Such is also the general case of Latin American and African cities encircled by shanty towns. In these regions and countries old agrarian structures are dissolving: dispossessed or ruined peasants crowd into these cities to find work and subsistence. Now these peasants come from farms destined to disappear because of world commodity prices, these being closely linked to industrialized countries and 'growth poles'. These phenomena are still dependent on industrialization.

An induced process which one could call the 'implosion–explosion' of the city is at present deepening. The urban phenomenon extends itself over a very large part of the territory of great industrial countries. It happily crosses national boundaries: the Megalopolis of Northern Europe extends from the Ruhr to the sea and even to English cities, and from the Paris region to the Scandinavian countries. The *urban fabric* of this territory becomes increasingly tight, although not without its local differentiations and extension of the (technical and social) division of labour to the regions, agglomerations and cities. At the same time, there and even elsewhere, urban concentrations become gigantic: populations are heaped together reaching worrying densities (in surface and housing units). Again at the same time many old urban cores are deteriorating or exploding. People move to distant residential or productive peripheries. Offices replace housing in urban centres. Sometimes (in the United States) these centres are abandoned to the 'poor' and become ghettos for the underprivileged. Sometimes on the contrary, the most affluent people retain their strong positions at the heart of the city (around Central Park in New York, the Marais in Paris).

Let us now examine the *urban fabric*. This metaphor is not clear. More than a fabric thrown over a territory, these words designate a kind of biological proliferation of a net of uneven mesh, allowing more or less extended sectors to escape: hamlets or villages, entire regions. If these phenomena are placed into the perspective of the countryside and old agrarian structures, one can analyse a general

movement of concentration: from populations in boroughs and small and large towns – of property and exploitation – of the organization of transports and commercial exchanges, etc. This leads at the same time to the depopulation and the ‘loss of the peasantry’ from the villages which remain rural while losing what was peasant life: crafts, small local shops. Old ‘ways of life’ become folklore. If the same phenomena are analysed from the perspective of cities, one can observe not only the extension of highly populated peripheries but also of banking, commercial and industrial networks and of housing (second homes, places and spaces of leisure, etc.).

The urban fabric can be described by using the concept of *ecosystem*, a coherent unity constituted around one or several cities, old and recent. Such a description may lose what is essential. Indeed, the significance of the urban fabric is not limited to its morphology. It is the support of a more or less intense, more or less degraded, ‘way of life’: *urban society*. On the economic base of the *urban fabric* appear phenomena of another order, that of social and ‘cultural’ life. Carried by the *urban fabric*, urban society and life penetrate the countryside. Such a way of living entails systems of objects and of values. The best known elements of the urban system of objects include water, electricity, gas (butane in the countryside), not to mention the car, the television, plastic utensils, ‘modern’ furniture, which entail new demands with regard to ‘services’. Among the elements of the system of values we can note urban leisure (dance and song), suits, the rapid adoption of fashions from the city. And also, preoccupations with security, the need to predict the future, in brief, a rationality communicated by the city. Generally youth, as an age group, actively contributes to this rapid assimilation of things and representations coming from the city. These are sociological trivialities which are useful to remember to show their implications. Within the mesh of the urban fabric survive islets and islands of ‘pure’ *rurality*, often (but not always) poor areas peopled with ageing peasants, badly ‘integrated’, stripped of what had been the nobility of peasant life in times of greatest misery and of oppression. The ‘urban-rural’ relation does not disappear. On the contrary, it intensifies itself down to the most industrialized countries. It interferes with other representations and other real relations: town and country, nature and artifice, etc. Here and there tensions become conflicts, latent conflicts are accentuated, and then what was hidden under the *urban fabric* appears in the open.

Moreover, urban cores do not disappear. The fabric erodes them or integrates them to its web. These cores survive by transforming themselves. There are still centres of intense urban life such as the Latin Quarter in Paris. The aesthetic qualities of these urban cores play an important role in their maintenance. They do not only contain monuments and institutional headquarters, but also spaces appropriated for entertainments, parades, promenades, festivities. In this way the urban core becomes a high quality consumption product for foreigners, tourists, people from the outskirts and suburbanites. It survives because of this double role: as place of consumption and consumption of place. Thus centres enter more completely into exchange and exchange value, not without retaining their use value due to spaces provided for specific activities. They become centres of consumption. The architectural and urbanistic resurgence of the *commercial* centre only gives a dull and mutilated version of what was the core of the old city, at one and the same time commercial, religious, intellectual, political and economic (productive). The notion and image of the commercial centre in fact date from the Middle Ages. It corresponds to the small and medium-sized medieval city. But today exchange value is so dominant over use and use value that it more or less suppresses it. There is nothing original in this notion. The creation which corresponds to our times, to their tendencies and (threatening) horizons is it not the *centre of decision-making*? This centre, gathering together training and information, capacities of organization and institutional decision-making, appears as a project in the making of a new centrality, that of *power*. The greatest attention must be paid to this concept, the practice which it denotes and justifies.

We have in fact a number of terms (at least three) in complex relations with each other, definable by oppositions each on their own terms, although not exhausted by these oppositions. There is the rural and the urban (urban society). There is the urban fabric which carries this ‘urbanity’ and centrality, old, renovated, new. Hence a disquieting problematic, particularly if one wishes to go from analysis to synthesis, from observations to a project (the ‘normative’). Must one allow the urban fabric (what does this word mean?) to proliferate spontaneously? Is it appropriate to capture this force, direct this strange life, savage and artificial at the same time? How can one strengthen the centres? Is it useful or necessary? And which centres,

which centralities? Finally, what is to be done about islands of ruralism?

Thus the *crisis* of the city can be perceived through distinct problems and problematical whole. This is a theoretical and practical crisis. In theory, the *concept of the city* (of urban reality) is made up of facts, representations and images borrowed from the ancient pre-industrial and precapitalist city, but in a process of transformation and new elaboration. In practice the *urban core* (an essential part of the image and the concept of the city) splits open and yet maintains itself: overrun, often deteriorated, sometimes rotting, the urban core does not disappear. If someone proclaims its end and its reabsorption into the fabric, this is a postulate, a statement without proof. In the same way, if someone proclaims the urgency of a restitution or reconstitution of urban cores, it is again a postulate, a statement without proof. The urban core has not given way to a new and well-defined 'reality', as the village allowed the city to be born. And yet its reign seems to be ending. Unless it asserts itself again even more strongly as centre of power . . .

Until now we have shown how the city has been attacked by industrialization, giving a dramatic and globally considered picture of this process. This analytical attempt could lead us to believe that it is a natural process, without intentions or volitions. There is something like this, but that vision would be truncated. The ruling classes or fractions of the ruling classes intervene actively and voluntarily in this process, possessing capital (the means of production) and managing not only the economic use of capital and productive investments, but also the whole society, using part of the wealth produced in 'culture', art, knowledge, ideology. Beside, or rather, in opposition to, dominant social groups (classes and class fractions), there is the working class: the proletariat, itself divided into strata, partial groups, various tendencies, according to industrial sectors and local and national traditions.

In the middle of the nineteenth century in Paris the situation was somewhat like this. The ruling bourgeoisie, a non-homogenous class, after a hard-fought struggle, has conquered the capital. Today the Marais is still a visible witness to this: before the Revolution it is an aristocratic quarter (despite the tendency of the capital and the wealthy to drift towards the west), an area of gardens and private mansions. It took but a few years, during the 1830s, for the Third

Estate to appropriate it. A number of magnificent houses disappear, workshops and shops occupy others, tenements, stores, depots and warehouses, firms replace parks and gardens. Bourgeois ugliness, the greed for gain visible and legible in the streets takes the place of a somewhat cold beauty and aristocratic luxury. On the walls of the Marais can be read class struggle and the hatred between classes, a victorious meanness. It is impossible to make more perceptible this paradox of history which partially escaped Marx. The 'progressive' bourgeoisie, taking charge of economic growth, endowed with ideological instruments suited to rational growth, moves towards democracy and replaces oppression by exploitation, this class as such no longer creates – it replaces the *œuvre*, by the *product*. Those who retain this sense of the *œuvre*, including writers and painters, think and see themselves as 'non bourgeois'. As for oppressors, the masters of societies previous to the democratic bourgeoisie – princes, kings, lords, emperors – they had a sense and a taste of the *œuvre*, especially in architecture and urban design. In fact the *œuvre* is more closely related to use value than to exchange value.

After 1848, the French bourgeoisie solidly entrenched in the city (Paris) possesses considerable influence, but it sees itself hemmed in by the working class. Peasants flock in, settling around the 'barriers' and entrances of the fortifications, the immediate periphery. Former craftsmen and new proletarians penetrate right up to the heart of the city. They live in slums but also in tenements, where the better-off live on the ground floors and the workers on the upper ones. In this 'disorder' the workers threaten the '*parvenus*', a danger which became obvious during the days of June 1848 and which the Commune was to confirm. A *class strategy* is elaborated, aimed at the replanning of the city, without any regard for reality, for its own life.

The life of Paris reaches its greatest intensity between 1848 and the Haussmann period – not what is understood by 'la vie parisienne', but the urban life of the capital. It engages itself into literature and poetry with great vigour and power. Then it will be over. Urban life suggests meetings, the confrontation of differences, reciprocal knowledge and acknowledgement (including ideological and political confrontation), ways of living, 'patterns' which coexist in the city. During the nineteenth century, a democracy of peasant origins which drove the revolutionaries could have transformed itself into an urban democracy. It was and it is still for history one of the beliefs of the

Commune. As urban democracy threatened the privileges of the new ruling class, that class prevented it from being born. How? By expelling from the urban centre and the city itself the proletariat, by destroying 'urbanity'.

Act One. Baron Haussmann, man of this Bonapartist State which erects itself over society to treat it cynically as the booty (and not only the stake) of the struggles for power. Haussmann replaces winding but lively streets by long avenues, sordid but animated 'quartiers' by bourgeois ones. If he forces through boulevards and plans open spaces, it is not for the beauty of views. It is to 'comb Paris with machine guns'. The famous Baron makes no secret of it. Later we will be grateful to him for having opened up Paris to traffic. This was not the aim, the finality of Haussmann 'planning'. The voids have a meaning: they cry out loud and clear the glory and power of the State which plans them, the violence which could occur. Later transfers towards other finalities take place which justify in another way these gashes into urban life. It should be noted that Haussmann did not achieve his goal. One strong aspect of the Paris Commune (1871) is the strength of the return towards the urban centre of workers pushed out towards the outskirts and peripheries, their reconquest of the city, this belonging among other belongings, this value, this *œuvre* which had been torn from them.

Act Two. The goal was to be attained by a much vaster manoeuvre and with more important results. In the second half of the century, influential people, that is rich or powerful, or both, sometimes ideologues (Le Play) with ideas strongly marked by religions (Catholic and Protestant), sometimes informed politicians (belonging to the centre right) and who moreover do not constitute a coherent and unique group, in brief, a few notables, discover a new notion. The Third Republic will insure its fortune, that is, its realization on the ground. It will conceive the notion of *habitat*. Until then, 'to inhabit' meant to take part in a social life, a community, village or city. Urban life had, among other qualities, this attribute. It gave the right to inhabit, it allowed townsmen-citizens to inhabit. It is thus that 'mortals inhabit while they save the earth, while they wait for the gods . . . while they conduct their lives in preservation and use'. Thus speaks the poet and philosopher Heidegger of the concept *to inhabit*. Outside philosophy and poetry the same things have been said sociologically in prose. At the end of the nineteenth century the notables isolate a function,

detach it from a very complex whole which was and remains the city, to project it over the ground, not without showing and signifying in this manner the society for which they provide an ideology and a practice. Certainly suburbs were created under the pressure of circumstances to respond to the blind (although motivated and directed) growth of industrialization, the massive arrival of peasants led to the urban centres by 'rural exodus'. The process has none the less been oriented by a strategy.

A typical *class strategy*, does that mean a series of concerted actions, planned with a single aim? No. Class character seems that much deeper than several concerted actions, centered around several objectives, has nevertheless converged towards a final result. It goes without saying that all these notables were not proposing to open up a means to speculation: some of them, men of good will, philanthropists, humanists, seem even to wish the opposite. They have none the less mobilized property wealth around the city, the entrance without restriction into exchange and exchange value of the ground and housing. This had speculative implications. They were not proposing to demoralize the working classes, but on the contrary, to moralize it. They considered it beneficial to involve the workers (individuals and families) into a hierarchy clearly distinct from that which rules in the firm, that of property and landlords, houses and neighbourhoods. They wanted to give them another function, another status, other roles than those attached to the condition of the salaried producers. They meant in this way to give them a better everyday life than that of work. In this way they conceived the role of owner-occupied housing. A remarkably successful operation (although its political consequences were not always those anticipated by its promoters). Nevertheless, a result was achieved, predicted or otherwise, conscious or unconscious. Society orients itself ideologically and practically towards other problems than that of production. Little by little social consciousness ceased to refer to production and to focus on everyday life and consumption. With 'suburbanization' a process is set into motion which decentres the city. Isolated from the city, the proletariat will end its sense of the *oeuvre*. Isolated from places of production, available from a sector of habitation for scattered firms, the proletariat will allow its creative capacity to diminish in its conscience. Urban consciousness will vanish.

In France the beginnings of the suburb are also the beginnings of a violently anti-urban planning approach; a singular paradox. For

decades during the Third Republic appeared documents authorizing and regulating owner-occupied suburbs and plots. What could be more accurately referred to here is the *banlieue pavillonnaire*, a type of suburbanization begun in this period in France characterized by small owner-occupied housing whose nearest Anglo-Saxon equivalent in terms of typology and social relations is the 'bungalow'.

A de-urbanized, yet dependent periphery is established around the city. Effectively, these new suburban dwellers are still urban even though they are unaware of it and believe themselves to be close to nature, to the sun and to greenery. One could call it a de-urbanizing and de-urbanized urbanization to emphasize the paradox.

Its excesses will slow this extension down. The movement it engenders will carry along the bourgeoisie and the well-off who will establish residential suburbs. City centres empty themselves for offices. The whole then begins to struggle with the inextricable. But it is not finished.

Act Three. After the Second World War it becomes evident that the picture changes according to various emergencies and constraints related to demographic and industrial growth and the influx of people from the provinces to Paris. The housing crisis, acknowledged and proven, turns into a catastrophe and threatens to worsen the political situation which is still unstable. 'Emergencies' overwhelm the initiatives of capitalism and 'private' enterprise, especially as the latter is not interested in construction, considered to be insufficiently profitable. The State can no longer be content with simply regulating land plots and the construction of informal suburban housing or fighting (badly) property speculation. By means of intermediary organisms it takes charge of housing construction and an era of "*nouveaux ensembles*" (large-scale housing estates) and 'new towns' begins.

It could be said that public powers take charge of what hitherto was part of a market economy. Undoubtedly. But housing does not necessarily become a public service. It surfaces into social consciousness as a right. It is acknowledged in fact by the indignation raised by dramatic cases and by the discontent engendered by the crisis. Yet it is not formally or practically acknowledged except as an appendix to the 'rights of man'. Construction taken in charge by the State does not change the orientations and conceptions adopted by the market economy. As Engels had predicted, the housing question, even aggravated, has politically played only a minor role. Groups and parties on the Left will be satisfied with demanding 'more housing'. Moreover,

what guides public and semi-public initiatives is not a conception of urban planning, it is simply the goal of providing as quickly as possible at the least cost, the greatest possible number of housing units. The new housing estates will be characterized by an abstract and functional character: the concept of *habitat* brought to its purest form by a State bureaucracy.

This notion of *habitat* is still somewhat 'uncertain'. Individual owner-occupation will enable variations, particular or individual interpretations of *habitat*. There is a sort of plasticity which allows for modifications and appropriations. The space of the house – fence, garden, various and available corners – leaves a margin of initiative and freedom to *inhabit*, limited but real. State rationality is pushed to the limit. In the new housing estate *habitat* is established in its purest form, as a burden of constraints. Certain philosophers will say that large housing estates achieve the concept of *habitat*, by excluding the notion of *inhabit*, that is, the plasticity of space, its modelling and the appropriation by groups and individuals of the conditions of their existence. It is also a complete way of living (functions, prescriptions, daily routine) which is inscribed and signifies itself in this *habitat*.

The villa *habitat* has proliferated in the suburban communes around Paris, by extending the built environment in a disorderly fashion. This urban, and at the same time non-urban, growth has only one law: speculation on plots and property. The interstices left by this growth have been filled by large social housing estates. To the speculation on plots, badly opposed, was added speculation in apartments when these were in co-ownership. Thus housing entered into property wealth and urban land into exchange value. Restrictions were disappearing.

If one defines urban reality by dependency *vis-à-vis* the centre, suburbs are urban. If one defines urban order by a perceptible (legible) relationship between centrality and periphery, suburbs are de-urbanized. And one can say that the 'planning thought' of large social housing estates has literally set itself against the city and the urban to eradicate them. All perceptible, legible urban reality has disappeared: streets, squares, monuments, meeting places. Even the café (the bistro) has encountered the resentment of the builders of those large housing estates, their taste for asceticism, the reduction of 'to *inhabit*' to *habitat*. They had to go to the end of their destruction of palpable urban reality before there could appear the demand for a restitution.

Then one saw the timid, slow reappearance of the cafe, the commercial, centre, the street, 'cultural' amenities, in brief, a few elements of urban reality.

Urban order thus decomposes into two stages: individual and owner-occupied houses and housing estates. But there is no society without order, signified, perceptible, legible on the ground. Suburban disorder harbours an order: a glaring opposition of individually owner-occupied detached houses and housing estates. This opposition tends to constitute a *system of significations* still urban even into de-urbanization. Each sector defines itself (by and in the consciousness of the inhabitants) in relation to the other, against the other. The inhabitants themselves have little consciousness of the internal order of their sector, but the people from the housing estates see and perceive themselves as not being villa dwellers. This is reciprocal. At the heart of this opposition the people of the housing estates entrench themselves into the *logic of the habitat* and the people of owner-occupied houses entrench themselves into the *make-believe of habitat*. For some it is the rational organization (in appearance) of space. For others it is the presence of the dream, of nature, health, apart from the bad and unhealthy city. But the logic of the *habitat* is only perceived in relation to make-believe, and make-believe in relation to logic. People represent themselves to themselves by what they are lacking or believe to be lacking. In this relationship, the imaginary has more power. It over-determines logic: the fact of *inhabiting* is perceived by reference to the owner-occupation of detached dwellings. These dwellers regret the absence of a spatial logic while the people of the housing estates regret not knowing the joys of living in a detached house. Hence the surprising results of surveys. More than 80 per cent of French people aspire to be owner-occupiers of a house, while a strong majority also declare themselves to be 'satisfied' with social housing estates. The outcome is not important here. What should be noted is that *consciousness of the city and of urban reality is dulled* for one or the other, so as to disappear. The practical and theoretical (ideological) destruction of the city cannot but leave an enormous emptiness, not including administrative and other problems increasingly difficult to resolve. This emptiness is less important for a critical analysis than the source of conflict expressed by the end of the city and by the extension of a mutilated and deteriorated, but real, urban society. The suburbs are urban, within a dissociated morphology, the empire of separation and

scission between the elements of what had been created as unity and simultaneity.

Within this perspective critical analysis can distinguish three periods (which do not exactly correspond to the distinctions previously made in three acts of the drama of the city).

First period. Industry and the process of industrialization assault and ravage pre-existing urban reality, destroying it through practice and ideology, to the point of extirpating it from reality and consciousness. Led by a class strategy, industrialization acts as a *negative* force over urban reality: the urban social is denied by the industrial economic.

Second period (in part juxtaposed to the first). Urbanization spreads and urban society becomes general. Urban reality, in and by its own destruction makes itself acknowledged as socio-economic reality. One discovers that the whole society is liable to fall apart if it lacks the city and centrality: an essential means for the planned organization of production and consumption has disappeared.

Third period. One finds or reinvents urban reality, but not without suffering from its destruction in practice or in thinking. One attempts to reconstitute centrality. Would this suggest that class strategy has disappeared? This is not certain. It has changed. To the old centralities, to the decomposition of centres, it substitutes the centre of decision-making.

Thus is born or reborn urban thought. It follows an urbanism without thought. The masters of old had no need for an urban theory to embellish their cities. What sufficed was the pressure exercised by the people on their masters and the presence of a civilization and style which enabled the wealth derived from the labour of the people to be invested into '*œuvres*'. The bourgeois period puts an end to this age-old tradition. At the same time this period brings a new *rationality*, different from the rationality elaborated by philosophers since ancient Greece.

Philosophical Reason proposed definitions of man, the world, history and society which were questionable but also underpinned by reasonings which had been given shape. Its democratic generalizations later gave way to a rationalism of opinions and attitudes. Each citizen was expected to have a reasoned opinion on every fact and problem concerning him, this wisdom spurning the irrational. From the confrontation of ideas and opinions, a superior reason was to emerge, a

general wisdom inciting the general will. It is fruitless to insist upon the difficulties of this classical rationalism, linked to the political difficulties of democracy, and to the practical difficulties of humanism. In the nineteenth and especially in the twentieth century, organizing rationality, operation at various levels of social reality, takes shape. Is it coming from the capitalist firm and the management of units of production? Is it born at the level of the State and planning? What is important is that it is an *analytical reason* pushed to its extreme consequences. It begins from a most detailed methodical analysis of elements – productive operation, social and economic organization, structure and function. It then subordinates these elements to a finality. Where does this finality come from? Who formulates it and stipulates it? How and why? This is the gap and the failure of this operational rationalism. Its tenets purport to extract finality from the sequence of operations. Now, this is not so. Finality, that is, the whole and the orientation of the whole, decides itself. To say that it comes from the operations themselves, is to be locked into a vicious circle: the analysis giving itself as its own aim, for its own meaning. Finality is an object of decision. It is a *strategy*, more or less justified by an *ideology*. Rationalism which purports to extract from its own analyses the aim pursued by these analyses is itself an *ideology*. The notion of *system* overlays that of strategy. To critical analysis the system reveals itself as strategy, is unveiled as decision, that is, as decided finality. It has been shown above how a *class strategy* has oriented the analysis and division of urban reality, its destruction and restitution; and projections on the society where such strategic decisions have been taken.

However, from the point of view of a technicist rationalism, the results on the ground of the processes examined above represent only chaos. In the 'reality', which they critically observe – suburbs, urban fabric and surviving cores – these rationalists do not recognize the conditions of their own existence. What is before them is only contradiction and disorder. Only, in fact, *dialectical* reason can master (by reflective thought, by practice) multiple and paradoxically contradictory processes.

How to impose order in this chaotic confusion? It is in this way that organizational rationalism poses its problem. This is not a normal disorder. How can it be established as norm and normality? This is unconceivable. This disorder is unhealthy. The physician of modern society see himself as the physician of a sick social space. Finality? The

cure? It is *coherence*. The rationalist will establish or re-establish coherence into a chaotic reality which he observes and which offers itself up to his action. This rationalist may not realize that coherence is a form, therefore a means rather than an end, and that he will systematize the *logic of the habitat* underlying the disorder and apparent incoherence, that he will take as point of departure towards the coherence of the real, his coherent approaches. There is in fact no single or unitary approach in planning thought, but several tendencies identifiable according to this operational rationalism. Among these tendencies, some assert themselves *against*, others *for* rationalism by leading it to extreme formulations. What interferes with the general tendencies of those involved with planning is understanding only what they can translate in terms of graphic operations: seeing, feeling at the end of a pencil, drawing.

One can therefore identify the following:

(1) The planning of men of good will (architects and writers). Their thinking and projects imply a certain philosophy. Generally they associate themselves to an old classical and liberal humanism. This not without a good dose of nostalgia. One wishes to build to the 'human scale', for 'people'. These humanists present themselves at one and the same time as doctors of society and creators of new social relations. Their ideology, or rather, their idealism often come from agrarian models, adopted without reflection: the village, the community, the neighbourhood, the townsman-citizen who will be endowed with civic buildings, etc. They want to build buildings and cities to the 'human scale', 'to its measure', without conceiving that in the modern world 'man' has changed scale and the measure of yesteryear (village and city) has been transformed beyond measure. At best, this tradition leads to a *formalism* (the adoption of models which had neither content or meaning), or to an *aestheticism*, that is, the adoption for their beauty of ancient models which are then thrown as fodder to feed the appetites of consumers.

(2) The planning of these administrators linked to the public (State) sector. It sees itself as scientific. It relies sometimes on a science, sometimes on studies which call themselves synthetic (pluri or multi-disciplinary). This scientism, which accompanies the deliberate forms of operational rationalism, tends to neglect the so-called 'human factor'. It divides itself into tendencies. Sometimes through a particu-

lar science, a technique takes over and becomes the point of departure; it is generally a technique of communication and circulation. One extrapolates from a science, from a fragmentary analysis of the reality considered. One optimizes information and communication into a model. This technocratic and systematized planning, with its myths and its ideology (namely, the primacy of technique), would not hesitate to raze to the ground what is left of the city to leave way for cars, ascendant and descendant networks of communication and information. The models elaborated can only be put into practice by eradicating from social existence the very ruins of what was the city.

Sometimes, on the contrary, information and analytical knowledge coming from different sciences are oriented towards a synthetic finality. *For all that, one should not conceive an urban life having at its disposal information provided by the sciences of society.* These two aspects are confounded in the conception of *centres of decision-making*, a global vision, planning already unitary in its own way, linked to a philosophy, to a conception of society, a political strategy, that is, a global and total system.

(3) The planning of developers. They conceive and realize without hiding it, for the market, with profit in mind. What is new and recent is that they are no longer selling housing or buildings, but *planning*. With or without ideology, planning becomes an exchange value. The project of developers presents itself as opportunity and place of privilege: the place of happiness in a daily life miraculously and marvelously transformed. The make-believe world of *habitat* is inscribed in the logic of *habitat* and their unity provides a social practice which does not need a system. Hence these advertisements, which are already famous and which deserve posterity because publicity itself becomes ideology. Parly II (a new development) 'gives birth to a new art of living', a 'new lifestyle'. Daily life resembles a fairy tale. 'Leave your coat in the cloakroom and feeling lighter, do your shopping after having left the children in the nurseries of the shopping mall, meet your friends, have a drink together at the drugstore . . .' Here is the fulfilled make-believe of the joy of living. Consumer society is expressed by orders: the order of these elements on the ground, the order to be happy. Here is the context, the setting, the means of your happiness. If you do not know how to grasp the happiness offered so as to make it your own – don't insist!

A *global strategy*, that is, what is already an unitary system and total planning, is outlined through these various tendencies. Some will put into practice and will concretize a directed-consumer society. They will build not only commercial centres, but also centres of privileged consumption: the renewed city. They will by making 'legible' an ideology of happiness through consumption, joy by planning adapted to its new mission. This planning programmes a daily life generating satisfactions – (especially for receptive and participating women). A programmed and computerized consumption will become the rule and norm for the whole society. Others will erect *decision-making* centres, concentrating the means of power: information, training, organization, operation. And still: repression (constraints, including violence) and persuasion (ideology and advertising). Around these centres will be apportioned on the ground, in a dispersed order, according to the norms of foreseen constraints, the peripheries, de-urbanized urbanization. All the conditions come together thus for a perfect domination, for a refined exploitation of people as producers, consumers of products, consumers of space.

The convergence of these projects therefore entails the greatest dangers, for it raises *politically* the problem of urban society. It is possible that new contradictions will arise from these projects, impeding convergence. If a unitary strategy was to be successfully constituted, it might prove irretrievable.