articulation. Analysis only makes sense if it is able to distinguish organizations and institutions, to the extent that they control the exterior and interior functions of the city and can therefore combine them. Structures are also twofold: they are *morphological* (sites and situations, buildings, streets and squares, monuments, neighborhoods) and *sociological* (distribution of the population, ages and sexes, households, active or passive population, socioprofessional categories, managers and the managed). As for its form in the conventional sense of the word, that is to say geometric or plastic, there is a spatial element that must be accounted for—grid or radial-concentric. However, such an arrangement does not become obvious unless we turn our attention to circulation, unless we restrict the urban problematic to the problems of circulation. The invention of new forms (X-shaped, spiral, helical, concave, etc.) is merely a simplistic solution to the urban problematic.

As we have seen, the essential aspect of the urban phenomenon is its centrality, but a *centrality* that is understood in conjunction with the dialectical movement that creates or destroys it. The fact that any point can become central is the meaning of urban space-time. However, centrality is not indifferent to what it brings together, for it requires a content. And yet, the exact nature of that content is unimportant. Piles of objects and products in warehouses, mounds of fruit in the marketplace, crowds, pedestrians, goods of various kinds, juxtaposed, superimposed, accumulated—this is what makes the urban urban. If the city is always a spectacle for itself, viewed from high on a terrace, a tower, a hilltop, a vantage point (a high point that is the *elsewhere* where the urban reveals itself), it is not because the spectator perceives a picture that is outside reality, but because her glance is consolidating. It is the very form of the urban, revealed. Everything that occurs within the urban reality does so as if everything that constituted that reality could be compared,

and always increasingly so. In this way—in confusion—the urban is conceived, perceived, and revealed. Agriculture settles into nature. It produces according to the laws of physis, guiding nature along rather than forcing it into shape. If physis moves from the seed to the flower and the fruit, beginning the cycle again, peasant space and time do not break the cycle; they are integral to it, they depend closely on its particularities: the composition of the soil, spontaneous flora and fauna, biological equilibriums, microclimates. Industry captures nature but doesn't respect it. It exhausts its energies, rips it apart to grab hold of its resources and raw materials, ravages it to "produce" things (exchangeable, salable) that are not in or of nature. Industry is not subjected to any given place but still depends on place. Although it tends to occupy the entirety of a territory, it does so only by combining a number of dispersed fragments, companies, through the market.

The city is vastly different. Indeed, it is not only a devouring activity, consumption; it becomes productive (means of production) but initially does so by bringing together the elements of production. It combines markets (the inventory includes the market for agricultural and industrial products—local, regional, national, global: capital markets, labor markets, markets for the land itself, for signs and symbols). The city brings together whatever is engendered somewhere else, by nature or labor: fruits and objects, products and producers, works and creations, activities and situations. What does the city create? Nothing. It centralizes creation. And yet it creates everything. Nothing exists without exchange, without union, without proximity, that is, without relationships. The city creates a situation, the urban situation, where *different* things occur one after another and do not exist separately but according to their differences. The urban, which is indifferent to each difference it contains, often seems to be as indifferent as nature, but with a cruelty

all its own. However, the urban is not indifferent to all differences, precisely because it unites them. In this sense, the city constructs, identifies, and delivers the essence of social relationships: the reciprocal existence and manifestation of differences arising from or resulting in conflicts. Isn't this the justification and meaning of this rational delirium known as the city, the urban? (Social) relationships continue to deteriorate based on the distance, time, and space that separate institutions and groups. They are revealed in the (virtual) negation of that distance. This is the source of the latent violence inherent in the urban, as well as the equally disturbing character of celebrations and holidays. Immense crowds gather along the unstable border between joyous frenzy and cruel frenzy, trancelike in the grip of ludic enjoyment. Rarely does a celebration occur without some kind of "happening," some unforeseen movement of the crowd, people fainting, trampled underfoot, dying. Centrality, an aspect of mathematics, is also an aspect of drama. It unites them the way it unites *everything,* including symbols and signs (including those of union). The signs of the urban are the signs of assembly: the things that promote assembly (the street and its surface, stone, asphalt, sidewalks) and the requirements for assembly (seats, lights). The urban is most forcefully evoked by the constellation of lights at night, especially when flying over a city—the dazzling impression of brilliance, neon, street signs, streetlights, incitements of various kinds, the simultaneous accumulation of wealth and signs. But during its realization, this concentration flexes and cracks. It requires another center, a periphery, an elsewhere. An other and different place. This movement, produced by the urban, in turn produces the urban. Creation comes to a halt to create again.

The urban is, therefore, pure form: a place of encounter, assembly, simultaneity. This form has no specific content, but is a center of attraction and life. It is an abstraction, but unlike a metaphysical entity, the urban is a concrete abstraction, associated with practice. Living creatures, the products of industry, technology and wealth, works of culture, ways of living, situations, the modulations and ruptures of the everyday—the urban *accumulates* all content. But it is more than and different from accumulation. Its contents (things, objects, people, situations) are mutually exclusive because they are diverse, but inclusive because they are brought together and imply their mutual presence. The urban is both form and receptacle, void and plenitude, superobject and nonobject, supraconsciousness and the totality of consciousnesses. It is associated with the *logic of form* and with the *dialectic of content* (with the differences and contradictions of content). It is associated with mathematical form (in the urban, everything is calculable, quantifiable, programmable; everything, that is, except the drama that results from the co-presence and re-presentation of the elements calculated, quantified, and programmed), with geometrical form (gridded, circular), and therefore with symmetry and recurrence (paths are reversible, in spite of the irreversibility of time, and, consequently, *legible,* urban simultaneity being analogous with literature, with the rational order of coexisting elements). And yet, in spite of its socio-logic, the urban does not constitute a system. There is neither an urban system nor an incursion of the urban into a unitary system of forms, because of the (relative) independence between form and content. This precludes a definition of the urban phenomenon (the urban) in terms of a system or as a system. It also precludes defining it as an object (substance) or subject (consciousness). It is a *form.* Because of this, it tends toward

1. *centrality,* through distinct modes of production, different productive relations—a trend that has already affected the "decision-making centers," the embodiment of the state, along with all the attendant dangers associated with such a movement—and
2. *polycentrality,* omnicentrality, the rupture of the center,

dispersion—a trend that can be oriented either toward the constitution of different centers (analogous and possibly complementary) or toward dispersion and segregation.

Few would argue with the difficulty in understanding, much less mastering, such a contradictory movement. But this is hardly sufficient grounds for denying its existence and substituting either a simplified socio-logic (a "pure" logic of form) or the emphasis on a given content (the industrial production of exchangeable objects such as merchandise, the circulation of information, authoritarian decisions, automobile circulation, and so on).

Dialectical reason, both mental and social, inherent in urban form and its relationship to its content, can explain certain aspects of the urban. There are no urban "forms" in the plastic (rather than logical) sense, silhouettes against a dark background, like those that stand out against a natural backdrop and make manifest the obscurity of that background. Abundance, proliferation—everything is distinguishable. Elements that are called or summoned blend into one another. Everything is legible. Urban space is transparent. Everything signifies, even if signifiers float freely, since everything is related to "pure" form, is contained in that form. Order and form tend to blur together, even though form is simultaneously perceived, conceived, and made manifest (dreamed). But *we* (subjects, individuals or groups, who are also in and of the urban reality and collected there the way things are) realize that this transparency is deceptive. The city, the urban, is also mysterious, occult. Alongside the strident signs of visible power such as wealth and the police, plots are engineered and hidden powers conspire, behind appearances and beneath the transparency. Until the arrival of a new order, the urban will never lack an element of repression, which arises from what is hidden within it and the will to keep hidden the dramas, the latent violence, death, and the

quotidian. This repressive side of the urban is incorporated in the conception of space; it supports transgression. Here, the relation between transparency and opacity differs from what it was either in nature or in industry. Couldn't it be said that there exists a dialectical relationship, a difference in contradiction? Social opacity tends to manifest itself, to appear as mental clarity. If truth is hidden and loses its meaning, the meaning of truth can fracture at any moment. Or explode. Yet urban life hovers, ambiguous and uncertain, between the interpretation of messages based on a (recognized) code and the metalanguage that is content to paraphrase messages that are known, repeated, redundant. The city writes itself on its walls and in its streets. But that writing is never completed. The book never ends and contains many blank or torn pages. It is nothing but a draft, more a collection of scratches than writing. Course and discourse accompany one another but never meet. Can the urban paradigm, namely the set of pertinent oppositions that give meaning to things (center and noncenter, information and redundancy, open and closed, public and nonpublic) ever find closure? Apparently not. Certain oppositions, like particularity and difference, which resolutely reflect lived experience, prevent that set from ever terminating. The city and the urban, super-objects and super-signs, are not exactly based on the same concepts as objects and signs. And yet they imply and contain them, both objects and signs and the concepts that refer to those objects and signs. To understand the laws governing objects and signs in urban reality, we need to add to those concepts (system, set, division and arrangement, the sociology of groups and groupings) specific concepts such as "network" (of exchange, communication). For the urban is *also* defined as the juxtaposition and superimposition of networks, the assembly and union of those networks, some of which are constituted on the basis of the territory, some

on industry, and others on the basis of other centers within the urban fabric.

In this way the notion of a "rupture" (a relative discontinuity) between the urban and its precedents, the industrial and agricultural spheres, is made concrete. Upon closer examination, this rupture turns out to be not epistemological or philosophical, not even and not solely political or historical. It goes much deeper than that. It simultaneously introduces and grounds a form of knowledge, a field. Space and time change, of course, but what distinguishes them is the introduction of a form (within a form) similar to logical form and *almost as abstract and active* as that logical form (which is associated with language, discourse, reasoning, analysis, effective action), as abstract and active as the form of exchange (of value and commodities) but different. This form relegates certain outmoded contents to the past; it acts *selectively* through knowledge and the results (or residues) of history. It absorbs other contents as well, combines them *actively* in a totality or virtual synthesis, which does not need philosophy for its fulfillment but can simply be recognized as a channel (strategy) for action. If we want to understand this form and the modalities of its intervention, there is no point in starting with space as such (since it is reconsidered, reworked) or time as such (since it is transformed). It is *form* itself, as generator of a virtual object, the urban, the encounter and assembly of all objects and subjects, existing or possible, that must be explored. As with conquered space and accumulated time, we must also abandon as a starting point philosophy, ideological and institutional discourse, the customary scientificity that limits thought to an existing framework and prevents it from exploring possibilities through form. And, most important, we must exclude conventional models, which have generally been adopted, from industrialization, productionism, and economism. Where then do we begin? We begin with a formal conception of logic and a

dialectic of content (including that fundamental content, the base, the foundation that is everywhere the same and never the same, always other and never other: *desire,* which, with an overwhelming degree of competence and cunning, is able to make use of form to recognize itself and be recognized, to confront itself and struggle in the urban).

In this way the space-time axis, extending from the zero point of urban reality to the completion of the process (industrialization, urbanization), assumes meaning and scope. Initially, when near the zero point, the urban was merely a work in progress, a seed—somewhat like a tool, a stone or wooden club, or language and concepts the first time they were used to identify a place. With the first gathering and collection of objects existing separately in nature, from the first cairn or pile of fruit, *centrality* came into being, and with it its virtual realization. From the very first, combining, assembling, and gathering were essential elements of social practice; it was a rational aspect of production that did not coincide with productive activity but was not dissociated from it, either. This conception of a center differs from the reality that is manifest in nature, but also from the social aspects of agricultural and industrial activity. These are not based on the virtual cancellation (negation) of distance in time and space, on action and effort in this sense. Yet the concept retains certain physical notions because it is associated with logico-mathematical concepts, although it cannot be equated with them.

Physicists also conceive of a concentration of matter scattered throughout the cosmos at a single point, the density of this matter becoming infinite and the distances (voids and spaces) between molecules and particles canceling one another out. This impossibility clarifies the real. The urban assumes cosmic significance; it is globalized (combining the *world* as obscure path and *cosmos* as luminous unity). Science fiction often describes this cosmic aspect of the City,

a rediscovered physical space, modeled as an artifact of the urban. Through the succession of cities and their types, the urban, already present as virtuality in the germinal stage, becomes concrete—but has no need of metaphysical support or transcendent unity. The political city, the mercantile city, the industrial city have this twofold quality: a process that engenders the urban (and is shaped by the urban) coupled with provisional limits inflicted on this process by the conditions of agricultural and industrial production. Through this dialectical movement, the urban reacts to what has preceded it, grows out of it, and serves as its terminus, without this implying any sense of metaphysical finality. Here, too, the formless, the dispersed, the scattered assume form. That form affirms itself as an end; we must rely on knowledge to control the process. The unifying power of urban form is not infinite. In fact it re-presents the summum of the finite: finitude. This form, which is itself empty (similar to "pure" logical form, or tautology), does not participate in the infinite power attributed to divinity, the transcendent Idea, absolute Reason. The urban, because it combines finite elements in finite places and in the finitude of place (point, center), is itself finite. It can perish. It is threatened by insignificance and, especially, the power of political society. Urban form does tend to break the limits that try to circumscribe it. Its movement seeks a path. But it is not immediately obvious that any obstacles will be sidestepped or overcome. The dialectic (contradictory) character of this movement means that it can be thwarted, means that certain elements can be used against the movement of the whole. The urban, a place of drama, can be transformed into the drama of the urban. Can segregation, the enemy of assemblies and encounters, arrest this movement? Can uniform space, without "topoi," without places, without contrast, pure indifference, a caricature of the relation between the urban and its components, stifle urban reality? It can. It can even assume a mantle of

democracy. Urban democracy would imply an equality of places, equal participation in global exchanges. Centrality would produce hierarchy and therefore inequality. And yet, wouldn't dispersion result in segregation? Can revolutionary upheaval break the boundaries of urban reality? Sometimes it can. Which is a measure of the importance of a radical critique of separation, segregation, the politics of space, and, more generally, urbanism.

The above helps give meaning and scope to the theory of *differential space.* The differences that are established in space do not come from space as such but from that which settles there, that which is assembled and confronted by and in the urban reality. Contrasts, oppositions, superpositions, and juxtapositions replace separation, spatio-temporal distances. The theory goes something like this: Space (and space-time) changes with the period, sphere, field, and dominant activity. There are, therefore, three layers in space: rural space, industrial space, and urban space, superposed, telescoped, sometimes absorbed into one another. At the start of the agrarian period, a given space (thoughts of and in urban space can think this "given" as such, as pure nature, as geography, but they can no longer achieve it without reconstructing it) was marked out, oriented, hierarchized. The initial topoi, or place-names, once given a name, entered a binary grid that was mental and social, practical and verbal. These places (topoi) were an immediate product of nature: the particularities of the soil (material nature, flora and fauna, the appearance of paths and byways) served as names. In place of the heterogeneity of the natural environment, industrial space substituted homogeneity, or rather, its will to homogeneity, consistent with its quantitative rationality. In a planned space these topoi were mere accidents, vague commodities of a folkloric language; all places were homologous, distinct only in their distance from one another. Objective and measurable, space was represented only with reference

to productivist criteria. While there is an advantage in consolidating all the social functions of production, it is not always possible to do so. In the first place, when it is possible, we end up with the urban phenomenon. In the second, there are additional costs: the cost of space, the displacement of objects and information. Methods of optimization can, in principle, modify the use of space. They add a scientific veneer to the project of industrial rationality: the extension on a global scale of the internal organization of the enterprise, of the "industrial division of labor." These methods are indifferent to the urban phenomenon but are incorporated in it every time we succeed in bringing together production and markets (labor, capital, products).

This urban space differs radically from industrial space, precisely because it is differential (and not homogeneous). Even if the initial property boundaries and rural names remain, urban space radically reshapes them. Oppositions and contrasts replace solitary particularities (relative to the soil). Consider the map of Paris. Many of the names have rural origins (Butte-aux-Cailles, Grange-Batelière, Moulin-Vert). We know that the streets in the Latin Quarter follow the trace of rural footpaths and roads, which the people of Paris took to go to their prairies, vineyards, and fields on the Left Bank. Over the centuries, however, this network turned into a labyrinth, the center of the intelligentsia and its ferment, which contrasted with the commercial roadways and grid-like projections of state order. Haussmann succeeded in cutting up the Latin Quarter but failed to exterminate this opposition. The retail space around Les Halles was established along a north-south axis and was filled with artisanal and manufacturing products. This social group led the assault in extending itself toward the east of Paris, until then inhabited by the aristocracy (the Marais) and royalty (near the Bastille, the Arsenal, etc.). The east-west axis along the Seine was never fully established, even after massive industrialization. The site, the situation explain why. Even though the river,

a neutral urban space, served as a means of transport for centuries, the north-south axis had a preponderant importance economically, militarily, and politically. The contrast was remarkable. The east-west axis, between Vincennes and Place de la Concorde, was marked by esplanades that were built away from local circulation, except for the most recent (Concorde, Place de l'Étoile). They served as meeting places and were the setting for festivals, games, and promenades: Place Royale (Place des Vosges), Place des Victoires, Palais-Royal, Place Vendôme. In contrast, the Louvre is the starting point for the triumphal way that leads westward. Although originally a noncommercial route, it became a site for the deployment of royal and imperial splendor (Tuileries, Place Louis XV, Cours-la-Reine, Champs-Élysées, and later l'Étoile). In this way, the thrust and pressure of the major social groups model space differentially, even when we would expect homogeneity (in the case of a large capital city such as Paris). Quite remarkably, there are no esplanades or squares along the north-south axis (Rue Saint-Denis, Rue Saint-Martin, Boulevard Saint-Michel, and Rue Saint-Jacques) other than intersections.

It's not the "élan vital" of the urban community that explains the structures of space, as Marcel Poëte expressed in the language of Bergson. It is the result of a history that must be conceived as the work of social "agents" or "actors," of collective "subjects" acting in successive thrusts, discontinuously (relatively) releasing and fashioning layers of space. These major social groups, comprising classes and fractions of classes, as well as institutions that cannot be adequately defined in terms of class character (royalty or municipality, for example), act with and/or against one another. From their interactions, their strategies, successes, and failures arise the qualities and "properties" of urban space. The general form of the urban encompasses these various differences by bringing them together. If Paris is any example, the proletariat has not yet created a space. The merchant bourgeoisie,

the intellectuals, and politicians modeled the city. The industrialists demolished it. The working class never had any space other than that of its expropriation, its deportation: segregation.

I referred to those parts of space that were comparable, that could be discussed and read (on maps, along trajectories, in images that had been more or less elaborated by "subjects") in a way that afforded direct comparison, as isotopies. For example, there is a remarkable isotopy in the spaces created by state rationalism: long straight lines, broad avenues, voids, empty perspectives, an occupation of the soil that makes a clean break with its antecedents, without regard for either the rights and interests of the lower classes or cost. These traits are distinct: from the Parisian spaces ordered by the kings to those commanded by the empire to those of the republics. They continue to expand, except in one respect: their mediocrity, their conscious and increasingly visible subordination to the needs of monopoly industry, as we follow the recent axis that has commercialized and industrialized the ancient royal and imperial way. No longer do units of production inhabit urban space, modeling it in a way that, although it can be contested, is at least straightforward. There is nothing but offices, one after the other.

Isotopies: places of identity, identical places. Neighboring order. Heterotopy: the other place, the place of the other, simultaneously excluded and interwoven. Distant order. Between them there are neutral spaces: crossroads, thoroughfares, places that are not so much nothing as indifferent (neutral). Often these are cuts/sutures (like the broad street or avenue that simultaneously separates and joins two neighborhoods, two contrasting heterotopies). Spaces marked by different functions are superimposed on one another. Isotopy is associated with multifunctionality (formerly embodied in plazas). Animated environments, especially streets, are multifunctional (passage, commerce, entertainment). In the case

of small streets, the suture is more important than the cut, and the reverse is true for large thoroughfares and highways, which crisscross and slice through urban space. The isotopy-heterotopy difference can only be understood dynamically. In urban space, something is always happening. Relations change. Differences and contrasts can result in conflict, or are attenuated, erode, or corrode.

Urban space as a whole was heterotopic compared with rural space until the reversal that began in the sixteenth century in Europe, which resulted in the invasion of the countryside by the urban fabric. During this same period, the outlying areas remained strongly heterotopic. Crisscrossed by long, poorly equipped thoroughfares, ambiguous spaces, they harbored populations from different origins: cart drivers and mercenaries, traders, seminomads forced to settle outside the city limits, often suspect and sacrificed in time of war. After a time, the city began to merge with these outlying areas, to assimilate them by annexing them to its more active neighborhoods, inhabited by merchants and artisans. This led to urban agglomeration and the ensuing strong sense of popular unity that is solidified by struggles with a monarchical state. It wasn't until the rise of the bourgeoisie that this trend reversed. Popular elements were expelled from the center to still rural peripheral heterotopies, which have since been changed into "suburbs," habitat receptacles, typified by a highly visible form of isotopy. In this sense, heterotopy corresponds—but to a limited extent—to the anomie discussed by sociologists. Anomic groups construct heterotopic spaces, which are eventually reclaimed by the dominant praxis.

What about u-topia, the non-place, the place for that which doesn't occur, for that which has no place of its own, that is always elsewhere? On a map of Paris (the so-called Turgot map of approximately 1735), u-topia can be neither read nor seen, and yet it is there in all its glory. It is where

the gaze that overlooks the large city is situated, a vaguely determined place, but one that is carefully conceived and imagined (imaged), a place of consciousness; that is, a consciousness of totality. In general, this place, imagined and real, is found near the borders of verticality, the dimension of desire, power, and thought. Sometimes it is found deep within the subterranean city imagined by the novelist or poet, the underside of the city given over to conspiracy and crime. U-topia combines near and distant orders.

In terms of its relationship to content, urban form creates the contradiction (dialectic) previously mentioned, which I would now like to discuss in greater detail. Earlier, I noted that something is always happening in urban space. The void, the nothingness of action, can only be apparent; neutrality is a limiting case. The void (a place) attracts; it has this sense and this end. Virtually, anything can happen anywhere. A crowd can gather, objects can pile up, a festival unfold, an event—terrifying or pleasant—can occur. This is why urban space is so fascinating: centrality is always possible. At the same time, this space can empty itself, expel its content, become a place of pure scarcity or power. It is grasped in terms of its fixed structures, staged, hierarchized, from the apartment building to the urban in its entirety, defined by visible limits or the invisible limits of administrative decrees and orders. It can easily be divided into parties and partitions, into basic objects and units. While it may be fascinating because of its availability, it is equally fascinating because of the arbitrariness of its predefined units (along with office blocks and residential neighborhoods, there are arrondissements, the bureaucratic limits of electoral districts, etc.).

To resolve this contradiction, we can imagine the complete mobilization, not of the population, but of space. A space taken over by the ephemeral. So that every place becomes multifunctional, polyvalent, transfunctional, with an incessant turnover of functions; where groups take control

of spaces for expressive actions and constructions, which are soon destroyed. (An admirable example of such a conjuncturally modeled space, modified by group action, is the large exhibition space, especially the one in Montreal. An ephemeral city rose up from a transformed site, a magnificent city, where everydayness was absorbed in festival, where the urban was transparent in its splendor.)

In this way, u-topia, an illuminating virtuality already present, will absorb and metamorphose the various topoi.

U-topia is as necessary as isotopy and heterotopy. It is everywhere and nowhere. The transcendence of desire and power, the immanence of the people, the omnipresence of symbolism and the imaginary, the rational and dreamlike vision of centrality accumulating wealth and human gestures, the presence of the other, presence-absence, the need for a presence that is never achieved—these are also the characteristics of differential space. Urban form unites these differences, whether minimal or maximal. This form is defined only in and through this consolidating unity of difference (all differences, that is to say, differences forming a whole). This consolidation implies three terms, three topoi: isotopy, heterotopy, and u-topia. However, the transcendence of utopia and the overwhelming nature of monumentality and the void (enormous plazas, nocturnal squares), which embody the u-topic, require closer scrutiny. This does not imply unexamined praise for this element, half-fictional, half-real, which would result in a form of urban idealism. This last point has already been touched upon: the u-topic appears as if it were incorporated in certain necessary spaces such as gardens and parks. It is impossible to consider these spaces as neutral (neutral elements of the urban spatial ensemble). Parks and gardens make the "elsewhere" sensible, visible, and legible, intercalated in urban time and place. They refer to a twofold utopia: absolute nature and pure facticity. When the (public) park and garden are no longer subject to a form

of rationality whose origin is productivist and industrial, when they are no longer neutralized, no longer reduced to being "greenery," an avaricious and parodic geometry, they suggest an absolute and inaccessible nature—grottos, wind, altitude, the sea, islands—as well as facticity—the trimmed and tortured tree that serves as pure ornament. The garden, the park, are both, absolute contrasts that have been forced together, but in such a way that they evoke liberty, u-topian separation. Japan has many examples of the art of the garden. Paris does as well, but there they have very different qualities. Again, there is no urban space without utopian symbols, without a use of height and depth that is based on laws that are not those of utilitarian empiricism or a mediocre aesthetic borrowed from painting, sculpture, or any specific art, for that matter: these are the laws of urban form.

I have already said most of what I wanted to say about the relations between difference and particularity. Differential space retains particularities, which are experienced through the filter of homogeneous space. A selection is made. The particularities that are incompletely homogenized survive, are reestablished with a different meaning. This is the source of a major theoretical problem: the reuse of signifying units detached from their initial context. The problem has cropped up before in philosophy, ideology, and mythology. We come across it again in the discussion of space. Once again, the role of practice is critical. Only urban practice can resolve the problem, since it was urban practice that presented us with the problem in the first place.

In urban practice, discourse on or about the city is circumscribed, inscribed; it prescribes acts, directions. Can we claim that this practice is defined by a discourse? By speech or writing? The urban reality is the site of limitless speech only to the extent that it offers a finite, but large, number of pathways for its expression. This discourse incorporates earlier,

natural, historic units. And although it is written and read, it is not exhausted by the writing and reading of urban texts.

It is worthwhile to discuss the confusion between *difference, distinction, separation,* and *segregation.* Difference is incompatible with segregation, which caricatures it. When we speak of difference, we speak of relationships, and therefore proximity relations that are conceived and perceived, and inserted in a twofold space-time order: near and distant. Separation and segregation break this relationship. They constitute a totalitarian order, whose strategic goal is to break down concrete totality, to break the urban. Segregation complicates and destroys complexity.

A result of the complexification of the social, the urban promotes practical rationality, the link between *form* and *information.* And what about synthesis? It is given in practice, to the extent that practice demands freedom of information, namely the possibility that every place, every event can inform the others and receive information from them in turn.

Difference is informing and informed. It produces form, the best form resulting from optimal information. Separation and segregation isolate information. They produce formlessness. The order they provide is merely apparent. Only an ideology can use it to counter the disorder of information, encounters, or centrality. Only a limited industrial or state rationalism can mutilate the urban by dissociating it, by projecting onto the terrain its "spectral analysis," composed of disjunct elements, where the exchange of information can no longer take place.

Now that we have a better understanding of urban form (including its practical aspect), I would like to turn to its concrete manifestation in the form of an urban strategy.[1]

7 || Toward an Urban Strategy

Contemporary theory would, to some extent, have been familiar to Marx. Radical criticism was already clearing a path to thought and action. Marx, as we know, used as his starting point German philosophy, English political economy, and contemporary French ideas about revolutionary action and its objectives (socialism). His critique of Hegelianism, economic science, and history and its meaning enabled Marx to conceive of capitalist society both as a totality and as a moment of total transformation. Negativity would give rise to a new form of optimism. For Marx the negativity of radical critique coincided, theoretically and practically, with that of the revolutionary proletariat. The similarities and differences between this situation and the second half of the twentieth century would soon become apparent. To the Marxist critique of philosophy and political ideology, we can now add the radical critique of the reductive disciplines, the fragmentary sciences, which have become specialized and institutionalized. Only through such critique can we distinguish the contribution of each of those sciences to the emerging totality. We now know that this is the only way to

gain access to totality, rather than through a summation or juxtaposition of the "positive" results of those sciences. Taken alone, each of these sciences dissolves in fragments or confusion, dogmatism or nihilism.

The dialectic between urban form and content is such that (1) the existence of this form ensures a rationality of the "real," which can then be analyzed conceptually; (2) form, as such, becomes the basis for study at the highest level; (3) content is based on analyses that will further fragment this already diverse content: the fragmentary sciences. Consequently, what is needed is perpetual criticism (and self-criticism) of those sciences on behalf of rational (global) form.

A critique of the specialized sciences implies a critique of specialized politics, structures, and their ideologies. Every political group, and especially every structure, justifies itself through an ideology that it develops and nurtures: nationalism or patriotism, economism or state rationalism, philosophism, (conventional) liberal humanism. This tends to mask essential problems, primarily those associated with urban society and its mutation (transformation or revolution). These ideologies, which are ill-suited to the use to which they are put, were developed during an earlier period, a period characterized by industrial rationalism and the division of intellectual labor. Here I would again like to make use of the methodology of levels to distinguish tactics and strategies. We can state the following:

1. On the level of projects and plans, there is always some distance between elaboration and execution. In this context, we should make a distinction between demands and disputes, which are frequently confused. Disputes reveal the ideologies characteristic of the groups or classes involved, including the ideology (or ideologies) of those who contribute to the development of projects, *ideological urbanism.* The intervention of "disputants" introduces conflict into social logics (socio-logic as ideo-logic). The possibility of

dispute causes these logics to manifest themselves as ideologies and promotes confrontation, which is a measure of the degree of urban democracy. The passivity of those involved, their silence, their reticent prudence are an indication of the absence of urban democracy; that is, concrete democracy. Urban revolution and concrete (developed) democracy coincide. The urban practice of groups and classes—that is, their way of life, their morphology—can only confront urban ideology in this way. And, in this way, disputes evolve into demands.

2. On what we might call the epistemological level, we can raise the question of knowledge, formal or otherwise. In terms of the way the problematic has been defined, it seems unlikely that a "body" of acquired knowledge can be formed. The problematic will dominate scientificity until a new order arises. In other words, ideology and knowledge blend together, and we must continuously strive to distinguish them. Yet every science can consider itself a party to the understanding of the urban phenomenon, providing the following two conditions are met: that it provide specific concepts and a method, and that it abandon imperialism, a requirement that implies a continuous process of criticism and self-criticism.

There is no question that sociology brings with it a large number of specific concepts, such as "ideology" (together with its critical implications), "institution," and "anomie" and all that they imply. Obviously, this is not an exhaustive list, and I mention these concepts specifically only because they are exemplary subjects for criticism. Further discussion is needed to determine if some of the concepts developed by Georges Gurvitch—for example, "effervescent behavior" or the "plurality of time"—would be useful for the analysis of the urban phenomenon.[1] However, concepts and representations of centrality, the urban fabric, and urban space are not restricted to the field of sociology (although my comments

should not be interpreted as a criticism of the concepts themselves).

On the highest theoretical level, we need to envisage the mutation (or transformation or revolution) through which so-called industrial society becomes urban society. Such mutations determine the problematic—that is, the problematic character of the real. Can we claim that the phenomena associated with industrialization within a given global framework (institutional, ideological) have been completely supplanted by urban phenomena? That the former are now subordinated to the latter? Not in my opinion. We shouldn't confuse trends with realization. Today's society is undergoing a transition and can best be understood in this sense. The phenomena and implications of industry are only now beginning to wane. On this level, we find that the so-called socialist countries were the first to transform their institutions to meet the needs of industrial production: modified rationality, planning, programming. In this, the capitalist countries have caught up to them—up to a certain point. The urban problematic is global, but the way we approach it depends on the economic, social, and political structure of the country, as well as its ideological superstructures. It is not obvious that these so-called socialist countries have shown as much initiative (more or less successful) in urbanization as they have in industrialization.

Knowledge of the urban phenomenon can only become a science in and through the conscious formation of an urban praxis, along with its own rationality, to supplant the now fully realized industrial praxis. Through this complex process, analysis can delineate "objects" or construct "models," all of which are provisional, all of which can be revised or criticized. This assumes the confrontation mentioned earlier between urban ideology and the urban practice of social groups and classes. It also assumes the intervention of social and political forces and the liberation of capacities for invention, without excluding the closest thing we have to utopianism, namely "pure" imagination.

I would again like to emphasize the need for a reversal of the conventional way of looking at things. The possibility of a strategy is in fact linked to this reversal, but the phase in which it is produced makes forecasts and projects difficult. In general, urbanization is represented as a consequence of industrialization, the dominant phenomenon. The city or agglomeration (megalopolis) then enters into an examination of the process of industrialization and urban space within the general space of development. In terms of Marxist terminology, the urban and the process of urbanization are simple superstructures of the mode of production (capitalist or socialist). It is often assumed that there is no interaction among urban phenomena, the relations of production, and productive forces. The reversal of perspective occurs when industrialization is considered to be a step toward urbanization, a moment, an intermediary, an instrument. In such a way that, within this twofold process (industrialization-urbanization), the second term becomes dominant following a period in which the first was dominant. From this point on, our concept of the "city" can no longer be limited to "optimizing" industrialization and its consequences, complaining about alienation in industrial society (whether through alienating individualism or overorganization), or wishing for a return to the urban communities of antiquity, whether Greek or medieval. These so-called models are only variations of urbanist ideology.

In this context, the *critique of everyday life* can play a surprising role. It is not merely a detail of sociology, an "object" that can be studied critically, or a "subject"; it has no clearly circumscribed domain. It makes use of economy and economic analysis, just as it does sociology, psychology, and linguistics. Yet it does not fall into any of those categories. And although it does not cover every aspect of praxis in the

industrial era, it makes use of the most important results. That era resulted in the constitution of an *everydayness*, a social environment of sophisticated exploitation and carefully controlled passivity. Everydayness is not found within the "urban" as such but in and through generalized segregation: the segregation of moments of life and activities. The critical approach comprises the criticism of objects and subjects, sectors and domains. In showing how people live, the critique of everyday life builds an indictment of the strategies that lead to that result. Critical thought transgresses the boundaries separating the specialized sciences of human reality. It illuminates the practical uses of those sciences. It indicates the emergence and urgency of a new social practice no longer typical of "industrial" but of urban society. In this sense, the critique of everyday life (an ongoing critique, sometimes spontaneously self-critical, sometimes conceptually formulated) brings together the essential elements of the sociological study of the industrialized countries. By comparing the real and the possible (which is also "reality"), it draws conclusions, without, however, requiring an object or subject, a fixed system or domain. Given this orientation, we can even envisage urban sociology one day being given a definable status through the critique of needs and functionalities, structures, ideologies, and partial and reductive practices. The social practice that needs to be developed, that of urban society, has little immediate connection with what is currently referred to as urbanism.

As an ideology, urbanism dissimulates its strategies. The critique of urbanism is characterized by the need for a critique of urbanist ideologies and urbanist practices (as partial, that is, reductive, practices and class strategies). Such a critique can illuminate what is really happening in urban practice: the clumsy and unenlightened efforts to formulate and resolve some of the problems of urban society. For these strategies, which are dissimulated beneath the logic of class

(the politics of space, economism, and so forth), it substitutes a strategy that is linked to the understanding.

Consideration of the urban phenomenon, by pushing philosophy to a new level and turning all the sciences to its own account through a form of radical critique, can define a *strategy*. Within this perspective, we can rationally define the limits and point of convergence, where apparently separate lines of thought come together.

This strategy appears in bifurcated form. However, the disjunction cannot mask a fundamental unity arising from the fact that full knowledge momentarily focused on a problematic becomes *political* in the strong sense of the term: the science of political (urban) reality. In a relative sense, the strategy devolves into a strategy of knowledge and a political strategy without any separation taking place.

Should the science of the urban phenomenon respond to pragmatic requirements, to immediate demands? Planners, programmers, and users want solutions. For what? To make people happy. To order them to be happy. It's a strange way of interpreting happiness. The science of the urban phenomenon cannot respond to these demands without the risk of validating external restrictions imposed by ideology and power. It constitutes itself slowly, making use of theoretical hypotheses and practical experience as well as established concepts. But it cannot exist without imagination, that is, without utopia. It must recognize that there are a multiplicity of situations. In some situations, demography dominates reality and, consequently, knowledge. This does not mean that demography will become dominant, but that it will have a voice, rather than the right or power to determine the future. In other situations, economics will dominate, helped by planners. But in doing so, economics lays itself open to a radical critique, which, although inconvenient for the field, is of undeniable utility and fecundity. Sociology and sociologists will also play a role in these developments. It is possible that

research on cities and the urban phenomenon would enable us to construct macrosociological models. During this process (strategically oriented), sociology in general and urban sociology, led to reconsider their categories and concepts, may be able to generate a body of scientific knowledge centered on the problematic. Within an industrial framework, however, these "disciplines" can do no more than oscillate between the role of servants of (private or public) interests and the discourse between contestant and contested. In any event, and regardless of the outcome, the means can never be substituted for the end, or the part for the whole, or tactics for strategy. Any tactic associated with a given specialization will be severely criticized as soon as it attempts to become strategy on a global level: imperialism.

The strategy of knowledge cannot be isolated. It strives toward practice; in other words, the incessant confrontation with experience and the constitution of a coherent global practice, that of urban society (the practice of adopting time and space to the human being, a superior modality of freedom).

However, until the new order, social practice will belong to politicians, who will control it through institutions and systems. More specifically, specialist politicians, like specialists themselves, will block the formation of a higher rationality, that of urban democracy. They operate within the very institutional and ideological frameworks that need to be overcome. This complicates the situation considerably. The strategy of knowledge is doubly constricted. Because it cannot avoid an awareness of political strategies, it must familiarize itself with them. How can it avoid having knowledge of those objects and subjects, systems and domains? Political sociology and the institutional analysis of administrations and bureaucracies have a large role to play in this. Strategic activities can include proposals to politicians, government officials, factions, and parties. This does not mean

that critical knowledge should step down and give way to these specialist politicians. Quite the contrary. How can we provide them with projects and programs without abandoning a critical analysis of their ideologies and realizations? How can we persuade or constrain them if we respond to their pressure with an opposing pressure? Although the solution is far from simple, it would be fatal if knowledge were to abandon its right to criticize decisions and institutions. Every failure would trigger a process that would be difficult to reverse. And here, it is democracy that steps down and not just science and scientific institutions.

Strategy contains a key element: the optimal and maximal use of technology (all technologies) for solving urban questions to improve everyday life in urban society. This exposes the possibility of transforming everyday life as we understand it through the rational use of machinery and technology (which also includes the transformation of social relationships). The co-optation of initiatives (of every initiative) in the order of existing things by a "system" of some kind does not mean that such proposals cannot be used to clear and highlight a path. Economic forecasts and state power rarely envisage the optimal use of resources, technology, or scientific tools based on a body of contemporary experience. They are used only when under pressure from opinion, emergency, or direct challenge (assuming it can be exercised). This is the result of budgetary and financial, that is, "economic," requirements. These requirements mask other, less obvious motives. Powers have their own strategy, systems their own interests, which all too often relegate such important issues to the background.

The reliance on philosophy in no way implies a nostalgia for the past. Here, the distinction between philosophic thought and metaphilosophy assumes meaning and importance. Metaphilosophy is the new context in which theories and concepts, signifying units detached from their philosophical context,

assume a different meaning. To get a clearer idea of the scope of the current problematic, that is to say, actuality as problematic, we can make use of philosophical thought—with the understanding that we are making a transition from classical philosophy to metaphilosophy.

What about totality? Dialectically speaking, it is present, here and now. It is absent as well. In every human act and possibly in the natural world as well, all moments are contained: work and play, knowledge and repose, effort and enjoyment, joy and sorrow. But these moments need to be "objectivized" in reality and society; they also require a form for their elaboration. Although close by in this sense, totality is also distant: lived immediacy and horizon. Urban society transcends the opposition between nature and culture created by the ideology of the industrial era. It puts an end to the things that make totality impossible: unresolvable division, absolute separation, programmed segregation. However, it only provides us with a *path,* not a model of totality. This was the method of conventional philosophy, but not metaphilosophy, for which path and model are contrasting oppositions.

The development of an urban strategy can only proceed using general rules of political analysis, which have been around since Marx. This analysis covers conditions and cycles as well as the structural elements of a situation. How and when should we separate specifically urban objectives from those associated with industrial production, planning, the distribution of revenue (surplus value), employment, the organization of the enterprise and labor? The most serious error would be the premature separation of objectives. In fact, the industrial revolution and the urban revolution are two aspects of a radical transformation of the world. They are two elements (dialectically united) of the same process, a single idea, that of global revolution. While it is true that the second aspect has increased in importance so that it is

no longer subordinate to the first, this does not imply that the first suddenly ceases to have any importance or reality. Political analysis of a situation has no bearing on the "real," in the trivial and most frequently used sense of the term, but on the dialectical relationship of the three terms: the real, the possible, and the impossible, so as to make possible what appeared to be impossible. Any analysis that approaches the real must accept political opportunism. Any analysis that diverges and moves too close to the impossible (toward the utopic in the banal sense of the term) is doomed to failure.

It is a recognized fact that the Americas have entered a phase of urban guerrilla activity. The technological advance in North America and its influence on Latin America (including Mexico) have made this a privileged continent in a way, at least from the point of view I am concerned with here. Just as Marx based his analysis on England and English capitalism, the political analyses of the urban transformation are based on a detailed study of North and South America. Urban guerrilla activity doesn't have the same characteristics in North America and Latin America. Blacks in the United States, who are locked in urban ghettos by a form of social segregation that is more powerful than legal integration, have resorted to desperate acts. Many of those blacks, many young people in general, have rejected any political program, and consider the search for such a program to be a form of treason. They want to unleash violence in its pure state. Until now there has been no direct relation between violent acts and the urban crisis to which American society has fallen prey. That society did not experience any fundamental crisis during the industrial period. It attempted—and it continues—to organize itself around the rationality of business, while retaining forms (ideological, political, urban) that antedate industrial growth. Within the overall context, the relations between local authorities, the federal government, and the states have become increasingly complicated. The

largest cities (New York is typical) have become uncontrollable, ungovernable, a knot of problems that are increasingly difficult to resolve. It is obvious that for strategy to succeed it must combine the "negative" forces of revolt against a repressive society with social forces that are capable of "positively" resolving the problems of the megalopolis. This is no simple matter. Just because this society has entered a phase of urban revolution does not mean that the urban problematic can be easily resolved. It simply means that a highly industrialized society, if it fails to respond to the urban problematic by a transformation capable of resolving it, will collapse into a form of chaos that is masked by an ideology of order and satisfaction. Yet the difficulty of theoretical analysis and the discovery of solutions shouldn't discourage either thought or action. A similar situation occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century with the industrial problematic. The second half of this century may call into question Marx's optimistic comment that humanity presents itself only with problems it can resolve, but it is still too early to deliberately abandon this belief. Optimism has one thing in its favor—its tenacity.

In South America, urban guerrilla activity is taking place in the favelas, or shantytowns, which have become outlets for struggle, intermediaries between the dispossessed peasants and industrial labor. In all likelihood, Che Guevara committed an error. His attempt to create centers of peasant guerrilla activity came too late. A few years earlier, in Cuba, there was still a possibility that this might have succeeded. The South American countryside was emptied of its population; the best of the peasants emigrated en masse to the outskirts of the already overcrowded cities. As of this writing, the objectives of urban guerrilla activity do not appear to have been very well defined (at least until additional information is available).

What about Asia? Has Asia concluded the period of

agrarian and industrial transformation? The existence of large cities is an inadequate marker. It is the totality of their relations with the countryside that needs to be examined. The concept of unequal development may be useful here for an analysis that does not coincide with the work of Lenin but expands on it. The enormous numbers of peasants, the latent or violent pressure, questions of agrarian reform and industrialization—all continue to mask the urban problematic. This situation helps explain the theory according to which the "global city," incapable of transformative actions, will fall victim to the "global struggle."

With respect to the socialist countries, there are three possibilities: First, the urban problematic, stifled by the ideology of industrial production, will fail to enter people's consciousness. An official urbanism, not very dissimilar from capitalist urbanism (except that there is less emphasis on the centrality of exchange and greater access to the soil and, therefore, an increase in the amount of green space, the zero degree of urban reality), will continue to pass for a solution that realizes socialist society. Second, the pressure of urban reality will burst the ideology of productivist socialism and expose the absurdity of a state philosophy that claims that production and productive labor possess a meaning and finality no longer based on profit. It will raise awareness of an active criticism of state socialism as well as the fusion between civil society and political society, to the benefit of the latter. In this way urban society will reshape civil society and lead to the absorption of political society into civil society (Marx's withering away of the state). Third, a strategic hypothesis: legal bodies and institutions will grow increasingly aware of the urban problematic; the transformation will take place gradually through legal means.

There is no need to choose among these three strategies, especially since we don't have the information to do so. The only ones authorized to choose are those willing to take the

risks and assume the responsibilities. Here, my intention is simply to outline the possibilities, point out a path, and distinguish among the various strategies.

In France, the moment may yet arrive when urban objectives diverge from (without actually separating from) specifically industrial objectives. This would involve either the formation of a new political party or an effort to involve an existing party in the politicization of urban issues. In this sense, could the "crisis of the left" be explained by its inability to analyze these issues or the fact that it has framed them so narrowly? The urban problem has ceased to be a municipal problem and has become national and global. The reduction of the urban to housing and infrastructure is part of the shortsightedness of political life on the right as well as the left. The most important political truth that the French "left" (what remains of it) must understand if it is to remain viable is the existence of a vast urban program, which would also be a project for the transformation of the everyday, and which would have no further relationship either with a repressive and banal urbanism or with the limitations of national development programs.

Could Les Halles serve as a salutary example of what might happen elsewhere in France? If so, that would be very unfortunate. In actuality, the fate of the center of Paris had been decided over a century ago: Haussmann's urbanism and the failure of the Commune sealed its fate. This center, the area surrounding Les Halles, has again shown a surprising lack of segregation. Every category of the population was represented (similar to the national averages: artisans, merchants, laborers, professionals). This contrasted strangely with the segregation visible in the neighboring ghetto (Rue des Rosiers and the surrounding area). However, the number of artisans and small shops began to dwindle. A return to the center of a moneyed class, sickened by the suburbs, just as they were by traditional bourgeois neighborhoods—in simple terms, the elitist gentrification of an urban center cut off from production—has been going on for years. Only the most recent arrivals, self-employed professionals for the most part (film, theater, couture, the arts), have been able to "modernize" the houses in these neighborhoods, which were formerly the reserve of the bourgeoisie and subsequently abandoned by them (as in the Marais).[2] Although these neighborhoods were considered to be "active" and "picturesque," a large percentage of this mixed population lived in slum dwellings. So what happened? The leaders and members of the various committees opposed to speculative activities, opposed to the asphyxiation of central Paris, opposed to the deportation of the poorest tenants, were people whose existence was not threatened by the activities taking place. And what about those people? What were they waiting for? Better housing, better jobs, or simply jobs. The other groups represented so-called private interests; they were capable of various activities but incapable of forceful political action. Aside from the engineering aspect, which was technically questionable, the attitudes of the participants were clearly drawn: those in power wanted to build an enormous finance ministry in the center of Paris, which would become a hub for government decisions. The so-called communist opposition wanted to see inexpensive residential quarters built on the site. Two mediocrities, squared off against one another, one bureaucratic, the other electoral.

The strategy of knowledge implies (1) a radical critique of what is called urbanism, its ambiguity, its contradictions, its variants, what it avows and what it hides; (2) the development of a science of the urban phenomenon, beginning with its form and content (aiming at convergence through the unity of these two approaches).

Political strategy implies the following:

1. The introduction of the urban problematic into (French) political life by moving it to the foreground.
2. The development of a program that begins with a form of generalized self-management. The self-management introduced in industry—not without some difficulty—can "trigger" urban self-management. But this can also move into the foreground and in turn trigger the practice of self-management in industry. Yet both urban life and industry require more than self-management. On its own, looking at each isolated unit, it is doomed to failure. The problems of urban self-management are related to those of industrial self-management but far more wide-ranging, for they also involve markets and the control of investments—that is, an overall program.
3. The introduction into the enlarged, transformed, concretized contractual system of a "right to the city" (the right not to be excluded from centrality and its movement).

8 || The Urban Illusion

We can now provide an *objective* definition of urbanism, which is officially defined as the "physical trace on the land of human dwellings of stone, cement, or metal." We now have the conceptual tools for a radical critique of an activity that claims to control the process of urbanization and urban practice and subject it to its order. Our perception of this activity differs from the way it perceives itself: simultaneously art and science, technology and understanding. This unitary character is illusory, however. In fact, urbanism, when examined closely, breaks into pieces. There are several urbanisms: the urbanism of humanists, of developers, of the state and its technocrats. The first group proposes abstract utopias; the second sells urbanism—that is, happiness, a lifestyle, a certain social standing. The activity of the last group dissociates, like the activity of the state, into will and representation, institutions and ideologies. The simultaneous pressures from these two aspects of state urbanism in no way provide the unitary and coherently ordered character it claims to possess. Some might retort, "Without urbanists, there would be chaos." It is chaos, but one that is the result of an imposed order. Lacking

an appropriate methodology (dialectic), urbanist theory has been unable to comprehend the twofold process of urbanization and industrialization, one that is characterized by its extreme complexity and conflict. It can hardly be claimed as an asset that urbanists perceive—from afar—the sense of urgency and the problems associated with the new scarcity of space, time, place, and natural "elements."

The urban illusion can't be separated from other illusions, which should also be denounced, using the same strategy of knowledge. There is nothing especially negative about the term "illusion." It is not a form of personal insult or an ad hominem argument against anyone in particular. Those who interpret it that way are simply suffering the pangs of a bad conscience. Is there anyone who is free of all illusion? The most tenacious, the most effective illusions are the illusions of class, whose origins are both higher and more distant than intellectual or individual errors. Their course passes well over the heads of those they most affect.

The philosophical illusion arises from the belief on the part of philosophers that they can enclose the world in a system of their own devising. They assume that their system is based on precedent, since it includes everything and is hermetically enclosed. Yet there is always more in the world than in any philosophical system. Philosophical activity wasn't only honorable. For years it rivaled art, possessing something of the incomparable character of an oeuvre: something unique, infinitely precious, irreplaceable. Isn't it an illusion, then, to go on indefinitely building systems that are forever disappointing, always improved? From the moment the idea of the indefinite perfectibility of systemization comes into conflict with the idea of the immanent perfection of the system as such, philosophical illusion enters consciousness.

The state illusion is part of a colossal and ludicrous project. The state is capable of managing the affairs of tens of millions of subjects. It would like to direct our consciousness

as if it were a kind of high-level administrator. Providential, a god personified, the state would become the center of things and conscious beings on earth. One might assume that such an illusion would crumble as soon as it was formulated. But this is not the case. It seems inherent in the projects and ambitions of those who want to be, and claim to be, elected officials, high- or low-level administrators, political leaders. The very idea of the state implies this project, which is acknowledged only in secret. Once the project is discredited, once it is abandoned by thought and will, the state begins to decline.

The urban illusion is closely related to the two illusions discussed above. Like classical philosophy, urbanism claims to be a system. It pretends to embrace, enclose, possess a new totality. It wants to be the modern philosophy of the city, justified by (liberal) humanism while justifying a (technocratic) utopia.

In the case of ideology, neither good will nor good intentions are justifications. In fact, a clear conscience and peace of mind merely aggravate the situation. How can we define the fundamental void in urbanism, whether the product of private intellect or public institutions? To the extent that it claims to replace or supplant urban practice it fails to examine that practice. But for urbanists, this practice is precisely the blind field I discussed earlier. They live it, they are in it, but they don't see it, and certainly cannot grasp it as such. With complete peace of mind, they substitute its representations of space, of social life, of groups and their relationships for praxis. They don't know where these representations come from or what they imply—that is, the logic and strategy that they serve. And if they do know, their knowledge is unforgivable; their ideological cover splits to reveal a strange nudity.

In bureaucratic capitalism, productive activity completely escapes the control of planners and developers. Technicians

and technocrats are asked for their advice. People sit around listening politely—most of the time, at least. But they are not the decision makers. In spite of their efforts, they cannot escape the status that has been given to them, that of a pressure group or caste, and they become a class. The same holds true for the so-called socialist countries. But for their technocrats, space is the site of their future exploits, the terrain of their victories, so to speak. Space is available. Why? Because it is almost empty or seems to be. Corporations, productive units, and established networks are dispersed in space but do not fill it. Free space belongs to thought, to action. Technocratic thought oscillates between the representation of empty space, nearly geometric, occupied only by concepts, by the most rational logics and strategies, and the representation of a permeated space, occupied by the results of those logics and strategies. They fail to perceive that every space is a *product* and that this product does not arise in conceptual thought, which is not necessarily immediately productive. Space, as product, results from relationships of production that are taken control of by an active group. Urbanists seem to be unaware of or misinterpret the fact that they themselves figure in these relationships of production as organizers and administrators. They implement, they do not control, space. They obey a social command that is not directed at any given object or any given product (commodity) but a global object, the supreme product, the ultimate object of exchange: space. The deployment of the world of commodities now affects not only objects but their containers, it is no longer limited to content, to objects in space. More recently, space itself has begun to be bought and sold. Not the earth, the soil, but *social space,* produced as such, with this purpose, this finality (so to speak). Space is no longer only an indifferent medium, the sum of places where surplus value is created, realized, and distributed. It becomes the product of social labor, the very general object of production, and consequently of the formation of surplus

value. This is how production becomes social within the very framework of neocapitalism. In the recent past this would have been unforeseen and unforeseeable, since production and the social nature of production were thought of only in terms of the enterprise and the productive labor of the enterprise. Today the social (global) nature of productive labor, embodied in productive forces, is apparent in the social production of space. In the recent past, there was no other way to conceive of "production" other than as an object, located somewhere in space: an ordinary object, a machine, a book, a painting. Today, space as a whole enters into production as a product, through the buying, selling, and exchange of parts of space. Not too long ago, a localized, identifiable space, the soil, still belonged to a sacred entity: the earth. It belonged to that cursed, and therefore sacred, character, the owner (not of the means of production, but of the Home), a carryover from feudal times. Today, this ideology and the corresponding practice are collapsing. Something new is happening.

The production of space is not new in itself. Dominant groups have always produced a particular space, the space of the old cities, of the countryside (and what will become the "natural" landscape). What is new is the global and total production of social space. This enormous expansion of productive activity is carried out on behalf of those who invented it, manage it, and profit from it. Capitalism appears to be out of steam. It found new inspiration in the conquest of space—in trivial terms, in real estate speculation, capital projects (inside and outside the city), the buying and selling of space. And it did so on a worldwide scale. This is the (unforeseen) path of the socialization of productive forces, of the production of space itself. Capitalism, to ensure its survival, took the initiative in this. The strategy goes far beyond simply selling space, bit by bit. Not only does it incorporate space in the production of surplus value, it attempts to completely reorganize production as something subordinate to the centers of information and decision making.

Urbanism encompasses this enormous operation, dissimulating its fundamental features, meanings, and finality. Beneath its benign exterior, humanist and technological, it masks capitalist strategy: the control of space, the struggle against the trend toward lower profits, and so on.

This strategy overwhelms the "user," the "participant," the simple "inhabitant." He is reduced not only to merely functioning as an inhabitant (habitat as function) but to being a buyer of space, one who realizes surplus value. Space becomes a place where various functions are carried out, the most important and most hidden being that of forming, realizing, and distributing in novel ways the surplus of an entire society (generalized surplus value within the capitalist mode of production).

Urban ideology exaggerates the importance of the so-called planned activities it sanctions. It gives the impression, to those who use these representations, of managing people and things in innovative and positive ways. With considerable naïveté (genuine or otherwise), many people believe they are determining and creating social life and social relations (human). Here the urban illusion awakens the somewhat somnolent mythology of the Architect. In the new ideology the old myths agree with and support one another. The result is a series of (occasionally cancerous) growths that are grafted onto real knowledge and concrete practice (that of users who are still attached to use value).

Ideology and its application (by the corresponding institutions) overwhelm actual practice. Use (use value), which had been pushed aside with the development of exchange value (the world of commodities, its logic and language, its system of signs and significations clinging to each object), continues to be overwhelmed by urban representations, by the encouragement and motivation so freely assigned to it. Practice disappears; it falls silent, becomes passive. A surprising paradox arises from this: the passivity of vested interests.

There are many reasons for this. Here I'll examine one of them, certainly not the least important: urban ideology as *reductive* of practice (of habiting, of urban reality). As with any ideology, it does not stop at being simply reductive. It systematically extrapolates and concludes, as if it held and manipulated all the elements of the question, as if it had resolved the urban problematic in and through a total theory, one that was immediately applicable.

This extrapolation becomes excessive when it tends toward a kind of medical ideology. The urbanist imagines himself caring for and healing a sick society, a pathological space. He perceives spatial diseases, which are initially conceived abstractly as an available void, then fragmented into partial contents. Eventually, space itself becomes a subject. It suffers, grows ill, must be taken care of so it can be returned to (moral) health. The urban illusion culminates in delirium. Space, and the thought of space, lead the thinker down a dangerous path. He becomes schizophrenic and imagines a mental illness—the schizophrenia of society—onto which he projects his own illness, space sickness, mental vertigo.

If we look at the various urbanist proposals, we find that they don't go very far. They are limited to cutting space into grids and squares. Technocrats, unaware of what goes on in their own mind and in their working concepts, profoundly misjudging what is going on (and what is not) in their blind field, end up minutely organizing a repressive space. For all that, they have a clear conscience. They are unaware that space harbors an ideology (more exactly, an *ideo-logic*). They are unaware, or pretend to be unaware, that urbanism, objective in appearance (because it is a function of the state and dependent on skills and knowledge), is a form of class urbanism and incorporates a class strategy (a particular logic). In this domain, is "technostructure" as effective (in maintaining the relationships of production that exist, ensuring their survival and development) as it is within the

enterprise? There is cause to wonder. For isn't it precisely in this sector that technostructure and the "compensatory power" of great economic and political power structures (Galbraith) reach their "optimal" efficiency? They manage this by allowing logic and strategy to conceal themselves from view—and strategy to appear logical, or necessary.

As it exists in the current framework, that is, as a functional entity (although this is not and possibly cannot be acknowledged), urbanism has been unable to escape the permanent crisis described above and remains stigmatized; it is unable to find a status for itself, nor is the urbanist able to find a role. Urbanism finds itself caught between particular interests and political interests, between those who decide on behalf of "private" interests and those who decide on behalf of higher institutions and powers. It lives off the compromise between neoliberalism (which participates in planning and in activities that are referred to as "voluntary" or "consensual") and neo-dirigisme (which leaves a field of action open for "free enterprise"). The urbanist slips into the crack between them, into the fissure between developers and power structures. The ideal situation for the urbanist is the (unconscious) conflict between representation and will, and this includes elected officials. Urban reality and its problematic break apart in the face of theory and in practice into scattered representations ("environment," "infrastructure") and skills (consulting firms, offices, institutions). Urbanism and the urbanist can only accept this fragmentation; indeed, they contribute to it. Whenever they act, it is always in an "official" capacity. At the same time, urbanism claims to be a doctrine. It tends toward unity: theory, logic, strategy. But when a unitary function reveals itself and becomes effective, that unity is lost. It is the strategy of profit or the logic of industrial space, the logic of exchange and the world of commodities, or . . .

As a form of representation, urbanism is nothing more

than an ideology that claims to be either "art" or "technology" or "science," depending on the context. This ideology pretends to be straightforward, yet it obfuscates, harbors things unsaid: which it covers, which it contains, as a form of will tending toward efficiency. Urbanism is doubly fetishistic. First, it implies the fetishism of satisfaction. What about vested interests? They must be satisfied, and therefore their needs must be understood and catered to, unchanged. From time to time, these needs can be modified. The implicit assumption is that we can determine those needs, either because those vested interests have openly stated them or because experts have studied them. We can classify them. For each need, an object is supplied. This assumption is inherently false, especially since it neglects to take into consideration *social needs*. Second, it implies the fetishism of space. Space is creation. Whoever creates space creates whatever it is that fills space. The place engenders the thing and the good place engenders good things. Which results in ambiguity, misunderstanding, a singular oscillation.

Either the disease of space excuses people but acknowledges skills, or the disease of people in a good space is inexcusable. The fetishism of space is not without its contradictions, for it fails to resolve the conflict between use and exchange, even when it crushes both use and user.

Rather than analyzing the contradictions of space, I would like to highlight the role played by urbanism and more generally real estate (speculation, construction) in neocapitalist society. Real estate functions as a second sector, a circuit that runs parallel to that of industrial production, which serves the nondurable assets market, or at least those that are less durable than buildings. This second sector serves as a buffer. It is where capital flows in the event of a depression, although enormous profits soon slow to a trickle. In this sector, there are few "multipliers," few spin-offs. Capital is tied up in real estate. Although the overall economy (so-called domestic

economy) soon begins to suffer, the role and function of this sector continue to grow. As the principal circuit—current industrial production and the movable property that results—begins to slow down, capital shifts to the second sector, real estate. It can even happen that real-estate speculation becomes the principal source for the formation of capital, that is, the realization of surplus value. As the percentage of overall surplus value formed and realized by industry begins to decline, the percentage created and realized by real-estate speculation and construction increases. The second circuit supplants the first, becomes essential. But as economists are accustomed to saying, this is an unhealthy situation. The role played by real estate in various countries (especially Spain and Greece) continues to be poorly understood, poorly situated within the general mechanisms of capitalist economy. It is a source of problems. It is here that the "compensatory power" discussed earlier can come into play. However, urbanism as an ideology and as an institution (as representation and will) masks these problems. It seems to contain a response and therefore seems to preclude the need for their theoretical investigation. Because urbanism is situated at the intersection of these two sectors (the production of movable goods and the production of real estate), it conceals that intersection.

Urbanism is, although unwittingly, class urbanism. When the urbanist realizes this, when he attains this level of knowledge, he becomes cynical or simply resigns. As a cynic, he may even sell freedom, happiness, lifestyles, social life, even community life, in phalansteries designed for the use of modern satraps.

Urbanism is therefore subject to radical critique. It masks a situation. It conceals operations. It blocks a view of the horizon, a path to urban knowledge and practice. It accompanies the decline of the spontaneous city and the historical urban core. It implies the intervention of power more than that of understanding. Its only coherence, its only logic, is

that of the state—the void. The state can only separate, disperse, hollow out vast voids, the squares and avenues built in its own image—an image of force and constraint.

Urbanism prevents thought from becoming a consideration of the possible, a reflection of the future. It encloses thought in a situation where three terms—critical thought, reformist ideology, leftist opposition—clash, a situation from which thought must escape, a situation from which urbanism and the urbanist prevent it from escaping.

Yet not everything about urbanism is negative. More specifically, it is nothing more than the opposition between the "blinding and the blinded," to the extent that the urbanist believes himself to be someone capable of broad ideas, interdisciplinary, a creator of space and human relationships. Moreover, the urbanist amasses data and information. Urbanism provides a presentiment of new scarcities and occasionally the opportunity to explore them: space, time, desire, the elements (water, air, earth, the sun). Of course, urbanists tend to avoid the concrete and fundamental question of the (social) management of scarcities that replace older scarcities (in the so-called advanced countries). The urbanist often perceives the importance of the question man asks of "nature" and nature of man. His reading of space encourages him to read nature—that is, to contemplate the rape and destruction of that nature. In fact, couldn't some of Le Corbusier's texts be read in this sense, "symptomatically" (rather than literally)? Or some of the so-called urbanist works, less well known but significant for the ideology they transmit? Urbanist discourses are sometimes articulated using the discourse of urban practice. A deformed image of the future and the possible may still contain their traces and indexes. The utopian part of urbanist projects (generally masked by technology and the abuse of technicism) is not without interest as a precursor symptom, which signals a problematic without explaining it. This does not mean

that there exists an epistemology of urbanism, a theoretical core that can virtually generate an urban practice. Far from it. In fact, the argument I have developed would claim the contrary. For the moment, for a long time into the future, the problematic will outweigh our understanding. What is most needed is that we categorize, that we prepare concepts (categories) we can verify, that we explore the possible-impossible, and that we do so through transduction.

The question comes to mind of whether urbanism today doesn't play the role ideology (philosophy + political economy + utopian socialism) did around 1845, when Marxist and critical (revolutionary) thought concerning industrial phenomena were being formed. This seemingly harsh interpretation contains an element of exaggerated praise. Do doctrinaire urbanists possess the scope that Hegel, Fourier, Saint-Simon, Adam Smith, or Ricardo had? Even if we were to compare them to minor ideologues like Bauer and Stirner rather than the great theorists, we would still be aiming too high.[1] Urbanism could be more accurately compared to common political economy than to Marxist economic analysis. For these economists, the critical point of view holds little interest. Sometimes, they say the same things as the Marxists in a different language. Rostow, for example, calls "takeoff" what the Marxists refer to as "primitive accumulation."[2] Their schemas frequently contain a tactical element, which they refer to as "operational." The characteristics of this tactic are easily discernible through analysis or application. More often, the abstract models used by economists are put safely to rest in drawers. Business executives and politicians do as they please. Couldn't the same be said about our urbanists?

Still, urbanism remains an impediment because of its *models*. Once again, this reflects one of the inherent conflicts in contemporary political and scientific thought, the conflict

between *path* and *model*. To clear a path, we have to destroy the models.

Given the confusion surrounding ideology, it is worth repeating that my criticism of urbanism is a criticism of the left (by the left). Right-wing criticism, whether liberal or neoliberal, attacks urbanism as an institution but extols the initiatives of developers. This leaves the path open for capitalist developers, who are now able to invest profitably in the real-estate sector; the era of urban illusion has given them an opportunity to adapt. The radical critique of urban illusion opens the way to urban practice and the theory associated with this practice, which will advance together during the process of overall *development* (if this development assumes greater importance than growth, together with its ideologies and strategies).

This "leftist" critique involves much more than a rejection of liberalism or neoliberalism by challenging private enterprise and the state, individual initiative and political paternalism. Such a critique can only become radical by rejecting the state, the role of the state, the strategy of the state, and the politics of space. It does so by demonstrating that the *promotion of the urban* is tied to the rejection of economic (quantitative) growth seen as an end in itself, the orientation of production for other purposes, the primacy of (qualitative) development over growth, the limitation of the state (the quintessential limiter) to a subordinate function—in short, a radical critique of the state and politics.

The worst utopia is the one that remains unnamed. The urban illusion belongs to the state. It is a state utopia: a cloud on the mountain that blocks the road. It is both antitheory and antipractice.

What is urbanism? A superstructure of neocapitalist society, a form of "organizational capitalism," which is not the same as "organized capital"—in other words, a *bureaucratic*

society of controlled consumption. Urbanism organizes a sector that appears to be free and accessible, open to rational activity: inhabited space. It controls the consumption of space and the habitat. As superstructure, it must be distinguished from practice, from social relationships, from society itself. There has been some confusion between urbanism and the "urban," namely urban practice and the urban phenomenon. This confusion would explain the pseudo-Marxist theory, apparently vigorously critiqued, that claims that the urban phenomenon is itself only a superstructure. These ideologies confuse practice with ideology, social with institutional relations. It is only from an ideological and institutional point of view, however, that urbanism reveals to critical analysis the illusions that it harbors and that foster its implementation. In this light, urbanism appears as the vehicle for a limited and tendentious rationality in which space, deceptively neutral and apolitical, constitutes an object (objective).

9 || Urban Society

The concept developed earlier as a (scientific) hypothesis can now be approached differently. I hope that readers will have a better understanding of it now that it has been freed somewhat of its earlier theoretical status. However, the process is far from complete, and it would be dogmatic to claim that it was. To do so would mean inserting the concept of an "urban society" into a questionable epistemology that we should be wary of because it is premature, because it places the categorical above the problematic, thereby halting, and possibly shifting, the very movement that brought the urban phenomenon to the threshold of awareness in the first place.

The concept of an urban society has freed itself from the myths and ideologies that bind it, whether they arise in the agrarian stages of history and consciousness or in an unwarranted extension of the representations borrowed from the corporate sphere (industrial rationalism). Myths become a part of literature; their poetic and utopian character in no way diminishes their attraction. We also know that ideology has played a large part in the development of a body of

doctrine known as urbanism. To continue our exploration of the blind field, we had to jettison that opaque, heavy body: the urban phenomenon in its totality.

The unconscious (the boundary between the misunderstood and the one who misunderstands) appears sometimes as a deceptive and blinding emergence of a rural and industrial past, sometimes as a sense of loss for an urban reality that is slipping away.

In this way, the notion of a critical zone or phase comes into view. Within this zone, the terrain flies before us, the ground is booby-trapped. Although the old concepts no longer work, new concepts are beginning to take shape. Reality isn't the only thing to go; thought itself begins to give way.

Still, we have succeeded in elaborating a coherent discourse that is nonideological and that is both *of* the urban (inside an emergent urban universe) and *about* the urban (describing it, outlining its contours). This kind of discourse can never be completed. Its incompletion is an essential part of its existence. It is defined as a reflection of the future, implying operations in time as well as space: transduction (construction of a virtual object) and the exploration of the possible-impossible. The temporal dimension, evacuated by epistemology and the philosophy of knowledge, is victoriously reintroduced. Yet transduction is not long-range planning. Like urbanism, it has been called into question; like urbanism it contains a strategy. It mixes ideology and scientificity. Here, as elsewhere, scientificity is an ideology, an excrescence grafted onto real, but fragmentary, knowledge. And like urbanism, long-range planning also extrapolates from a reductive position.

During this exploration, the urban phenomenon appears as something other than, as something more than, a superstructure (of the mode of production). I say this in response to a form of Marxist dogmatism that manifests itself in a variety of ways. The urban problematic is worldwide. The same problems are found in socialism and in capitalism—

along with the failure to respond. Urban society can only be defined as global. Virtually, it covers the planet by recreating nature, which has been wiped out by the industrial exploitation of natural resources (material and "human"), by the destruction of so-called natural particularities.

Moreover, the urban phenomenon has had a profound effect on the methods of production: productive forces, relationships of production, and the contradictions between them. It both extends and accentuates, on a new plane, the social character of productive labor and its conflict with the ownership (private) of the means of production. It continues the "socialization of society," which is another way of saying that the urban does not eliminate industrial contradictions. It does not resolve them for the sole reason that it has become dominant. What's more, the conflicts inherent in production (in the relationships of production and capitalist ownership as well as in "socialist" society) hinder the urban phenomenon, prevent urban development, reducing it to growth. This is particularly true of the action of the state under capitalism and state socialism.

To summarize then: Society becomes increasingly complex with the transition from the rural to the industrial and from the industrial to the urban. This multifaceted complexification affects space as well as time, for the complexification of space and the objects that occupy space cannot occur without a complexification of time and the activities that occur over time.

This space is occupied by interrelated networks, relationships that are defined by interference. Its homogeneity corresponds to intentions, unified strategies, and systematized logics, on the one hand, and reductive, and consequently simplifying, representations, on the other. At the same time, differences become more pronounced in populating this space, which tends, like any abstract space, toward homogeneity (quantitative, geometric, and logical space). This, in turn, results in conflict and a strange sense of unease. For

this space tends toward a unique code, an absolute system, that of exchange and exchange value, of the logical thing and the logic of things. At the same time, it is filled with subsystems, partial codes, messages, and signifiers that do not become part of the unitary procedure that the space stipulates, prescribes, and inscribes in various ways.

The thesis of complexification appears philosophical. And sometimes it is, at least for certain authors (Teilhard de Chardin, for example). Here it is related to a fragmentary but effective scientific understanding: theories of information, message theories, encoding and decoding. We can, therefore, again state that this thesis is *metaphilosophical*—simultaneously global and articulated through the understanding.

The concept of complexification continues to be of service. It is theoretically based on the distinction between growth and development, a distinction imposed by the period, by experience, by a consideration of results. Marx distinguished growth and development only because he wanted to avoid any confusion between quantity and quality. But for Marx the growth (quantitative) and development (qualitative) of society could and must occur simultaneously. Unfortunately, history shows that this is not the case. Growth can occur without development and sometimes development can occur without growth. For half a century, growth has been at work just about everywhere, while rigid social and political relations have been maintained. Although the Soviet Union underwent a period of intense development between 1920 and 1935, objective "factors," namely the productive forces that were left behind by this "superstructure" explosion and the growth targets used as strategic objectives—means construed as ends—soon took their revenge. Wasn't the same true of France after the explosion of May 1968? The law of unequal development (Lenin) should be extended, expanded, and formulated in such a way that it can account for the conflict between growth and development that was revealed during the course of the twentieth century.

The theory of complexification anticipates the revenge of development over growth. The same is true for the theory of urban society. This revenge is only just beginning. The basic proposition, that growth cannot continue indefinitely and that the means can remain an end without a catastrophe occurring, still seems paradoxical.

These considerations evoke the prodigious extension of the urban to the entire planet, that is, urban society, its virtualities and potential. It goes without saying that this extension-expansion is not going to be problem-free. Indeed, it has been shown that the urban phenomenon tends to overflow borders, while commercial exchange and industrial and financial organizations, which once seemed to abolish those territorial limits (through the global market, through multinationals), now appear to reaffirm them. In any event, the effects of a possible rupture in industry and finance (a crisis of overproduction, a monetary crisis) would be accentuated by an extension of the urban phenomenon and the formation of urban society.

I have already introduced the idea of the "global city," generally attributed to Maoism, if not Mao Tse-tung himself. I would now like to develop this idea. The global city extends the traditional concept and image of the city to a global scale: a political center for the administration, protection, and operation of a vast territory. This is appropriate for the oriental city within the framework of an Asian mode of production. However, urban society cannot be constructed on the ruins of the classical city alone. In the West, this city has already begun to fragment. This fragmentation (explosion-implosion) may appear to be a precursor of urban society. It is part of its problematic and the critical phase that precedes it. However, a known strategy, which specifically makes use of urbanism, tends to view the political city as a decision-making center. Such a center is obviously not limited to collecting information upstream and distributing it downstream. It is not just a center of abstract decision making but

a center of power. Yet power requires wealth, and vice versa. That is, the decision-making center, in the strategy being analyzed here, will serve as a point of attachment to the soil for a hyperorganized and rigidly systematized state. Formerly, the entire metropolitan land area played a central role with respect to the colonies and semicolonies, sucking up wealth, imposing its own order. Today, domination is consolidated in a physical locale, a capital (or a decision-making center that does not necessarily coincide with the capital). As a result, control is exercised throughout the national territory, which is transformed into a semicolony.

Part of my analysis may appear at first glance to correspond to the so-called Maoist interpretation of the "global city," but this interpretation raises a number of objections. There is nothing that prevents emerging centers of power from encountering obstacles and failing. What's more, any contradictions that occur no longer take place between city and country. The principal contradiction is shifted to the urban phenomenon itself: between the centrality of power and other forms of centrality, between the "wealth-power" center and the periphery, between integration and segregation.

A complete examination of the critical phase would far exceed the scope of this book. As an example, what remains of the classic notions of history and historicity? The critical phase can leave neither these concepts nor the corresponding reality intact. Does the extension of the urban phenomenon, the formation of a time-space differential on a global scale, have any relationship to what is still called "historicity"?

This phase is accompanied by the emergence of complex entities, new functions and structures, but this does not mean that the old ones necessarily disappear. For this reason, what is called for is a repeated, and repeatedly refined, analysis of the relations between form and content. Here I've limited myself to the barest outline, consisting of a handful of markers and directional arrows. What is most important

is to demonstrate that the dialectic method can exercise its revenge. And why not? Swept aside by the strategy (ideological and institutional) of the industrial period and corporate rationalism, replaced by an advocacy of the operational, deprecated by procedures that are reductive and generalizing (primarily structuralism), dialectical thought reasserts its rights. As I stated earlier, the key issue, in the fullest and most accurate sense of the word, that of centrality, demands a dialectic analysis. The study of the logic of space leads to the study of its contradictions (and those of space-time). Without that analysis, the solutions to the problem are merely dissimulated strategies, hidden beneath an apparent scientificity. On the theoretical level, one of the severest critiques of urbanism as a body of doctrine (not altogether successful) is that it harbors a socio-logic and a strategy, while it evacuates dialectical thought in general and the dialectical movements specific to urbanism in particular—in other words, internal contradictions, both old and new (one aggravating and masking the other).

Is the urban phenomenon the *total social phenomenon* long sought for by sociologists? Yes and no. Yes, in the sense that it tends toward totality without ever achieving it, that it is essentially totalizing (centrality) but that this totality is never effected. Yes, in the sense that no partial determinism, no fragmentary knowledge can exhaust it; it is simultaneously historical, demographic, geographic, economic, sociologic, psychologic, semiologic, and so on. It "is" that and more (thing or non-thing) besides: *form*, for example. In other words, a void, but one that demands or calls forth a content. If the urban is total, it is not total in the way a thing can be, as content that has been amassed, but in the way that thought is, which continues its activity of concentration endlessly but can never hold or maintain that state of concentration, which assembles elements continuously and discovers what it has assembled through a new and different

form of concentration. Centrality defines the u-topic (that which has no place and searches for it). The u-topic defines centrality.

But neither the separation of fragment and content nor their confused union can define (and therefore express) the urban phenomenon. For it incorporates a *total reading*, combining the vocabularies (partial readings) of geographers, demographers, economists, sociologists, semiologists, and others. These readings take place on different levels. The phenomenon cannot be defined by their sum or synthesis or superposition. In this sense, it is not a totality. Similarly, it overcomes the separation between accident and necessity, but their synthesis doesn't determine it, assuming such synthesis can be determined. This is simply a repetition of the paradox of the urban phenomenon, a paradox that in no way gives it precedence over the fundamental paradox of thought and awareness. For it is undoubtedly the same. The urban is specific: it is localized and focused. It is locally intensified and doesn't exist without that localization, or center. Thought and thinking don't take place unless they are themselves localized. The specificity of the fact, the event, is a given. And, consequently, a requirement. Near order occurs around a point, taken as a (momentary) center, which is produced by practice and can be grasped through analysis. This defines an isotopy. At the same time, the urban phenomenon is colossal; its prodigious extension-expansion cannot be constrained. While encompassing near order, a *distant order* groups distinct specificities, assembles them according to their differences (heterotopies). But isotopy and heterotopy clash everywhere and always, engendering an *elsewhere.* Although initially indispensable, the *transformed* centrality that results will be reabsorbed into the fabric of space-time. In this way the dialectical movement of the specific and the colossal, of place and non-place (elsewhere), of urban order and urban disorder assumes form (reveals itself as form).

The urban is not produced like agriculture or industry. Yet, as an act that assembles and distributes, it does create. Similarly, manufacturing at one time became a productive force and economic category simply because it brought together labor and tools (technology), which were formerly dispersed. In this sense, the urban phenomenon contains a praxis (urban practice). Its form, as such, cannot be reduced to other forms (it is not isomorphous with other forms and structures), but it absorbs and transforms them.

The procedure for accessing urban reality as a form is reversed once the process is complete. In this way we can use linguistics to define isotopy and heterotopy. Once they have been identified in the urban text, these concepts assume a different meaning. Isn't it because human habitations assume the form that they do that they can be recognized in discourse? The urban is associated with a discourse and a route, or pathway. And it is for this reason, or formal cause, that there are different discourses and pathways in language. One cannot be separated from the other. Although different, language and dwelling are indissolubly combined. Is it surprising then that there is a *paradigm* of the urban (high and low, private and public), just as there is for habiting (open and closed, intimate and public), although neither the urban nor habiting can be defined by a simple discourse or by a system? If there is any logic inherent in the urban and the habiting it implies, it is not the logic of a system (or a subject or an object). It is the logic of thought (subject) that looks for a content (object). It is for this reason that our understanding of the urban requires that we simultaneously abandon our illusions of subjectivity (representation, ideology) and objectivity (causality, partial determinism).

Although the urban consolidates differences and engenders difference within the things it brings together, it cannot be defined as a system of differences. Either the word "system" implies fulfillment and closure, intelligibility through

completion, or it implies nothing more than a certain kind of coherence. But the urban phenomenon is made manifest as movement. Therefore, it cannot achieve closure. The centrality and the dialectical contradiction it implies exclude closure, that is to say, immobility. Even if language appears to be a closed system, the use of language and the production of discourse shatter this perception. Consequently, we cannot define the urban by means of a system (definite); for example, as a series of deviations around invariant points. In fact, the very concept precludes our ability to mandate anything that reduces or suppresses differences. Rather, it would imply the freedom to produce differences (to differ and invent that which differs).

The urban consolidates. As a form, the urban transforms what it brings together (concentrates). It consciously creates difference where no awareness of difference existed: what was only distinct, what was once attached to particularities in the field. It consolidates everything, including determinisms, heterogeneous materials and contents, prior order and disorder, conflict, preexisting communications and forms of communication. As a transforming form, the urban destructures and restructures its elements: the messages and codes that arise in the industrial and agrarian domains.

The urban also contains a negative power, which can easily appear harmful. Nature, a desire, and what we call culture (and what the industrial era dissociated from nature, while during predominately agrarian periods, nature and culture were indissoluble) are reworked and combined in urban society. Heterogeneous, if not heteroclite, these contents are put to the test. Thus, by way of analogy, agricultural exploitation (the farm) and the enterprise (which came into existence with the rise of manufacturing) are put to the test, are transformed, and are incorporated in new forms within the urban fabric. We could consider this a form of second-order creativity *(poiesis)*, agricultural and industrial production being forms of first-order creativity. This does not mean that the urban phenomenon can be equated with second-order discourse, metalanguage, exegesis, or commentary on industrial production. No, second-order creation and the secondary naturality of the urban serve to *multiply* rather than reduce or reflect creative activity. This raises the issue of an activity that produces (creates) meanings from elements that already possess signification (rather than units similar to phonemes, sounds or signs devoid of signification). From this point of view, the urban would create situations and acts just as it does objects.

There is no model for determining the urban through its elements or conditions (what it brings together—contents and activities). Models borrowed from the fields of energy (devices that capture finite, but considerable, quantities of energy) and information (which uses minute amounts of energy) are also inappropriate here. In other words, if we want to find a model, an analytic study of the urban can supply them. But in practice, this has more to do with a path (sense and direction, orientation and horizon) than a model.

This means that there is nothing harmonious about the urban as form and reality, for it also incorporates conflict, including class conflict. What is more, it can only be conceptualized in opposition to segregation, which attempts to resolve conflicts by separating the elements in space. This segregation produces a disaggregation of material and social life. To avoid contradiction, to achieve a purported sense of harmony, a certain form of urbanism prefers the disaggregation of the social bond. The urban presents itself as a place of conflict and confrontation, a unity of contradictions. It is in this sense that the concept incorporates dialectical thought (deeply modified, it is true, because it is now attached to a mental and social form rather than a historical content).

We could therefore define the urban as a place where conflicts are *expressed*, reversing the separation of places where

expression disappears, where silence reigns, where the signs of separation are established. The urban could also be defined as a place of *desire*, where desire emerges from need, where it is concentrated because it is recognized, where Eros and Logos can (possibly) be found side by side. Nature (desire) and culture (categorized needs and induced facticity) come together during the course of a mutual self-criticism that engenders impassioned dialogues. In this way the immature and premature character of the human being is formed, handed over to the struggles of Eros and Logos, although this formation is not necessary for the development of the mature adult. The urban as a practical medium would, paradoxically, serve a pedagogical role that is quite different from the customary pedagogy based on the authority of acquired knowledge, the finished adult.

From this point of view, the industrial era (in other words, what passes for industrial society) looks quite different than it looked to itself. From its own perspective, it was productive and creative, in control of nature, substituting the freedom of production for the determinism of matter. In fact—in truth—it was radically contradictory and conflictual. Rather than dominating nature, industry ravaged it, destroyed it completely. Claiming to substitute a consistent rationality for the chaos of spontaneity, it separated and dissociated everything it touched, it destroyed connections by instituting a reign of homogeneous order. For industry, the means became an end and the end a means: production became strategy, productivism a philosophy, the state a divinity. The order and the disorder of the industrial era reproduced the earlier, blood-filled chaos; indeed they aggravated it. Ideologues (especially urban ideologues) think they can still base the principle of superior organization on the industrial era and its rationality. For them the problem is to overcome that order and disorder and create a higher

order, but from established principles. Extending the principles of the enterprise unchanged to society as a whole is a strategy that has now been judged and condemned. Because there is something else (a different non-thing) that we must acknowledge, that calls everything into question, that is itself question . . .

The separation brought about by industrial rationality also occurs among a number of subsystems: values, decisions, models of action and behavior. Could the pluralism of those subsystems accommodate or create a certain coherence? The sense of cohesion of the whole appeared to come from the ideology of the enterprise and the ideology of the state. And yet, something else was needed so that this juxtaposition of isolated functions—deciding, wishing, projecting—could operate. Sociologists were right when they isolated those subsystems as being functionally and structurally distinct. They failed because they failed to show how that order and its immanent disorder, those units and their disjunctions, could contain a self-regulatory mechanism and constitute a whole, and in some cases a totality. It would be easy to show where the reductive approach of American and Soviet (to the extent that we are familiar with them) ideologues failed. However, this immanent cohesion could only arise from a logic. This socio-logic was hidden behind or beneath sociology. It was and still is the logic of commodity and the world of commodities, dissimulated (absent) *as such* in the language of commodities yet still present in every object that is bought, sold, and consumed. It was also, and still is, the implacable logic of the state, of power conceived (or conceiving itself) as omniscient and omnipresent—logic that was also dissimulated as such, beneath the ethical prestige of the state.

The logic of repressive space reestablished coherence. This resulted in the complication and anxiety inherent in a

society that was destroyed, slowly but surely, by urban society and its transparent logic, a logic that comes into view as soon as we are able to express it. Similarly, we need only formulate those other socio-logics for them to disappear (this is theoretically self-evident).

We can now identify and formulate a number of *urban laws*. These are not positive laws, the laws associated with an "order of orders," or a model of equilibrium or growth that should be followed or imitated, the laws of an initial affirmation from which consequences can be deduced, or some final analysis that would result in various propositions. No, these are primarily, essentially, negative laws and precepts.

1. We must break down the barriers that block the path and maintain the urban field in thrall to the blinding-blinded (especially in terms of the quantitative aspects of growth).
2. We must put an end to separation, to the separation between people and things, which brings about multiform segregations, the separation between messages, information, codes, and subcodes (in short, the forms of separation that block qualitative development). But in the existing order, what separates imagines itself to be solid; what dissociates is conscious of its power; what divides judges itself to be positive.
3. We must overcome the obstacles that enhance the opacity of relationships and the contrasts between transparency and opacity, that relegate differences to distinct (separate) particularities, that restrict them to a prefabricated space, that mask the polyvalence of ways of living in urban society (modalities and modulations of the everyday and habiting), that outlaw the transgression of norms that stipulate separations.

These negative laws in turn imply a number of positive laws.

1. The urban (urban life, the life of urban society) already implies the substitution of custom for contract. Contract law determines the frameworks of exchange and of reciprocity in exchange. This law comes into being in agrarian societies once they begin to exchange their relative surpluses and (once the world of commodities is in place) achieves its highest expression in logic and language. However, use, in the urban, comprises custom and privileges custom over contract. The use of urban objects (this sidewalk, this street, this crosswalk, this light fixture) is customary, not contractual, unless we wish to postulate the existence of a permanent quasi contract or pseudo-contract for sharing those objects and reducing violence to a minimum. This does not, however, imply that the contract system cannot be improved or transformed.
2. The conception of the urban also strives for the *re-appropriation* by human beings of their conditions in time, in space, and in objects—conditions that were, and continue to be, taken away from them so that their recovery will be deferred until after buying and selling have taken place.

   (Is it reasonable to assume that time—the place of values—and space—the medium of exchange—can be reunited in a higher unity, the urban? Yes, providing we clearly point out what everyone already knows: that this unity is a u-topia, a non-place, a possible-impossible, but one that gives meaning to the possible, to action. The space of exchange and the time of values, the space of goods and the supreme good, namely time, cannot be articulated and go their own way, reflecting the incoherence of so-called industrial society. Creating space-time

unity would be a possible definition, one among many, of the urban and urban society.)

3. Politically, this perspective cannot be conceived without extensive self-management of production and the enterprise within territorial units. A difficult proposition. The term "politically" is a source of confusion because generalized self-management implies the withering away of the state and the end of politics as such. In this sense, the incompatibility between the state and the urban is radical in nature. The state can only prevent the urban from taking shape. The state has to control the urban phenomenon, not to bring it to fruition but to retard its development, to push it in the direction of institutions that extend to society as a whole, through exchange and the market, the types of organization and management found in the enterprise, institutions developed during periods of growth, where the emphasis is given to quantitative (quantifiable) objectives. But the urban can only establish and serve "habiting" by reversing the state order and the strategy that organizes space globally, through constraint and homogenization, thereby absorbing the subordinate levels of the urban and habiting.

As I have tried to show, urbanism is a mask and a tool: a mask for the state and political action, a tool of interests that are dissimulated within a strategy and a socio-logic. Urbanism does not try to model space as a work of art. It does not even try to do so in keeping with its technological imperatives, as it claims. The space it creates is political.

Conclusion

Throughout this book I have examined various aspects of the urban problematic. However, one of the most disturbing problems still remains: the extraordinary passivity of the people most directly involved, those who are affected by projects, influenced by strategies. Why this silence on the part of "users"? Why the uncertain mutterings about "aspirations"—assuming anyone even bothers to consider them? What exactly is behind this strange situation?

In this book I have criticized urbanism as ideology and institution, representation and will, pressure and repression, because it establishes a repressive space that is represented as objective, scientific, and neutral. It is obvious that this explanation, although necessary, is incomplete. It is only one part of the explanation or interpretation of one paradoxical fact among a number of paradoxes. To conclude, I would like to tie up some loose ends in my argument and add a few additional thoughts on urbanism.

1. Couldn't the passivity of those who inhabit, who could and should "dwell poetically" (Hölderlin), be compared to the strange impasse that architectural and urbanist thought

has come up against? It is as if their projects were under the influence of some strange curse. It seems that the only progress they have made involves the use of graphics and technology. The imagination is hampered in its flight. The authors of these projects have clearly not succeeded in locating the intersection of the following two principles: *(a)* there is no thought without u-topia, without an exploration of the possible, of the elsewhere; *(b)* there is no thought without reference to practice (here the practice of habiting and use, but what if the inhabitant and the user remain silent?).

The massive involvement of those affected would alter this state of affairs. Would it enable those thoughts and projects to cross the threshold before which they seem to hesitate? Possibly. But that involvement has never taken place. Here and there we see scattered signs of renewed interest. But there has been no trace of any political movement—that is, the politicization of the problems and objectives of "construction."

Where does this blockage come from? The question cuts to the heart of the matter. The mechanism is fairly obvious on the theoretical plane: concrete space has been replaced with abstract space. Concrete space is the space of habiting: gestures and paths, bodies and memory, symbols and meanings, the difficult maturation of the immature-premature (of the "human being"), contradictions and conflicts between desires and needs, and so forth. This concrete content, time inscribed in space, an unconscious poiesis that misunderstands its own conditions, is also misunderstood by thought. Instead, it takes off into the abstract space of vision, of geometry. The architect who draws and the urbanist who composes a block plan look down on their "objects," buildings and neighborhoods, from above and afar. These designers and draftsmen move within a space of paper and ink. Only after this nearly complete *reduction* of the everyday do they return to the scale of lived experience. They are convinced they have captured it even though they carry out their plans

and projects within a second-order abstraction. They've shifted from lived experience to the abstract, projecting this abstraction back onto lived experience. This twofold substitution and negation creates an illusory sense of affirmation: the return to "real" life. In this way the blinding-blinded operates on a field that may appear to be illuminated but is in fact blind.

How can we put an end to this ideo-logic of substitution, hidden beneath technical arguments, justified by professional skills, without the rebellion of lived experience, of the everyday, of praxis? The technicians and specialists who "act" are unaware that their so-called objective space is in fact ideologic and repressive.

2. There are historical reasons for this situation. The town, the city, has fascinated people for centuries. They have developed a sense of parish pump politics, or parochialism. Only in this sense did they take an interest in the organization of space, form groups that produced space. Generally, these were "notables," who, quite naturally, took an interest in the morphological and social framework of their "interests." This attitude has far from disappeared in towns and small cities. However, it has lost or is losing its most powerful incentives. Its offensive, productive attitude (of social space and time, that is to say, the use of time) has changed into a defensive attitude, has become passive. Battles are fought against the encroachments of a central authority and state pressure. But we know that the real problems lie elsewhere, that the most important decisions are made elsewhere. This creates a sense of disappointment in urban reality because we know that there is something outdated about the reality of the town or small city, that it is becoming an embarrassment. How can we make the transition from the city, which maintains its image, which has a heart, a face, a "soul," to *urban society*, without a long period of disorientation?

Between 1920 and 1930, Russia experienced a tremendous

spurt of creative activity. Quite amazingly, Russian society, turned upside down through revolution, managed to produce superstructures (out of the depths) of astonishing novelty. This occurred in just about every field of endeavor, including politics, architecture, and urbanism. These superstructures were far in advance of the existing structures (social relations) and base (productive forces). The existing base and superstructures would have had to follow, make up for their delay, and reach the level of the superstructures that had come into existence through the process of revolutionary creativity. This was a key problem for Lenin during his last years. Today, however, it has become painfully obvious that those structures and the "base" did a poor job of catching up. The superstructures produced by revolutionary genius collapsed on top of a base (peasant, backward) that had been badly or inadequately modified. Isn't this the great drama of our era? Architectural and urbanist thought cannot arise from thought or theory alone (urbanistic, sociological, economic). It came into being during this total phenomenon known as revolution. The creations of the revolutionary period in the Soviet Union quickly disappeared; they were destroyed and then forgotten. So why did it take forty years, why did we have to wait until today (an age that some claim is characterized by speed, acceleration, vertigo) and the work of Anatole Kopp to acknowledge the achievements of architectural and urban thought and practice in the Soviet Union?[1] In spite of the favorable circumstances (in France, in 1968, there also occurred a "total phenomenon" that was, to some extent, comparable to the phenomena that took place in Russia between 1920 and 1930), it is not clear that this knowledge has been assimilated. We live with the consequences: the remains of revolutions buried under the remains of technology.

There are several historical reasons for passivity and obstruction. And aren't we, faced with the urban phenomenon, in a situation comparable to the one faced a century ago by those who had to accommodate the growth of industrial phenomena? Those who hadn't read Marx—which is to say, nearly everyone—saw only chaos, unrelated facts. This was true not only of "ordinary" people, but "cultivated" individuals as well, including economists. All they saw were separate units, enterprises, each of which was under the control of a manager (boss, owner, entrepreneur). Before their eyes, society was being atomized, dissociating into individuals and fragments. Even the market seemed like a series or collection of unconnected accidents. Since totality was not a part of thought or action, since the concept of planning was still somewhat vague, there were no objections to this atomistic and molecular vision of the social. There was no way to account for the facts, to act on them. Isn't the same true today with respect to the urban phenomenon and urban society? We don't know how to approach them. Contemporary thought and action can only accommodate empty spaces and the void of space. Plenitude is resistant. It escapes our grasp. Or rather, it fragments indefinitely before any thought or action that attempts to comprehend it. Thought floats between a self-annihilating plenitude and the void that defies it.

The political reasons for passivity need to be taken seriously. Enormous pressure is at work to maintain awareness within fixed boundaries. Ideologically, technically, and politically, the quantitative has become rule, norm, and value. How can we escape the quantifiable? Even in business, bodies that represent the working class express their demands and aspirations in quantifiable terms: salary and work week. The qualitative is worn down. Anything that cannot be quantified is eliminated. The generalized terrorism of the quantifiable accentuates the efficiency of repressive space, amplifies it without fear and without reproach, all the more so because of its self-justifying nature (ideo-logic), its apparent scientificity. In this situation, since the quantitative is never seriously questioned,

the working class has no scope for political action. In terms of urbanism, it can offer nothing of consequence.

In spite of its inability to construct a body of doctrine, in spite of its internal discord (between humanists and technocrats, private entrepreneurs and government representatives), urbanism reflects this overall situation and plays an active role in applying ideo-logic and political pressure. This much is obvious. But it can only be avoided through an ongoing process of self-criticism.

3. What about the theoretical aspects of passivity? These are associated with the fragmentation of the urban phenomenon. As I indicated earlier, there is a paradox here: the urban phenomenon can only be comprehended as a totality, but its totality cannot be grasped. It escapes us. It is always elsewhere. Little by little, I've tried to elaborate the nature of this paradox, which signifies centrality and the dialectic of centrality, urban praxis, and finally urban revolution. This threefold character, rejected by ideology and positivist pseudoscientificity, justifies the most extreme fragmentation, motivates the most cynical forms of compartmentalization. Some pseudoconcepts, which appear to be precise (operational) and global, legitimate fragmentation and compartmentalization. Take the pseudoconcept of the *environment*, for example. What exactly does it refer to? Nature? A milieu? This much is obvious but trivial. The surroundings? Yes, but which? No one seems to know. The city has an environment; it's called the countryside. Individuals have an environment: it's the succession of envelopes, skins, and shells (Abraham Moles) that contain them, from their habits to their neighborhood.[2] The apartment block and the neighborhood have their environments and serve as environments in turn. Is it the city's boundary or the city as boundary that we refer to as an environment? If not, why not? As soon as we try to be specific, we turn to a specialist, a technician. Thus, there is a geographic environment, a site, landscape, ecosystem. There

is a historical environment, an economic and sociologic environment. The semiologist describes symbolic systems and the signs that environ individuals and groups. The psychosociologist describes the groups that serve as environments for individuals. And so on. In the end, we have access to a number of partial descriptions and analytic statements. We spread them out on the table before us or dump them all into the same sack. That's our environment. In fact, the image is borrowed from ecological and morphological, which is to say limited, description, and this has been extended carelessly because it is simple and pliable. It has been used for the conventional and well-known (although officially unknown as such) operations of extrapolation and reduction.

The concept of infrastructure, although more technical, yields the same result: isolated functions, projected separately onto the terrain; analytic fragments of a global reality that the very process destroys. Urban life is said to be located within diverse and diversified infrastructures that satisfy any number of problems. In fact, functional location overlooks so large a number of elements and so rarely achieves its goals that it is hardly worth the trouble to criticize it from the point of view of theory. Similarly, we need only mention the growing number of authorities, skills, services, and offices associated with the separate "elements" of urban reality. Here, too, the only limits the bureaucrat and bureaucratic fragmentation encounter are internal. These continue to proliferate until they stop functioning, caught up in the inextricable interlocking of skills that are themselves localized in offices. This situation would be comic if it didn't imply a practice: the segregation, projected onto the terrain, of *all* the isolated elements of the *whole*.

4. There are sociological reasons, as well, for this phenomenon, namely the passivity (the lack of participation) of those affected, which the ideology of participation will in no way change. We have a long history of delegating our

interests to our representatives. Political representatives have not always played their part, and sometimes their part has been eliminated. So to whom should we delegate power and the representation of practical and social life? To experts and those with skills. They in turn can confer with one another and rule on everything that concerns a functionalized "habitat." Habiting and the inhabitant play no role in their decisions. Decisions are placed in the hands of decision makers. Activity withdraws to the everyday, to static space, to the reification that is initially endured, then accepted.

How could the user not feel excluded from the dialogue (assuming there is dialogue) between the architect and the urbanist? Sometimes these are found in the same individual, sometimes they are separate, and sometimes they disagree. Frequently, they establish a contract, a quasi contract, or a gentleman's agreement between them. What is the best situation for the user? A not-too-violent conflict between these two individuals. How often is the user present to take advantage of this circumstance? Rarely.

Who is this user? It's as if they (the skilled, the agents, the authorities) had so excluded *use* for the sake of *exchange* that this use came to be confused with usury. So how is the user perceived? As a fairly repulsive character who soils whatever is sold to him new and fresh, who breaks, who causes wear, who fortunately fulfills the function of making the replacement of a thing inevitable, who successfully carries out the process of obsolescence. Which is hardly an excuse.

Notes

The French text of *The Urban Revolution* was published in 1970. The original notes are reproduced here but may refer to more recent editions of cited references.

1. From the City to Urban Society

1. The bibliography on the subject is now rather extensive. The initial research was sparked by a well-known article entitled "Asiaticus," published in *Rinascita* (Rome), 1963. The standard reference still remains K. A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1957). See also the articles by J. Chesneaux in *La Pensée,* nos. 114 and 122, and M. Godelier in *Les Temps modernes,* May 1965, and Marx's *Grundrisse* and *Capital.*

2. ["Habiting" is my translation of the highly unusual form *l'habiter.* Although the term is far from euphonious, even somewhat jarring, it accords well with the author's usage. Lefebvre employs an infinitive *(habiter)* that has been made to serve as a noun *(l'habiter).* Such forms obviously contravene correct grammatical use—even in French. Although Lefebvre doesn't explicitly say so, the term is derived from Heidegger's use of the verb *wohnen,* from which *das Wohnen,* the verbal noun, is formed. This in turn has been translated as "dwelling"

(the gerundive form rather than the noun synonymous with "house" or "abode"). One of the underlying reasons for my decision to translate *l'habiter* as "habiting" is the author's frequent juxtaposition of *l'habiter* with French *habitat,* which is paralleled in English "habiting" and "habitat." Moreover, both "to habit" (the verb from which "habiting" is formed) and French *habiter* are derived from the same Latin infinitive, *habitare.* An additional argument for the use of "habiting" is its unexpectedness (a verbal noun used as an ordinary noun) for the reader.

Additional support for this translation can be found in Heidegger himself, at least as he has been interpreted by his translators. In "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," Heidegger writes, "Building as dwelling, that is, as being on the earth, however, remains for man's everyday experience that which is from the outset *'habitual'*—we *inhabit* it" (my emphasis). "Habiting" captures some of the echoes of the terms "habitual" and "inhabiting," which stem from similar roots: "habitual" from Latin *habitus,* "inhabit" from Latin *inhabitare (in + habitare).*

One criticism that has been leveled at the use of "dwell" as a translation of *wohnen* is that the term implies a sense of temporal duration, something Heidegger did not intend. "Habiting" is less durative and therefore more consonant with Heidegger's own usage. For examples of the use of "dwelling" in Heidegger, see *Being and Time,* trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1996), and "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought,* trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1971).—*Trans.*]

2. Blind Field

1. Cf. J. T. Desanti, *Idéalités mathématiques* (Paris: Seuil, 1968).

2. *Isotopy* is defined as "a redundant set of semantic categories that makes it possible to read a story as something uniform, this reading being the result of partial readings of the utterances after resolution of their ambiguities, this resolution itself being guided by the search for a single reading" (Algirdas Julien Greimas, "Eléments pour une théorie de l'interprétation du récit," in *Communication,* no. 8, 30; see also *Structural Semantics,* 96). The concept is thus associated with a reading of urban space (and the time inscribed in this space). This space, which is more or less legible in the image and on maps of the city, can be read in various ways. It gives rise to different vocabularies and different types of discourse, just as it encourages recourse to different paths through the city. The term "isotopy" and its correlate "heterotopy" indicate the suitability of bringing together a plurality of discourses and vocabularies by situating them in one place. These paths through the city can engender numerous discourses with varying forms, functions, and urban structures. Who is talking? Who is acting? Who is moving in space? A subject (individual or collective) who participates in social relations (ownership, production, consumption). The description of isotopies and heterotopies goes hand in hand with the analysis of the acts and situations of these subjects and their relation to objects populating the urban space. This leads to the discovery, or rather re-cognition, of the presence-absence that contributes to the population of urban space, of an elsewhere, a utopia (a place without place that has not taken place).

3. Using borrowed concepts and terms, we can say that the urban (as opposed to urbanism, whose ambiguity is gradually revealed) rises above the horizon, slowly occupies an epistemological field, and becomes the episteme of an epoch. History and the historic grow further apart. Psychoanalysis and linguistics, like economy and politics, reach their apogee and begin to decline. The urban begins its ascendance. The important thing is not to classify the fields, the domains, the topoi of the understanding but to influence their movement. We can, if we prefer, refer to this activity as "theoretical practice," but it has nothing in common with a scientism that asserts itself as a criterion, pushing aside the "lived" and praxis.

3. The Urban Phenomenon

1. The urban center displays the following characteristics: the simultaneous presence of elements in the urban inventory (objects, people) that are fixed and separate within the periphery based on a (redundant) order, the interaction of these elements and, consequently, disorder and maximum information. This creates complexification with respect to the periphery as well as the risks and dangers arising from this influx. Decentrality is fixed in redundancy. The analytic and formal (mathematical) study of these phenomena runs the risk of masking the *dialectic of centrality.* No single center is self-sufficient or

sufficient. Saturation makes this impossible. It directs us toward a *different* center, a *different* centrality.

2. See the work of Christopher Alexander in *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* (1967), no. 1.

3. This is the biggest stumbling block for the application of post-Saussurian linguistics and the Saussurian model to the theory of myths and mythology, literature, stories, and so forth. See in particular the work of Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes. This is why other models are needed. [N. Trubetzkoy (1890–1938) was one of the founders of the Prague School of structuralism.—*Trans.*]

4. See R. Boudon: *The Uses of Structuralism,* trans. Michalina Vaughan (London: Heinemann, 1971).

5. [Louis Bolk (1866–1930) was a Dutch anatomist who formulated a theory of "fetalization," according to which humans developed by retaining the juvenile features of their ancestors. Unlike those of primates, human features are assumed to be fetal conditions that have become permanent.—*Trans.*]

4. Levels and Dimensions

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra,* part 3, "On Virtue that Makes Small," trans. Walter Kaufmann (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1978).

2. This grid has been constructed and verified based on information collected in Kyoto, Japan, a remarkable urban space, where city architects and urbanists supplied the author with the needed information: historic, cadastral, demographic, et cetera. During my all-too-brief stay in Japan (approximately two months), I attempted a first approximation for a study of urban and architectural space in the country, using the analytic categories of Western thought. The potential advantages of such a study, which would have included a knowledge of ideograms and their associated time-space components, as well as Asian modes of production and their variants (including an understanding of China), were barely touched upon. This is a historic space, which predates capitalism and industry, but is highly complex.

An analysis of space (or rather of time-space) undertaken here would focus on:

a. the principle of interaction, interpenetration, and superposition of spaces (paths)
b. the concepts of polyfunctionality and transfunctionality
c. the dialectics of centrality
d. the contradictions of space
e. the concept of the production of the space of (time-space), and so on

In light of this sequence (proceeding from the abstract to the concrete, from logistics to the dialectic exploration of the contradictions of space), can we really talk about an urbanistic epistemology? Possibly, but only with certain reservations. Developing the supposedly definitive "cores" or "centers" of formal knowledge is never without risk. Rational solidity and "purity" tend toward a strange kind of segregation, even in terms of theory.

3. See Anatole Kopp, *Town and Revolution: Soviet Architecture and City Planning, 1917–1935,* trans. Thomas E. Burton (New York: Braziller, 1970).

4. [Yona Friedman was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1923 and graduated from the Technological Institute of Haifa, Israel. He has lived and worked in Paris since 1956. In 1958, he published his manifesto, *L'Architecture mobile.* He is the author of a number of urban projects promoting the idea of a spatial architecture that implicates the participation of the users.—*Trans.*]

5. See the texts from the 1919 Manifesto and the *Bauhaus* review (no. 4, 1928), which appeared in the Bauhaus exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Paris, 1969, as well as the catalog for the exhibition.

6. My remarks are aimed at Roger Garaudy and his brand of "Marxist humanism," as well as at Louis Althusser (*For Marx,* translated from the French by Ben Brewster [New York: Pantheon Books, 1969]) and Lucien Sève (*Marxism and the Theory of Human Personality* [London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1975]) and others. It is especially strange to follow in Marxist (so-called Marxist) thought the consequences of this philosophizing attitude, the efforts to maintain and sustain it, to retain its abstraction as the private property of an apparatus (which also ensures the privatization of ideas).

By studying social relationships without considering places (which are filled with these relationships) and morphology (material), aren't

we at risk of applying a purely *idealist* approach? The attitude of these philosophers, who claim to be materialists, can only be explained by the ideological power of the apparatus.

5. Urban Myths and Ideologies

1. I don't want to belabor a point already highlighted but left unresolved: how do already signifying units become part of other units? Is meaning transformed, invented, or created? Are heretofore unknown combinations now brought to light through new relationships? Or is it only metalanguage, a discourse about an initial discourse? I feel that the first solution, effected through the relationship between text and context, is the most reasonable.

2. [Anatole Kopp is the author of *Town and Revolution: Soviet Architecture and City Planning, 1917–1935,* trans. Thomas E. Burton (New York: Braziller [1970]), and *Constructivist Architecture in the USSR,* trans. Sheila de Vallée (London: Academy Editions; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).—*Trans.*]

6. Urban Form

1. This theory of form envelops and develops the analysis I provided in *Right to the City,* ed. Joan Ockman (New York: Columbia Books of Architecture/Rizzoli International Publications, 1993). In *Right to the City,* the city is understood as *(a)* a (spatial) object, *(b)* mediation (between near and distant order), *(c)* a work (similar to the work of art, formed by a group). Form unifies these three aspects of the city. The "right to the city" becomes the right to centrality, the right to not be excluded from urban form, if only with respect to the decisions and actions of power. I also demonstrated

a. that the tree, that is, a graph of the tree, is a rigorous, limiting structure that only provides access to predetermined pathways
b. that this structure is both mental and social
c. that it projects onto the terrain a bureaucratic conception (hierarchic) of society
d. that its "scientificity" dissimulates an ideology
e. that this schema is reductive of urban reality
f. that it is generally adopted by urbanists as representative of the urban order, although it is segregating

These topics will be discussed in further detail in my *Théorie de l'espace urbain.*

7. Toward an Urban Strategy

1. [Georges Gurvitch (1894–1965) was a French sociologist born in Novorossiysk, Russia. He is the author of numerous works of sociology, including *The Social Frameworks of Knowledge,* trans. Margaret A. Thompson and Kenneth A. Thompson (New York: Harper and Row [1971]), and *Sociology of Law* (London: Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1947).—*Trans.*]

2. [The Marais, one of the many historic districts of Paris, is located in the third and fourth arrondissements. The area became one of the most fashionable parts of Paris in the seventeenth century following the construction of the Place des Vosges and was soon populated by the nobility and wealthy Parisians. The region became a center of art and culture. However, the Marais experienced a period of decline that lasted from the eighteenth to the mid–twentieth century, sparked by the relocation of many of its residents to the more fashionable Faubourg Saint-Honoré and Faubourg Saint-Germain. These new neighborhoods offered light and open space, which were in short supply in the Marais's narrow streets and small courtyards. After the flight of the aristocracy, the area was occupied primarily by light industry and artisans, and it housed a large Jewish community, primarily along Rue des Rosiers. The Marais was classified a historic district in 1962, when efforts at restoration were begun. In recent years it has—once again—become one of the most fashionable neighborhoods of central Paris.—*Trans.*]

8. The Urban Illusion

1. [Bruno Bauer (1809–82) was a German rationalist philosopher and theologian. Prior to the 1848 revolution, he was a Left Hegelian and developed a republican interpretation of Hegel's ideas. As a theologian, he described religion as a form of alienation. After the revolution, Bauer repudiated Hegel and predicted a crisis of European civilization. His writings are said to have influenced Nietzsche, Engels, and Karl Kautsky. Bauer was a prolific writer, but little of his work has been translated into English. The following, however, are available: *Christ*

and the Caesars: The Origin of Christianity from Romanized Greek Culture, trans. Frank E. Schacht (Charleston, S.C.: Davidonis, c. 1998), and *The Trumpet of the Last Judgement against Hegel the Atheist and Antichrist: An Ultimatum,* trans. Lawrence Stepelevich (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen Press, 1989).

Max Stirner (1806–56) is a pseudonym for Johann Kaspar Schmidt, a German anti-statist philosopher in whose writings many anarchists of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries found ideological inspiration. He is sometimes regarded as a source of twentieth-century existentialism. Like Bauer, Stirner started out as a Left Hegelian but attacked what he perceived as the radicalism of Bauer, Feuerbach, and Marx. He thought the only reality was that of the individual ego. His best-known work in English is *The Ego and His Own: The Case of the Individual against Authority,* trans. Steven T. Byington, ed. James J. Martin (New York: Dover [1973]).—*Trans.*]

2. [W. W. Rostow, American economic historian, developed a five-stage economic growth model that incorporated what he termed "takeoff," which was based on Western (primarily British) economic development in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1962).—*Trans.*]

Conclusion

1. [For Kopp, see ch. 5, n. 1.—*Trans.*]

2. [Abraham A. Moles (1920–92) was an influential French engineer and sociologist who was head of research at the CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) (1945–54) and later directed Hermann Scherchen's Laboratory of Electronic Music in Switzerland. He taught in several countries and founded the Institute of Social Psychology in Strasbourg in 1966. He is the author of numerous publications, including *Information Theory and Esthetic Perception,* trans. Joel F. Cohen (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966).—*Trans.*]

Henri Lefebvre (1901–1991) was a noted French philosopher and sociologist. His treatment of modern urban society resulted in the production of several works that have become classics of urban studies, and he was among the first scholars to recognize the implications of alienation and disaffection in modern life and their impact on rural traditions. His books include *Everyday Life in the Modern World, Introduction to Modernity, The Production of Space,* and *Writings on Cities.*

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