for consumption?' Construction is? Could urban life recover and strengthen its capacities of *integration* and *participation* of the city, which are almost entirely lost, and which cannot be stimulated either by authoritarian means or by administrative prescription, or by the intervention of specialists? The foremost theoretical problem can be formulated thus. The political meaning of class segregation is clear, whether it is a 'subject' for analysis, whether it is the end result of a series of unplanned actions, or whether it is the effect of a will. For the *working class*, victim of segregation and expelled from the traditional city, deprived of a present or possible urban life, there is a practical and therefore *political* problem even if it is not posed politically and even if until now the housing question has for it and its representatives concealed the problematic of the city and the *urban*.

14

The Right to the City

Theoretical thought sees itself compelled to redefine the forms, functions and structures of the city (economic, political, cultural, etc.) as well as the social needs inherent to urban society. Until now, only those individual needs, motivated by the so-called society of consumption (a bureaucratic society of managed consumption) have been prospected, and moreover manipulated rather than effectively known and recognized. Social needs have an anthropological foundation. Opposed and complimentary, they include the need for security and opening, the need for certainty and adventure, that of organization of work and of play, the needs for the predictable and the unpredictable, of similarity and difference, of isolation and encounter, exchange and investments, of independence (even solitude) and communication, of immediate and long-term prospects. The human being has the need to accumulate energies and to spend them, even waste them in play. He has a need to see, to hear, to touch, to taste and the need to gather these perceptions in a 'world'. To these anthropological needs which are socially elaborated (that is, sometimes separated, sometimes joined together, here compressed and there hypertrophied), can be added specific needs which are not satisfied by those commercial and cultural infrastructures which are somewhat parsimoniously taken into account by planners. This refers to the need for creative activity, for the *oeuvre* (not only of products and consumable material goods), of the need for information, symbolism, the imaginary and play. Through these specified needs lives and survives a fundamental desire of which play, sexuality, physical activities such as sport, creative activity, art and knowledge are particular expressions and *moments*, which can more or less overcome the fragmentary division of tasks. Finally, the

need of the city and urban life can only be freely expressed within a perspective which here attempts to become clearer and to open up the horizon. Would not specific urban needs be those of qualified places, places of simultaneity and encounters, places where exchange would not go through exchange value, commerce and profit? Would there not also be the need for a time for these encounters, these exchanges?

At present, an analytical science of the city, which is necessary, is only at the outline stage. At the beginning of their elaboration, concepts and theories can only move forward with urban reality in the making, with the *praxis* (social practice) of urban society. Now, not without effort, the ideologies and practices which blocked the horizon and which were only bottlenecks of knowledge and action, are being overcome.

The *science of the city* has the city as object. This science borrows its methods, approaches and concepts from the fragmentary sciences, but synthesis escapes it in two ways. Firstly, because this synthesis which would wish itself as total, starting from the analytic, can only be strategic systematization and programming. Secondly, because the object, the city, as consummate reality is falling apart. Knowledge holds in front of itself the historic city already modified, to cut it up and put it together again from fragments. As social text, this historic city no longer has a coherent set of prescriptions, of use of time linked to symbols and to a style. This text is moving away. It takes the form of a document, or an exhibition, or a museum. The city historically constructed is no longer lived and is no longer understood practically. It is only an object of cultural consumption for tourists, for a esthetic-icism, avid for spectacles and the picturesque. Even for those who seek to understand it with warmth, it is gone. Yet, the *urban* remains in a state of dispersed and alienated actuality, as kernel and virtuality. What the eyes and analysis perceive on the ground can at best pass for the shadow of a future object in the light of a rising sun. It is impossible to envisage the reconstitution of the old city, only the construction of a new one on new foundations, on another scale and in other conditions, in another society. The prescription is: there cannot be a going back (towards the traditional city), nor a headlong flight, towards a colossal and shapeless agglomeration. In other words, for what concerns the city the object of science is not given. The past, the present, the possible cannot be separated. What is being studied is a *virtual object*, which thought studies, which calls for new approaches.

The career of the old classical humanism ended long ago and badly. It is dead. Its mummified and embalmed corpse weighs heavily and does not smell good. It occupies many spaces, public or otherwise, thus transforms into cultural cemeteries under the guise of the human: museums, universities, various publications, not to mention new towns and planning procedures. Trivialities and platitudes are wrapped up in this 'human scale', as they say, whereas what we should take charge of are the excesses and create 'something' to the scale of the universe.

This old humanism died during the World Wars, during the demographic growth which accompanied great massacres, and before the brutal demands of economic growth and competition and the pressure of poorly controlled techniques. It is not even an ideology, barely a theme for official speeches.

Recently there have been great cries of 'God is dead, man too' as if the death of classical humanism was that of man. These formulae spread in best-sellers, and taken in by a publicity not really responsible, are nothing new. Nietzschean meditation, a dark presage for Europe's culture and civilization, began a hundred years ago during the 1870–1 Franco-Prussian war. When Nietzsche announced the death of God and man, he did not leave a gaping hole, or fill this void with makeshift material, language or linguistics. He was also announcing the Superhuman which he thought was to come. He was overcoming the nihilism he was identifying. Authors transacting these theoretical and poetic treasures, but with a delay of a century, plunge us back into nihilism. Since Nietzsche, the dangers of the Superhuman have been cruelly evident. Moreover, this 'new man' emerging from industrial production and planning rationality has been more than disappointing. There is still another way, that of urban society and the human as *oeuvre* in this society which would be an *oeuvre* and not a product. There is also the simultaneous overcoming of the old 'social animal' and man of the ancient city, the urban animal, towards a polyvalent, polysensorial, urban man capable of complex and transparent relations with the world (the environment and himself). Or there is nihilism. If man is dead, for whom will we build? How will we build? It does not matter that the city has or has not disappeared, that it must be thought anew, reconstructed on new foundations or overcome. It does not matter whether terror reigns, that the atomic bomb is dropped or that Planet Earth explodes. What is important? Who thinks? Who acts? Who still speaks and for whom? If meaning and

finality disappear and we cannot even declare them in a praxis, nothing matters. And if the capacities of the 'human being', technology, science, imagination and art, or their absence, are erected as autonomous powers, and that reflective thought is satisfied with this assessment, the absence of a 'subject', what to reply? What to do?

Old humanism moves away and disappears. Nostalgia lessens and we turn back less and less often to see its shape lying across the road. It was the ideology of the liberal bourgeoisie, with its Greek and Latin quotes sprinkled with Judeo-Christianity, which bent over the people and human sufferings and which covered and supported the rhetoric of the clear consciences of noble feelings and of the sensitive souls. A dreadful cocktail, a mixture to make you sick. Only a few intellectuals (from the 'Left' – but are there still any intellectuals on the 'Right'?) who are neither revolutionary nor openly reactionary, nor Dionysiacs or Apollonians, still have a taste for this sad potion.

We thus must make the effort to reach out towards a new humanism, a new praxis, another man, that of urban society. We must avoid those myths which threaten this will, destroy those ideologies which hinder this project and those strategies which divert this trajectory. Urban life has yet to begin. What we are doing now is to complete an inventory of the remains of a millenarian society where the countryside dominated the city, and whose ideas, values, taboos and prescriptions were largely agrarian, with rural and 'natural' dominant features. A few sporadic cities hardly emerged from a rustic ocean. Rural society was (still is), a society of scarcity and penury, of want accepted or rejected, of prohibitions managing and regulating privations. It was also the society of the *Fête*, of festivities. But that aspect, the best, has been lost and instead of myths and limitations, this is what must be revitalized! A decisive remark: for the crisis of the traditional city accompanies the world crisis of agrarian civilization, which is also traditional. It is up to us to resolve this double crisis, especially by creating with the new city, a new life in the city. Revolutionary societies (among which the USSR ten or fifteen years after the October Revolution), intimated the development of society based on industry. But they only intimated.

The use of 'we' in the sentences above has only the impact of a metaphor to mean those concerned. The architect, the planner, the sociologist, the economist, the philosopher or the politician cannot out of nothingness create new forms and relations. More precisely, the

architect is no more a miracle-worker than the sociologist. Neither can create social relations, although under certain favourable conditions they help trends to be formulated (to take shape). Only social life (praxis) in its global capacity possesses such powers – or does not possess them. The people mentioned above can individually or in teams clear the way; they can also propose, try out and prepare forms. And also (and especially), through a maieutic nurtured by science, assess acquired experience, provide a lesson from failure and give birth to the possible.

At the point we have arrived there is an urgent need to change intellectual approaches and tools. It would be indispensable to take up ideas and approaches from elsewhere and which are still not very familiar.

Transduction. This is an intellectual operation which can be methodically carried out and which differs from classical induction, deduction, the construction of 'models', simulation as well as the simple statement of hypothesis. Transduction elaborates and constructs a theoretical object, a *possible* object from information related to reality and a problematic posed by this reality. Transduction assumes an incessant feed back between the conceptual framework used and empirical observations. Its theory (methodology), gives shape to certain spontaneous mental operations of the planner, the architect, the sociologist, the politician and the philosopher. It introduces rigour in invention and knowledge in utopia.

Experimental utopia. Who is not a *utopian* today? Only narrowly specialized practioners working to order without the slightest critical examination of stipulated norms and constraints, only these not very interesting people escape utopianism. All are utopians, including those futurists and planners who project Paris in the year 2,000 and those engineers who have made Brasilia! But there are several utopianisms. Would not the worst be that utopianism which does not utter its name, covers itself with positivism and on this basis imposes the harshest constraints and the most derisory absence of technicity?

Utopia is to be considered experimentally by studying its implications and consequences on the ground. These can surprise. What are and what would be the most successful places? How can they be discovered? According to which criteria? What are the times and rhythms of daily life which are inscribed and prescribed in these 'successful' spaces favourable to happiness? That is interesting.

There are other indispensable intellectual approaches to identify without dissociating them the three fundamental theoretical concepts of structure, function and form, and to know their import, the spheres of their validity, their limits and their reciprocal relations. To know that they make a whole but that the elements of this whole have a certain independence and relative autonomy. To not privilege one over the other, otherwise this gives an ideology, that is, a closed and dogmatic system of significations: structuralism, formalism, functionalism. To be used equally and in turn for the analysis of the real (an analysis which is never exhaustive or without residue), as well as for that operation known as 'transduction'. It is important to understand that a function can be accomplished by means of different structures, and that there is no unequivocal link between the terms. That is, that functions and structures clothe themselves with forms which reveal and veil them – that the triplicity of these aspects make a whole which is more than these aspects, elements and parts.

We have among our intellectual tools one which deserves neither disdain nor privilege of the absolute: that of *system* (or rather *sub-system* of significations.

Policies have their systems of significations – ideologies – which enable them to subordinate to their strategies social acts and events influenced by them. At the ecological level, the humble inhabitant has his system (or rather, his sub-system) of significations. The fact of living here or there involves the reception, adoption and transmission of such a system, for example that of owner-occupied housing. The system of significations of the inhabitant tells of his passivities and activities: he is received but changed by practice. He is perceived.

Architects seem to have established and dogmatized an ensemble of significations, as such poorly developed and variously labelled as 'function', 'form', 'structure', or rather, functionalism, formalism, and structuralism. They elaborate them not from the significations perceived and lived by those who inhabit, but from their interpretation of inhabiting. It is graphic and visual, tending towards metalanguage. It is graphism and visualization. Given that these architects form a social body, they attach themselves to institutions, their system tends to close itself off, impose itself and elude all criticism. There is cause to formulate this system, often put forward without any other procedure or precaution, as *planning* by extrapolation.

This theory which one could legitimately call planning, close to the meanings of that old practice of *to inhabit* (that is, the human) which would add to these partial facts a general theory of urban *time-spaces*, which would reveal a new practice emerging from this elaboration can be envisaged only as the practical application of a comprehensive theory of the city and the urban which could go beyond current scissions and separations, particularly those existing between philosophy and the sciences of the city, the global and the partial. Current planning projects could figure in this development – but only within an unwavering critique of their ideological and strategic implications. Inasmuch as we can define it, our object – the urban – will never today be entirely present in our reflections. More than any another object, it possesses a very complex quality of totality in act and potential the object of research gradually uncovered, and which will be either slowly or never exhausted. To take this object as a given truth is operate a mythifying ideology. Knowledge must envisage a considerable number of methods to grasp this object, and cannot fasten itself onto a particular approach. Analytical configurations will follow as closely as possible the internal articulations of this 'thing' which is not a thing; they will be accompanied by reconstructions which will never be realized. Descriptions, analyses and attempts at synthesis can never be passed off as being exhaustive or definitive. All these notions, all these batteries of concepts will come into play: form, structure, function, level, dimension, dependent and independent variables, correlations, totality, ensemble, system, etc. Here as elsewhere, but more than elsewhere, the residue reveals itself to be most precious. Each 'object' constructed will in turn be submitted to critical examination. Within the possible, this will be accomplished and submitted to experimental verification. The science of the city requires a historical period to make itself and to orient social practice.

This science is necessary but not sufficient. We can perceive its limits at the same time as its necessity. Planning thought proposes the establishment or reconstitution of highly localized, highly particularized and centralized social units whose linkages and tensions would re-establish an urban unity endowed with a complex interior order, with its hierarchy and a supple structure. More specifically, sociological thought seeks an understanding and reconstitution of the integrative capacities of the urban as well as the conditions of practical participation. Why not? But only under one condition: never to

protect these fragmented and therefore partial attempts from criticism, practical assessment and global preoccupation.

Knowledge can therefore construct and propose models. In this sense each object is but a model of urban reality. Nevertheless, such a reality will never become manageable as a thing and will never become instrumental even for the most operational knowledge. Who would not hope that the city becomes again what it was – the act and *oeuvre* of a complex thought? But it cannot remain at the level of wishes and aspirations and an *urban strategy* is not defined. An urban strategy cannot take into account existing strategies and acquired knowledge: science of the city, with its disposition towards the planning of growth and the control of development. Whoever says 'strategies' says the hierarchy of 'variables' to be considered, some having a strategic capacity and others remaining at the tactical level – and says also the power to realize these strategies on the ground. Only groups, social classes and class fractions capable of revolutionary initiative can take over and realize to fruition solutions to urban problems. It is from these social and political forces that the renewed city will become the *oeuvre*. The first thing to do is to defeat currently dominant strategies and ideologies. In the present society that there exist many divergent groups and strategies (for example between the State and the private) does not alter the situation. From questions of landed property to problems of segregation, each project of *urban reform* questions the structures, the immediate (individual) and daily relations of existing society, but also those that one purports to impose by the coercive and institutional means of what remains of urban reality. In itself *reformist*, the strategy of urban renewal becomes 'inevitably' revolutionary, not by force of circumstance, but against the established order. Urban strategy resting on the science of the city needs a social support and political forces to be effective. It cannot act on its own. It cannot but depend on the presence and action of the working class, the only one able to put an end to a segregation directed essentially against it. Only this class, as a class, can decisively contribute to the reconstruction of centrality destroyed by a strategy of segregation and found again in the menacing form of *centres of decision-making*. This does not mean that the working class will make urban society all on its own, but that without it nothing is possible. Without it integration has no meaning and disintegration will continue under the guise of nostalgia and integration. There is there not only an option but an horizon which opens or closes. When the working class is silent, when

it is quiescent and cannot accomplish what theory has defined as its 'historical mission', then both the 'subject' and 'object' are lacking. Reflection confirms this absence, which means that it is appropriate to consider two series of propositions:

1 *A political programme of urban reform* not defined by the framework and the possibilities of prevailing society or subjugated to a 'realism', although based on the study of realities. In other words, reform thus understood is not limited to reformism. This programme will therefore have a singular and even paradoxical character. It will be established to be proposed to political forces, parties. One could even add that preferentially it would be presented to 'left' parties, political formations representing or wishing to represent the working class. But it would not be established as a function of these forces and formations. It will have in relation to them a specific character which comes from knowledge, a scientific part. It will be *proposed* (free to be altered) by those who take control of it. Let political forces take their responsibilities. In this domain which engages the future of modern society and that of producers, ignorance and misunderstanding entail responsibilities before history.

2 Mature *planning projects* which consist of models and spatial forms and urban times without concern for their current feasibility or their utopian aspect. It does not seem possible that these models result either from a simple study of existing cities and urban typologies, or from a combination of elements. Other than contrary to experience, the forms of space and time will be invented and proposed to praxis. That imagination be deployed, not the imaginary of escape and evasion which conveys ideologies, but the imaginary which invests itself in *appropriation* (of time, space, physiolocal life and desire). Why not oppose ephemeral cities to the eternal city, and movable centrality to stable centres? All audacities can be premissed. Why limit these propositions only to the morphology of time and space? They could also include the way of living in the city and the development of the urban on this basis.

In these two series there will also be long, medium and short-term propositions constituting urban strategy understood as such.

The society in which we live appears to tend towards plenitude – or at least towards fullness (durable goods and objects, quantity, satisfaction and rationality). In fact it allows a colossal gulf to be dug into

which ideologies agitate themselves and the fog of rhetoric spreads. Having left speculation and contemplation, incomplete knowledge and fragmentary divisions, one of the greatest projects active thought can propose for itself is to fill this lacuna – and not only with language.

In a period during which ideologists pronounce abundantly on structures, the destructuration of the city manifests the depth of phenomena, of social and cultural disintegration. Considered as a whole, this society finds itself *incomplete*. Between the sub-systems and the structures consolidated by various means (compulsion, terror, and ideological persuasion), there are holes and chasms. These voids are not there due to chance. They are the places of the possible. They contain the floating and dispersed elements of the possible, but not the power which could assemble them. Moreover, structuring actions and the power of the social void tend to prohibit action and the very presence of such a power. The conditions of the possible can only be realized in the course of a radical metamorphosis.

In this conjuncture, ideology claims to provide an absolute quality to 'scientificity', science appertaining to the real, dissecting it, reconstituting it, and by this fact isolating it from the possible and closing the way. Now, in such a conjuncture science which is fragmentary science can only have a *programmatic* impact. It brings elements to a programme. If one concedes that these elements already constitute a totality, and one wishes to execute this programme literally, one treats the virtual object as a pre-existent technical object. A project is accomplished without criticism and this project fulfills an ideology by projecting it on the ground – that of the technocrats. Although necessary, policy is not enough. It changes during the course of its implementation. Only social force, capable of investing itself in the urban through a long political experience, can take charge of the realization of a programme concerning urban society. Conversely, the science of the city brings to this perspective a theoretical and critical foundation, a positive base. Utopia controlled by dialectical reason serves as a safeguard against supposedly scientific fictions and visions gone astray. Besides, this foundation and base prevent reflection from losing itself in pure policy. Here the dialectical movement presents itself as a relation between science and political power, as a dialogue which actualizes relations of 'theory–practice' and 'critical positive–negative'.

As necessary as science, but not sufficient, *art* brings to the realization of urban society its long meditation on life as drama and

pleasure. In addition and especially, art restitutes the meaning of the *oeuvre*, giving it multiple facets of *appropriated* time and space; neither endured nor accepted by a passive resignation, metamorphosed as *oeuvre*. Music shows the appropriation of time, painting and sculpture that of space. If the sciences discover partial determinisms, art and philosophy show how a totality grows out of partial determinisms. It is incumbent on the social force capable of creating urban society to make efficient and effective the unity of art, technique and knowledge. As much the science of the city, art and the history of art are part of a meditation on the urban which wants to make efficient the images which proclaim it. By overcoming this opposition, this meditation striving for action would thus be both utopian and realistic. One could even assert that the maximum of utopianism could unite with the optimum of realism.

Among the contradictions characteristic of our time there are those (particularly difficult ones) between the realities of society and the facts of civilization. On the one hand, genocide, and on the other, medical and other interventions which enable a child to be saved or an agony prolonged. One of the latest but not least contradictions has been shown in this essay: between the *socialization of society* and *generalized segregation*. There are many others, for example, the contradiction between the label of *revolutionary* and the attachment to an obsolete productivist rationalism. The individual, at the centre of social forces due to the pressure of the masses, asserts himself and does not die. *Rights* appear and become customs or prescriptions, usually followed by enactments. And we know how, through gigantic destructions, World Wars, and the terror of nuclear threats, that these concrete rights come to complete the abstract rights of man and the citizen inscribed on the front of buildings by democracy during its revolutionary beginnings: the rights of ages and sexes (the woman, the child and the elderly), rights of conditions (the proletarian, the peasant), rights to training and education, to work, to culture, to rest, to health, to housing. The pressure of the working class has been and remains necessary (but not sufficient) for the recognition of these rights, for their entry into customs, for their inscription into codes which are still incomplete.

Over the last few years and rather strangely, the *right to nature* entered into social practice thanks to *leisure*, having made its way through protestations becoming commonplace against noise, fatigue,

the concentrationary universe of cities (as cities are rotting or exploding). A strange journey indeed! Nature enters into exchange value and commodities, to be bought and sold. This 'naturality' which is counterfeited and traded in, is destroyed by commercialized, industrialized and institutionally organized leisure pursuits. 'Nature', or what passes for it, and survives of it, becomes the ghetto of leisure pursuits, the separate place of pleasure and the retreat of 'creativity'. Urban dwellers carry the urban with them, even if they do not bring planning with them! Colonized by them, the countryside has lost the qualities, features and charms of peasant life. The urban ravages the countryside: this urbanized countryside opposes itself to a dispossessed rurality, the extreme case of the deep misery of the inhabitant, the habitat, of to inhabit. Are the rights to nature and to the countryside not destroying themselves?

In the face of this pseudo-right, the *right to the city* is like a cry and a demand. This right slowly meanders through the surprising detours of nostalgia and tourism, the return to the heart of the traditional city, and the call of existent or recently developed centralities. The claim to nature, and the desire to enjoy it displace the right to the city. This latest claim expresses itself indirectly as a tendency to flee the deteriorated and unrenovated city, alienated urban life before at last, 'really' living. The need and the 'right' to nature contradict the right to the city without being able to evade it. (This does not mean that it is not necessary to preserve vast 'natural' spaces).

The *right to the city* cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed *right to urban life*. It does not matter whether the urban fabric encloses the countryside and what survives of peasant life, as long as the 'urban', place of encounter, priority of use value, inscription in space of a time promoted to the rank of a supreme resource among all resources, finds its morphological base and its practico-material realization. Which presumes an integrated theory of the city and urban society, using the resources of science and art. Only the working class can become the agent, the social carrier or support of this realization. Here again, as a century ago, it denies and contests, by its very existence, the class strategy directed against it. As a hundred years ago, although under new conditions, it gathers the interests (overcoming the immediate and the superficial) of the whole society and firstly of all those who *inhabit*. Who can ignore that the

Olympians of the new bourgeois aristocracy no longer inhabit. They go from grand hotel to grand hotel, or from castle to castle, commanding a fleet or a country from a yacht. They are everywhere and nowhere. That is how they fascinate people immersed into everyday life. They transcend everyday life, possess nature and leave it up to the cops to contrive culture. Is it essential to describe at length, besides the condition of youth, students and intellectuals, armies of workers with or without white collars, people from the provinces, the colonized and semi-colonized of all sorts, all those who endure a well-organized daily life, is it here necessary to exhibit the derisory and untragic misery of the inhabitant, of the suburban dweller and of the people who stay in residential ghettos, in the mouldering centres of old cities and in the proliferations lost beyond them? One only has to open one's eyes to understand the daily life of the one who runs from his dwelling to the station, near or far away, to the packed underground train, the office or the factory, to return the same way in the evening and come home to recuperate enough to start again the next day. The picture of this generalized misery would not go without a picture of 'satisfactions' which hides it and becomes the means to elude it and break free from it.