

19-05-2012 URBAN POLICIES AND THE GLOBALIZATION CRISIS

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The globalization crisis puts a new perspective on the issue of urban transformation.¹ After considering some aspects of the connection between globalization and urbanization, we will return to urban policies and urban models before going on to repeat the importance of urban social movements. We will then go into the effects of the crisis on urban policies and end with alternative policy proposals, initially restricted to local policies.

The crisis of neoliberalism puts into perspective recent decades and the close link between globalization and urbanization. Urbanization has changed and can now be seen as a breach in urban development. The evolution of globalization upsets the geopolitical system and calls into question the very nature of States. It alters the links between local, national, regional and global; between rural and urban; and between individual and universal.

URBANIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION

We are living through a new urban revolution. Urbanization is becoming something different. It is no longer an extension into the South of the 19th century urban revolution. It now corresponds more to a breakdown in urban development.² This urban revolution is linked to the development of globalization, without at this point going further into the characterization of globalization seen as a contradictory process whose outcome is not predetermined. As pillars of globalization, cities also become changed by it.

The world's population in full transformation

This new stage of urban revolution directly concerns the world's population. Unlike the 19th and 20th century revolutions, notably in Europe and the United States, which are often used as points of reference, this current urban revolution is taking place in the South. From a demographic, structural point of view, the characteristics of this revolution are hardly apparent because we always go by representations – those of the last urban revolution – which are out of date with regard to contemporary reality.

This urbanization means considerable demographic change. After fears of population explosions and figures of around ten billion inhabitants, we have now accepted the model of demographic transition and the hypothesis of a shift in the rate of population growth. But there remain uncertainties with respect to the hard demographic cores in Africa and

¹ Thanks go to Françoise Lieberherr, Jean-François Tribillon and Elise Massiah for their editing and suggestions.

² Massiah G. (1990) "L'Aventure de la Ville". Paris : *La Recherche* review.

South Asia. And we do not know what would happen if China and India were to abandon their authoritarian birth control policies.

The most sensitive issue is not that of global demographic evolution but the distribution of the world's population in every country and between countries. The gap is widening between countries with an ageing population and countries with a high birth rate. Migration is the central strategic issue of the future.³ Since 2007, for the first time in the world's history, more than half the world population live in cities and over the last decade urban areas have grown considerably. By 2030, all regions of the world are expected to have mainly urban populations with demographic growth being mostly in the urban areas of developing countries. Temporary and permanent migration within every country accentuates social imbalances. There are more and more refugees and displaced persons in their own countries as a result of natural disasters, armed conflict, social unrest, and economic and political crises. In many countries, national and regional development is characterized by the distribution of population in the different regions as well as by resettlement concerns. The economic dynamism of large urban centres attracts migrants and medium-sized cities are playing a growing role in migration between cities.

International migration will affect more than 175 million people worldwide in 2000 – that is, one in 35 people – as compared with 79 million in 1960.⁴ Three-fifths were in developed regions. International migratory movements have a marked economic, socio-cultural and demographic impact on the departure, transit and arrival areas. The areas migrants leave behind lose qualified manpower and families are split up. The economic effects of migration are two-way. The remittance of migrant workers' wages to developing countries rose to over 88 billion dollars (30 billion dollars more than development aid).

The thinking on national migration policies is totally inadequate in relation to the reality of these migrations. We should bear in mind the warning Alfred Sauvy wrote, a few months before he died, in an article in *Le Monde*: "If the people are in the South and the wealth is in the North, they will go to where that wealth is and nothing will stop them". That was said with regard to economic migration and does not take into account the new international migration which is taking place. Thus, ever-increasing migration linked to the changing environment and climate, could in the end affect hundreds of millions of people. Other kinds of migration, which are also increasing, are a result of war and mainly of so-called "low intensity" conflicts.

The migrants issue colours the recognition of rights in the cities. Interregional and global cooperation give rise to two major questions: What is the connection between migration, development and the distribution of wealth among countries?⁵ How should the basic rights of migrants, migrant workers and their families be respected and guaranteed?⁶ The

³ Massiah G. "Migration and Globalization", November 2004. www.liberationafrique.org/spi

⁴ Migration and Urbanization in the report on the state of world population 2004, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) www.unfpa.org/swp/2004/english/ch4/index.htm

⁵ Massiah G. (2008) "Migration and development", Paris : Cedetim

⁶ Terray E. (2009) "Migration and democracy", *Plein Droit*, No. 88, Paris.

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families is a first step; it has yet to be ratified by any host country. On this issue States have not reached agreement on calling for a United Nations conference.

According to the above-mentioned UNFPA report, the number of city dwellers will rise from 3 billion in 2003 (48% of the global population) to 5 billion in 2030 (60%). Most of this growth in urban areas will be due to the normal birth rate rather than migration. Over this same period, there will be a slight decrease in the rural population, falling from 3.3 to 3.2 billion. The management of demographic growth and the development of infrastructure in sprawling urban areas have created another area of interest: in the next twenty to thirty years, mainly in poor countries, as much infrastructure as already exists in the world, will have to be built. There is the all-important issue of how to finance urbanization and urban organization.

The world's population is growing and at an unprecedented rate. This is the major challenge for the current generation. In the long term, the five dimensions of sustainable development must be taken into account: demographic dynamism, the occupation of new areas, economic transformation and opening up to the rest of the world, ecological constraints, and social and political dynamics. Jean-Marie Cour proposes giving this objective to Public aid to global development and to set up a system of automatic, annual transfers for financing the structural investments which are now needed because of the shift in population.⁷

The rift between urbanization and industrialization

Urbanization is characterized by the population explosion of cities and by the number of cities with over one million inhabitants and those with over ten million. Urban policies vary depending on the size and type of city.

The first level of global urban structure groups together the twenty-seven megalopolises with between ten and twenty million inhabitants. In the North there are only four. The twenty-three other cities are in the South. The world's urban population lives for the most part in these megalopolises. They are "City States" whose public function is more important than that of many States, just as their populations and wealth are greater than those of many States. Urban planning and programming are new to these cities, and all the more so since they are now linked by a global urban structure. There are now therefore urban planning outlines on a global scale.

The second level of urban structure is that of the metropolis. It is not the number of inhabitants that matters, since in India or China a city of two million people is not considered to be a large city but an agglomeration of the same size in Europe is considered to be large. Metropolises are linked to the organization of the national region with its important administrative functions. For the metropolis, the question usually posed is about the development of these cities in relation to their periphery. The Forum of local authorities of peripheral areas of cities (FALP), organized by the city of Nanterre,

⁷ Cour J.P. "Giving new meaning to Public aid to development", Club AMINTER, 14 March 2002.
<http://pagesperso-orange.fr/atthalin/2002/clubs/club1.html>

put forward a proposal on urban policies for interdependent and solider metropolises.⁸ The third level is that of central or secondary linking cities where space is organized. Although one would no longer qualify them as “rural”, this category has become difficult to define. Let us simply say that these cities give structure and dynamism to a whole region.

The rift recalls the close link between urbanization and industrialization which characterized the urban industrial revolution of the 19th century. Around the last urban revolution, directly linked to massive industrialization, the world’s population and the region/population relation, principally in countries in the North, became organized. Clearly, an industrialization process is under way today in the BRIC countries – Brazil, Russia, India and China – as well as in around thirty developing countries; nevertheless, this process does not affect the whole population as was the case in the North. The global generalization of the industrial production-oriented model comes up against a double barrier. The first is the world’s ecosystem whose fragility has been measured ; particularly in the degradation of the environment of the megalopolises which themselves are sources of environmental pollution. The second barrier is the negative effect on employment brought about by the lightning speed of productivity. There is a marked difference between the informal sector of cities and the general public. The questions in this important report are on the future: employment. It recalls Henri Lefebvre’s most enlightening remark: “space is the projection on the ground of social relations”.⁹

The urban revolution was based on the expansion of the wage-earning classes which, initially seen as a social link, later became a social status. The salary, the purchasing power of employment, later spread to the whole of society. The generalization of the wage-earner created a stabilization of the lower social classes. Stabilization came about through employment, notably through the indirect wage, social welfare, education and health. This social organization transferred into the urban organization. Housing policies were directly linked over this period to the generalization of employment. The expansion of industrialization to the South was incomplete and large areas remained outside this development.

The place of each person in the city only partially corresponds to the old social structures.¹⁰ The place in the city and access to housing are closely linked to the type of income rather than the level. A stable salary confers social status and gives access to credit, housing, individual and community consumer patterns and it is the key to integration, whereas the absence of a stable income opens up the process of exclusion in relation to institutionalized society. Without a regular income our societies do not know how to acknowledge the right to security as inscribed in the Declaration of Human Rights, and incorrectly confused with shifting security systems.

⁸ Global Forum of Local Peripheral Authorities (FALP) Network www.falp.nanterre.net/

⁹ Lefebvre H. (1974) *La production de l'espace*, Paris : Anthropos.

¹⁰ Massiah G. and Tribillon J.F.(1996) *Habitat-tiers*. Paris : ACT Consultants.
www.urban-politique.org/ecriture/?exec=articles&id_article=27

Globalization cannot be analysed without considering growing vulnerability, the increase of inequalities, and the widening and deepening of exclusions. Exclusion through poverty linked to inequalities of income; exclusion from work and social status linked to regular employment; exclusion because of the difficulty of access to housing; cultural exclusion from the elite's social reproduction; and mass exclusion in the megalopolises blurs identities. Traditional groups – community, religious, national and social – only partially understand the relationship of the individual to the group.

There needs to be urgent action on the development and improvement of the lives of poor people, many of whom live in shanty towns and marginal urban areas with restricted access to health care and other services. In many regions of the South, HIV and AIDS have added a new element of uncertainty, notably on the pace of urbanization.

A large section of city dwellers in developing countries, sometimes the majority, are excluded from legal access to land and housing. They live in precarious conditions, in districts lacking the normal facilities; these districts are usually designated as “irregular”. It is reckoned that irregular housing – varying between regions and countries – constitutes 20% to 80% of urban growth and concerns between 15% and 70% of city dwellers in developing countries, the average being around 40%.¹¹ It is in the great metropolitan cities that the problems are worst. Access to land, which is in fact another way of saying access to the city, is the most difficult obstacle to overcome in carrying out housing projects.

This situation is the result of marketing public lines of access to land and housing. Poverty, precariousness, lack of facilities and land irregularities have all been reinforced by structural adjustment programmes. Undertaking regularization operations implies a redefining and clarification of the role of the State and public bodies, and the institutional strengthening of municipalities and basic communities. Experience over the past few years has shown a need to strengthen the role of municipalities, NGOs and grass-roots organizations. The definition of these new roles would also imply recognition and guarantee of the right of association and that inhabitants should be consulted and associated with the facilities and regularization programmes as well as with their management. A condition of this association would be the reduction of government privileges and local wealthy people who only allow poor people to settle in the outskirts of cities, in areas that are devalued and unfit to be lived in.

URBAN MODELS AND URBAN POLICIES

Urban policies are dependent on specific situations. At certain times they also have general characteristics which cannot be simplified to just one society, but spread out on a scale that Fernand Braudel calls a world-economy and Immanuel Wallerstein calls a world-system.¹² Only on this scale can the general phenomenon of urbanization be

¹¹ Durand-Lasserve A. “En finir avec l’insécurité”, *Dossier Enjeux fonciers, Vivre autrement* No.10, June 1996 Paris.

¹² Braudel F. (1979), *Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme*, Paris : Armand Colin.

understood and a way of thinking about social transformation and development be formed. The models suggest coherence between concepts and values; the policies correspond to the contingent transcription of the models in situations and periods. To each development model there is a corresponding urban model; to each development policy there is a corresponding urban policy.¹³

Urban transformation is one of the forms of social transformation; one of the most important as it integrates the symbolic dimension, not just the economic. A proper city is structured by layers connecting the different urban models that have marked its history. In the 1960s, the most dominant development model in the North was the Fordist model. The dominant development model in the South was that of national independence. The structural adjustment model or global neoliberal model became established in the 1980s.

Each development policy diverts into different fields with its own urban policy. While the urban model is part of the development model, in a dialectic manner, and preserving the autonomy of the urban dimension, urban policy is in general a relatively direct application, in the urban field, of the development policy.

An urban policy is a way of setting up in a particular situation the social transformation strategy conceptualized within a development model. These concepts are not always very clear for technicians and decision-makers; they function like unavoidable facts. Resistance to policies and crises helps clarify the meaning and why certain solutions are proposed rather than others.

In the culture of decision-makers and experts, in order to understand cities and put forward solutions, one finds elements of several urban models from earlier periods. These elements function as points of reference, often implicit in the relation between urbanization, the State and industrialization. The colonial urban model at its different stages (trading post, implantation, commerce), was the founder of towns in the South. The original system remains as does the pre-eminence of occupation rights over inhabitants' user rights. The classic model, with its two component parts – military architecture on the one hand and on the other, princely architecture which is always monumental and sometimes baroque, sets the stage for the reorganization of authorities in the independent cities. The industrial city model, in the form of workers' housing, is that of the new settlements or production enclaves. The Haussman model with its wide boulevards corresponds to the fantasies of the rising classes and also to urban development.

The Fordist model of regulation and the modern movement

Since 1945, the dominant model in the West has been a liberal social model; we shall call it the Fordist model of regulation. The major phenomenon in industrial societies is the expansion of the salaried class. It accounts for the stabilization of a large part of the working classes as well as the rise of the so-called middle classes. The balance between

Wallerstein I. (2006), *Comprendre le monde. Introduction à l'analyse des systèmes-monde*, Paris : La Découverte.

¹³ Massiah G. and Tribillon J.F. (1988), *Villes en Développement*, Paris : La Découverte.

generations is changing with the widespread education of young people and the growing burden of old people. The wage-earner who emerged from 1830 as a social force, from 1920 onwards became a social status of universal aspiration. Modernity places the three states of progress at the forefront: economic, social and political. It makes distinctions between city space, business space and work space, as decreed by Taylor. It is explained by Ford and Keynes, from production to macro-economy; by Wilson and Roosevelt, from liberalism to the New Deal. The welfare state concerns itself with employment and social welfare. Democracy and Human Rights emerge in political representations. Workers' and national liberation movements define another aspect of modernity: a specific link between the social issue and the national.

There is a close connection between the development model and the architectural model. The urban model of the modern movement corresponds to the Fordist model. The modern movement translates in architecture and town planning as the rationality of social transformation. Housing provides the natural complement to the wage-earner, assuring reproduction. Standards of hygiene convey the moralizing notion of social stability. The urban models of Garnier's industrial city and the garden city are a continuation of the earlier period. Fordism displays the organic architecture of F.L. Wright. The International Congresses for Modern Architecture (CIAM) and the Athens Charter gave shape to the modern movement. They set out mixed housing development zones. They gave the bill, the cheap housing and the low-rent housing to the social housing departments and their completed work became the new towns. We should recall that there are three ways of building a town: the new town, through the production of new housing districts (renovation, restoration, rehabilitation); applying contemporary housing standards to insalubrious housing and demolition of slums; improvement of two-storey housing through municipal action.

Soviet architecture, after attempting to redirect its ideas in the 1920s, falls into this category and pushes the modern movement to its limits.

The national independence development model and the focused space of States

The national independence model falls into the decolonization category; following political liberation, it was a question of building economic liberation. This model was conceived during the liberation struggles; it borrows ideas from both the Fordist model and the Soviet model, all across the Eastern countries, China and Viet Nam. It became clearer in India and in Africa, and was completed in Latin America through the debates on dependence.

It is based on heavy industry, the basis for independent accumulation, on an agrarian reform which must modernize agriculture starting with industry and be its outlet, on the control and enhanced value of natural resources, on the substitution of imports, on nationalized companies and on the control of external trade. It involves a powerful, uncontested State, guarantor of national unity, supported by well-equipped armies and ever-present police, and founded on the theorization of the single party.

The limits of development policies appeared fairly soon. Construction of the State became an end in itself. A dual explosion, the State takeover and urbanization, provoked a structural imbalance of the basics of the economy (budget, trade balance, balance of payments). The modernization of agriculture excluded the vast majority of the rural poor. State businesses were for the most part ineffective, their working was bureaucratized and they were incapable of reducing commercial and technological dependence in relation to the multinational corporations. Bureaucracy and corruption were like gangrene on society. The denial of basic rights and the absence of liberties finished off the work of reducing to nothing the credibility of the regimes.

The post-colonial urban model gave concrete expression to this development model and its by-products. The major facilities of sovereignty took priority (airports, ministries, grand avenues, palaces); the housing policy was that of the middle classes connected with the State (low-rent housing and other property companies); the working classes settled in the gaps in between and on the peripheries in districts that sprang up over night.

At the outset, with regard to the national independence models, the World Bank was rather on the defensive. It accompanied decolonization while reminding States of the foundations of liberalism; the reference is Rostow's take-off theory which reverts to the catching up approach widely shared by all parties. The World Bank defended an international system based on free trade, comparative advantages taking account of the differences of productivity and the costs of manpower. The debate focused on the relation between the market and planning.¹⁴

The dominant development model was that of the independent nations. There were three successive development policies corresponding to this model: the infrastructures, the basic needs and integrated rural development. The development policies advocated by the World Bank became more defined. They took account of the constraints and contradictions of implementation policies, criticisms and proposals. At the outset, the Bank funded weighty infrastructures and accompanied the construction of States. Later, the Bank fought against the priority for heavy industry and instead proposed the basic needs approach and small businesses, saying "small is beautiful". Then, later on, becoming aware of the rural poor's exasperation at devaluation and the muddle of the new management and credit restrictions, it proposed to the rural poor access to the market and "rural integrated development".

At the outset the urban policies that accompanied these development policies were linked to transport infrastructures (airports, ports, roads, highways and railways) and to the other main networks (electricity, water, telecommunications), managed by national and concessionary companies. After that, the rural priority began to take second place behind the urban dimension, and urban matters were dealt with by a small department of the directorate of infrastructures of the World Bank.

In some countries, French Cooperation backed a modern procedure for housing production (planning associations, savings banks and social housing bureaux). This

¹⁴ Osmont A. (1995), *La Banque mondiale et les villes: du développement à l'ajustement*, Paris : Khartala.

formal procedure responded only marginally to the needs; between 80% and 90% of households resorted to public, so-called informal procedures.

The situation deteriorated with the urban explosion and lack of maintenance. Public offices multiplied. Programmes for the rehabilitation of plots of land and “sites and amenities” were notoriously insufficient; distance and increasingly reduced standards made them unsuitable. After the first Habitat-UN Conference on Human Settlements in Vancouver in 1976, new ideas arrived; “housing is your own affair” was John Turner’s remark when he advocated self-help, which marked a turning point.¹⁵ The impromptu districts that had sprung up became established; people began to accept the idea of State regularization and to receive interest from the public savings and credit systems. The World Bank finalized the “urban development projects” with several sections: institutional, financial, urban management, infrastructure, restructuring, not to forget the sections for “women” and “environment”.

The structural adjustment model and fragmented space

From the 1980s, a neo-liberal phase began. The prevailing model became that of structural adjustment. It advocated adjustment of the economy and of businesses to the world market. It proposed: liberalization, meaning the regulation by markets and the reduction of the role of States in the economy; priority given to exportation and to free markets; priority to international investment and to privatization; flexibility and pressure on salaries, the reduction of expenditure on welfare, the reduction of expenditure on health and education deemed unproductive; the unrestrained exploitation of resources; and devaluation of currencies.

To construct their structural adjustment development model, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) took their blue-print from Asia, specifically the Republic of Korea. The “developing countries” category was for those institutions a confirmation of these policies. At the outset, these policies were well accepted. The international balance of power altered. The new medicine was applied in the same way to the South and the North, the East had come apart and the Fordist regulation had been damaged by the money markets. Debt made it difficult to finance development.

The “world liberal urban model” gave concrete expression to the neoliberal model. A new city centre began to compete with the earlier city centres, those of the State and the municipality. The new centres were where the multinational corporations had their headquarters, the large hotels and the shopping centres. In many cities in the South, multinational corporations set up their local headquarters in the hotels. These centres are sections of cities directly linked to the rest of the world with their communications systems and consumer habits directly linked to a fraction of the world’s bourgeoisie (international civil servants, ambassadors, overseas voluntary workers, consultants and directors of multinational corporations). There are also the jobs linked to tourism and to access to the world market, financial services, prostitution, luxury local crafts, etc. More and more, the large hotels began to resemble fortresses.

¹⁵ Turner J. (1976) *Housing by People* .London, Paris : Le Seuil 1979

Industry began to develop outside the large cities or in the free zones around ports and airports. The districts began to be segregated spatially, socially and ethnically. Since being a wage-earner no longer constituted the usual inter-mixing element, different kinds of cohesion and power formed community identities. People began to group together more according to their region of origin, and as the State was no longer interested, they began to organize themselves according to their own strengths. These districts are separated from each other, situated around high-speed routes and urban motorways. It is difficult to get from one district to the other on foot. The areas around these motorways are wasteland and unsafe. These districts are defined by their ethnic and social differences: rich “Latino”, average “Latino” and average poor “Latino” districts, etc.

The housing issue is crucial. As the wage-earner has no security of employment, access to housing becomes extremely difficult and because there is disengagement on the part of the State, social housing is insufficient to deflate the rise of property prices. For these two reasons, there is a very marked deterioration in the condition of housing. Slums and insalubrious districts are developing. These new urban concentrations of the population are in the most sensitive areas: along urban riverbanks, along the railway lines and motorways, on rubbish dumps – in all the areas that can be occupied and which are generally the most dangerous, making urban ecology tip towards insolvable situations.

The problem of expansion of the overall urban area together with the pressure of land ownership is considerable. On the one hand, there are a number of districts with a high vertical integration and on the other, the suburban and peripheral districts which are horizontal. This brings with it two kinds of problems: those linked with concentration and those linked with dispersion.

Urban policies that accompany structural adjustment continued to launch “urban development projects”, highlighting the institutional and interventionist aspects in the so-called “informal” sector. In fact, urban projects appeared like vectors of the social dimension of adjustment. It was a question of intervening in the working-class neighbourhoods and it affected those with the lowest incomes, the “first tenth”. New methods were tried out: for example, the *agetip* – public works agency – that enabled small businesses and artisans to work and thus inject income into the districts. The World Bank discovered partnerships and, through various means, tried to associate them with its policy and plans. It also embarked on decentralization and the strengthening of local communities.

The crisis of neoliberalism opens up a new phase

To reduce imbalances, we will realize what the consequences of the proposed solutions would be. But without any other credible options, even leaders of good faith preferred to attribute the responsibility of unpopular action to the IMF rather than take on the task of readjustment which could but be painful. On the other hand, the World Bank and the IMF appeared to be modernists in comparison with the independent bourgeoisie and the traditional, often archaic layers of bureaucracy that ran the States. Often, the most brilliant elements of opposition forced out of their respective countries, have found shelter and been “recycled” in international institutions.

And yet from the outset, resistance showed the limitations of these policies; hunger strikes multiplied. Reports showed the degradation of living conditions of the “fragile layers of society”. In fact, growth, which is real in some countries, arrived with a rise in inequality, poverty and exclusion. Corruption became rife. Weakened States brought about an increase in the number of armed conflicts.

To offset these consequences, the World Bank set up a project called “the Social Dimensions of Adjustment”. Subsequently, it decided to make the fight against poverty a priority objective. It decided to complete its plan of action by rigorous intervention with regard to “governance”, realizing that it is not enough to leave markets to their own devices in order to solve all the problems.

At the end of the 1990s, from 1995 onwards, a new phase began. The development model was debated. The financial crises in Asia, Latin America, Central America and in Russia demonstrated the limitations of regulation by the financial markets. Social conflict against precariousness in Europe, the United States and the Republic of Korea altered the political balance. The convergence of ecology movements, consumers and workers at Seattle marked a stage in the calling into question of the neoliberal direction of globalization. The debate on policies began at the World Bank between ultra-liberals and neo-Keynesians.

The contradictions of neoliberalism extend into urban situations. From 1980 to 2007 there was considerable growth surplus in almost all countries across the globe. Everywhere, that growth surplus meant even more inequality. The redistribution of wealth functioned only from the poor towards the rich. To give an idea of the scale, we should specify that the share of salaries in the distribution of added value rose nine points from 1945 to 1980. Since 1980, the share of profits regained the nine points lost in the preceding phase.¹⁶ These were considerable developments but gains and losses are never homothetic from one category to another: this is an average. Today, the number of poor people is even greater and poverty is worsening. France is two and a half times richer than it was in 1980 and yet there are now more unemployed, more poor, and more homeless people. The poverty issue is always linked to the question of inequality and discrimination; in effect, no one is poor just by accident in our societies. There is more likelihood of being poor, for example, if one is an immigrant, a woman or a young man from a working-class background. It is a key element of cities’ structures. Cities become organized according to discrimination. Sonia Fayman translates that with a fearsome formula: “urban segregation, ethnic cleansing”. Poverty moves away from city centres and the surrounding areas; poor people seldom leave their distant neighbourhoods and either hide or melt into the crowd when they come into the city.

After the first contradiction concerning inequality and discrimination the second contradiction concerns the ecology issue. Ecological awareness is linked to the major catastrophes of Bhopal, Chernobyl, Seveso, etc. The environment issue holds a central

¹⁶ Attac.(2009) *Sortir de la crise globale*, Jean-Marie Harribey and Dominique Plihon (Eds.) Paris : La Découverte.

position. The debate is open as to whether one can or if one should expand the industrial model from green industries and the production of environmental technologies or whether one should move on to totally different models and kinds of growth. This debate will have considerable consequences for urban policies.

The third contradiction, an essential one, is the question of war. Between one and two billion people in the world live in regions where there is a classic war going on or a civil war, which engenders serious consequences. Urban wars have taken on a new form and have completely altered the urban way of thinking. A city is not planned in the same way if the region is at war or at peace.

The fourth contradiction is that of security.¹⁷ Insecurity increases in cities: social insecurity, job insecurity and housing insecurity; ecological insecurity and civil insecurity related to conflicts and violence. The answer to this insecurity has become one of the essential factors of urban management. It takes the form of a securitarian ideology: one can only fight insecurity with repression, as indicated by the worrying invention of “zero tolerance”, which mathematically corresponds to a demand for total intolerance. This goes together with the forceful rise of extremely dangerous notions like those that advance the idea that social inequality is linked to genetic inequality or that insecurity begins with incivility – an idea put forward by the Mayor of New York City.

These debates are echoed in the field of urban policy. At Habitat II, which took place in Istanbul, new proposals were put forward. Among some of the ideas being hatched were sustainable development, the right to housing, variety in basic approaches, the financing of urbanization, methods of urban management, the importance of associations and recognition of municipalities as strategic players. The World Bank entered into the debate with the proposal of a new programme, Cities Alliance. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights proposed, with the associations, to help advance international law. There exist new possibilities for the definition of urban policy. To a great extent they depend on the strength of urban social movements.

URBAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The arena for the actors of urban transformation is being reorganized. Between the State, protested against but always present, and the inhabitants, variously considered depending on the particular issue, as subjects, clients, consumers, users or citizens, others are trying to find the right slot for their input. Municipalities are gaining more autonomy. They link the local with the region; they assert their representativeness as local or nearby institutions. Associations present themselves as being the organized face of civil society;

¹⁷ Massiah G. (2005), “Soulèvement populaire dans les banlieues et idéologie sécuritaire”, Paris : AITEC.

Bertho A. (2009), *Le Temps des émeutes*, paris : Editions Bayard.

Mucchieli L.(2002) *Violences et insécurité, Fantômes et réalités dans le débat français*, Paris : Editions La Découverte.

Bouamama S. (2009)), *Les classes et quartiers populaires. Paupérisation, ethnicisation, discrimination*. Paris : Le Cygne

they restate the interests of inhabitants and the demand for their participation in all democratic processes. Businesses insist on being in the public space; they repeat the importance of production and take over the monopoly of “good governance”; they convey rationality in the management of networks and services; they correspond to several different forms of logic as demonstrated by the new kinds of actors backing social economy.

In order to fight against their situation and improve it, inhabitants become organized and form associations. They become organized to fight (unions, tenant associations, etc.); to experiment and react (solidarity, social integration and development associations); or to gain power (political parties, citizen associations). This is not a new situation ; neither does it belong only to urban movements.

Urban social movements are growing and changing. They combine claims for rights in the city and rights to the city. All social movements in cities have an urban dimension. The specificity of urban social movements, through demands concerning inhabitants’ living conditions, widens out to include the production of cities and access to rights to the city. The analysis of urban social movements is extraordinarily rich. Movements for the right to housing have grown. Nowadays they are linked closely to defending the interests of the homeless and the badly housed as shown by the example of the national inhabitants’ movement for housing (MNLN) in Brazil. The Right to Housing Movement (DAL) in France, is building the NO-VOX movement for those who have no voice and no rights, and is broadening the movement to include those with no homeland, the unemployed, migrants, the caste-less, etc. Sit-in movements have expanded into a widespread regularization process against the exclusion of poor people from city centres. A vast international movement against expulsion is beginning to get under way. The notion of “urban poor” is becoming more radical. The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, which groups together inhabitants’ associations for the right to housing in over twenty Asian countries places this new term at the fore: urban poor.

Struggles for basic security are expanded to include practices for the improvement or construction of housing, urban rehabilitation and planning, and demands for citizenship. Associations in France such as Emmaus, the Federation for inclusion through housing (FAPIL), the Federation of programmes for action against slums (PACT-ARIM) extend their interventions from housing to the districts. Community movements, in a contradictory way, bring new practices of basic reconstruction, savings and credit banks, self-construction and self-promotion, joint management of spaces and local democracy.

Social movements are bearers of new practices. After struggles and negotiations, the inhabitants of some districts manage to impose their basic security and avoid being moved out. Basic security always opens up a new phase in urban improvements within a district, thus giving an important role to associations and to the financing of housing and district planning by inhabitants’ methods of self-production. We also see emerging in these new districts new kinds of local democracy which is extended notably by the accession to municipal responsibilities of those who led the struggle.

These movements give rise to intense development. For example, the movement for urban reform brings into play the analogy with the agrarian reform of decolonization. It places at the forefront land ownership, production and employment in the districts, funding, urban management, democracy and citizenship. In some regions, new attempts seek to bring together municipalities, inhabitants' associations and movements, peasant organizations and workers' unions. In order to reflect on new kinds of participatory democracy, including institutional democracy. The best known example is the participatory budget invented in Porto Alegre.

Urban social movements are bearers of new projects for social change. They change their style through their participation in the "another world" movement characterized by the convergence of social and citizens' movements around a common focus, that of access for everyone to basic rights, to peace and to democracy.

The uprising in the French suburbs brought to the fore the importance of urban struggles. Those riots have some of the characteristics of the riots of Los Angeles in the 1980s and Birmingham in the 1990s. They demonstrate the consequences of neoliberal policies with regard to unemployment and poverty, interaction among equals, discrimination and racism. They also reflect the explosion of North-South contradictions in European cities. They underline the rise of securitarian ideologies in response to social and ecological insecurity. They remind us that policies responding to urban riots have constantly had a dual focus: to divide districts by a selective policy of social advancement; and suppressing the spokesman. In the United States, for example, support for the rise of a black bourgeoisie and the liquidation, even physical, of leaders of radical movements were carried out head-on.

Urban social movements are defined in relation to the development of cities which conveys that of society. What is discriminatory is the position in relation to instability, exclusion and inequality; the rejection of social cleansing, ethnic and urban segregation. The challenge is sizeable as is the contradiction. So then we should reject the view that liberalism holds of social matters, punishment and compassion for poor people. Solidarity would be opposed to charity. So as not to be content, realistically, with a little less inequality, a little less exclusion, in order to be able to fight effectively against injustice and exclusion, we must be capable of conceiving of a world without exclusion and cities without segregation.

THE CRISIS AND URBAN POLICIES

Several scenarios presented the hypothesis of an open crisis of globalization. That is where we are at. This is about a structural crisis: economic and social, ecological, geopolitical, political and ideological. The current sequence – financial monetary, property, food, economic crisis – is a description of the situation.¹⁸

¹⁸ Massiah G. (2009), "Dangers and opportunities of the global crisis".
www.rinoceros.org/article8221.html

The Braudel analysis of the crisis leads to the hypothesis of the end of a Kondratiev cycle.¹⁹ It is probable that a new cycle will characterize the 25 to 40 next years. It is impossible to characterize it but there are several possible ways out: warring neo-conservatism or open neo-Keynesianism, with several variants in either case. It is within the next five to ten years that the new economic rationality will become formalized, just as neoliberalism imposed itself from the trends existing between 1979 and 1985.

There remains a discussion on what will follow this coming cycle. Immanuel Wallerstein makes the hypothesis of a reversal of the secular cycle, even multi-secular, posing the historical question of capitalism being overtaken and giving new scope to “another world”.²⁰

Among the strategic debates that need resolving, let us consider the one that concerns the connection of the urgency of the current situation, and social transformation and its long-term objectives. In the case of urban policies, we can suggest a strategy that links urgency with development. The immediate response is to invest in cities in order to safeguard the inhabitants, fight against poverty and defend liberties. The long-term response is defining the future of the metropolis and new urban policies.

The dangers of the crisis

It is well known that the Chinese ideogram depicting crisis associates two contradictory signs, as does every dialectic, that of dangers and that of opportunities.

The first danger concerns poverty and destitution. The first way to be sought out of the crisis will be to make the poor pay for the crisis, and first of all it will be those who are discriminated against and those who are dominated. And they will also seek to push down the middle classes. And if that is not enough, they will make certain categories of rich people pay; this foreshadows heavy contradictions.

Among the consequences of such policies is fear of plenty of repression, criminalization of social movements, penalization of solidarity, instrumentalization of terrorism, securitarian ideology, islamophobic, nationalistic and racist agitation, exploitation of scapegoats, migrants and Roma. This evolution will spread from some regions to authoritarian, repressive regimes and even to fascism and fascist movements.

Another way out of the crisis will target countries that will be marginalized and ruined. The risk of war is also one of the classic ways out of great crises. We should not forget that the world is already at war and that almost one billion people live in regions at war. The conflicts are permanent and the destabilization systematic. The kinds of war have changed with the militarization of societies, global apartheid, the war of the strong against the weak, and torture that has become commonplace.

¹⁹ Scandella L. (1998), *Le Kondratieff, essai de théorie des cycles longs économiques*, Paris : Poche Economie, 1998.

²⁰ Wallerstein I. “Le capitalisme touche à sa fin”, *Le Monde*, 13 October 2008.

The consequences for cities and urban policies will be extensive: poverty and urban destitution; jobs and housing will become insecure; conflicts, wars and urban violence. Urban social movements will have to define new forms of social solidarity in the cities and make alliances as broad as possible in order to fight for liberty and against repression.

Opportunities opened up by the crisis

While the dangers are well known, the opportunities are not. As Hölderlin says, quoted by Edgar Morin: “Where danger is, deliverance also grows”.²¹

For cities, the opportunities opened up by the crisis are worth specifying:

- The ideological defeat of neoliberalism encourages an increase in public regulation and gives meaning to urban policy.
- The redistribution of wealth and the return of the domestic market provide a possibility of stabilization of salaries and of guarantee of incomes and social welfare, including the right to housing and to services.
- The ecological urgency necessitates a transformation of social development and will determine urban thinking and the evolution of the urban form.
- The crisis of the political model of representation strengthens the need for social democracy. The need to strengthen the social link gives meaning to the rejection of social and urban segregation.
- The readjustment between the North and the South opens up a new phase of decolonization and new geopolitics. The global urban armour will be modified. Urbanization and migration are the new ways of populating the planet.
- A system of global regulation giving opportunities to citizens worldwide will enable thinking on mastering urbanization on a global scale.

These opportunities define new paths for urban policies and the financing of urbanization.

The rise of public regulation should complete the ideological defeat of neoliberalism. It should underline the importance of public policies based on public interest. Neoliberalism is still dominant but the neoliberal ideology has undergone a crushing defeat and it will find it difficult to rise again. The so-called temporary nationalizations, until the crisis is over, should prove difficult to throw away. The sovereign funds have already opened up a channel for unexpected interventions on the part of the State at the level of globalization. The evaluation of privatizations, until now unsuccessfully requested, should hold some surprises in reserve. The new rationality would have difficulty in continuing to subordinate the regulation of the markets and to confuse the private sector with capital and the markets. Similarly, associations would not be considered a non-viable sub-category of businesses. The return of public regulation would perhaps not take the shape of classic State control. Different kinds of social and community property would find a new legitimacy. Nationalizations would take place in different ways and at regional level.

²¹ Morin E. (2008), “Vivre avec l'imprévisible”, *Revue relation-europe*, May 2008.
www.relation-europe.eu/la-revue/invites-de-relation/3428-edgar-morin-qvivre-avec-limprevisibleq

Two possible consequences for urban policies: first, the increased legitimacy of public policies – voluntary, local, national or at the level of broad regions and progressing with urban planning and spatial programming procedures; then, an opening up of discussions and innovations on the kinds of land ownership and land policies.

The redistribution of wealth, which is necessary in relation to the excesses of neoliberalism, opens up a neo-Keynesian temptation. It confirms the trend to rehabilitate the internal market, more on a broad regional scale than nationally. This could mean the rehabilitation of social welfare systems and relatively stable salaries. The minimum wage and public consumption would regain its role as driving-force for growth in relation to the over-indebtedness which triggered the “sub-prime” crisis. Access to rights for everyone, for which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a weak substitute, would find its place again. It would enable the redeployment of public services by linking public sectors, municipalities and a strong community element.

There are two conditions to this hypothesis which make the idea of simply returning to the Keynesian model of before neoliberalism difficult. The first condition is the need to respond to the ecological constraints that make it dangerous to continually strive to increase production. The contradiction between ecological and social matters is the deciding factor, and it is essential that this obstacle be overcome. The second condition is the need for regulation that is open and worldwide, as compared with the national regulation set out at Bretton Woods in the sixties.

There are considerable opportunities for urban policies. A public social housing sector could once again become topical. The strengthening of revenue would make life easier in the working-class districts. There could be new expansion for the public sphere. Social and urban segregation could decrease in the metropolis.

The urgency of climate change and the depletion of resources make it impossible to continue with development based on increased production and waste. The urgency of the ecological situation forces a complete break with previous methods which will mean a transformation of societies, combining social and ecological matters with peace and liberties.²² This is a plan for the future which is not simply a down-to-earth Utopia. The consequences for urban policies are already potentially sensitive. Awareness about the environment modifies the conception even of urban styles and housing. This extends to a new conception of progress which could change the direction of technological innovation and would drastically change cities. Similarly, the evolution of scientific thinking will play a decisive role in the evolution of architectural and urban thinking.

The crisis of the political model of representation makes social democracy and the strengthening of representative democracy by participatory democracy unavoidable. The renewal of models of power and of representation will be at the centre of social and economic reconstruction. It is probable that the recomposition of the social link will mean new opportunities with regard to the juridical, formal forms of democracy imposed from

²² Massiah G.(2009) “Écologie et solidarité internationale”.
www.mouvements.info/Ecologie-et-solidarite.html

the top. Inequalities of income and the relation between the minimum wage and the maximum wage will be far more sensitive. Democracy will remain a point of reference but the determinants may change. Electoral and institutional systems would have greater difficulty in being considered independent of social situations. Stronger demands will highlight community and individual liberties and their guarantees. Access to individual and community rights for everyone should create a social democracy without which political democracy would lose much of its attraction. The various links between participatory (probably direct) democracy and representative (often delegacy and notability) should progress and diversify.

Other developments already embarked upon should become more important. Local communities will expand their role in local power and local institutions. Agencies of conurbations, less dependent on communes than classic property agencies, should extend their fields of competence to include urban, land, housing and transport matters. The strategic alliance between local communities and community movements will form the basis of territories and residence citizenship. Large regions will be the driving-force behind national and regional development.

Such development will have considerable effect on nature and on the way in which urban policies are made. Alliances between working-class and middle-class sections of society, the basis of the model for the renewal of working-class districts, will be made easier; these alliances will be the alternatives with regard to the different oligarchies. The construction and development of the social link gives a privileged position to the construction of the public space, symbolic reference and social link of the cohesive metropolis.

Readjustment between North and South opens up a new phase of decolonization and new geopolitics. It might close the phase that ran from 1979 to 2008 and through management of the debt crisis take over the control of raw materials and military interventions. Between thirty and fifty developing countries, of which the three most dynamic are Brazil, India and China, can defend their points of view and their interests. It is not a question of a multipolar world but of a new international, geopolitical system. The effects could be considerable, notably for the terms of international trade. This would go together with new urbanization and migration which are the new ways of populating the planet.

This evolution carries two conditions. The first is that developing countries be capable of changing their growth model favouring the domestic market and the consumption of the working-class and middle-class sections of society with regard to exports. This deconnection is possible. It offers new possibilities for urban policies. The second condition is that developing countries build alliances with countries in the South; it is in their own interest to do so. The first phase of decolonization failed mainly when the petroleum countries, after the clash of 1977, had allowed rifts to form between countries of the South, thus enabling the G7, supported by the IMF and the World Bank, to impose structural adjustment.

The indispensable and necessary global regulation will require an overhaul of the system of international relations based on a radical reform of the United Nations and a progression of international law based on the implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, rejecting the subordination of individual and community rights to commercial and business law. This worldwide regulation could help make global citizenship a reality. It could have several important effects for urban policies: first of all, on the financing of urbanization, and urban amenities, considered as a Global Public Good which should be financed by international taxes; next, on the mastering of urbanization through linking the different levels; and the planning of conurbations from the global urban framework to global level and large regions; that of conurbations and national and regional development to national level and to the level of large regions; that of access to the region and to rights at local level.

None of these opportunities will happen on its own; they are all heavy with reprocessing and renewed oppression. The opportunities can only be seized if resistance is increased and if the struggles – social, ecological, pro-liberty, anti-war – are intensified. By displaying the potential borne by the resistance movements and current practices, another world offers a way out of the current crisis in its various configurations.²³ It would enable coalitions to be founded for freedom and democracy and against authoritarian, repressive conservatism. This would enable the struggle against a possible alliance between neoliberals and neo-Keynesians by increasing resistance and demands for social and ecological modernization. And it would allow us to go even further. After all, while capitalism is not eternal, the question of it being overcome is here and now; it must be posed and prepared straight away. Its prefiguration already exists in current society. It is now that we must plan and prepare another possible world.

The challenge is that of asserting rights and their inscription in urban policies and in the generation of cities. And thence the idea that the city to be envisaged is one which would rely on the right to housing for everyone and the right to the city for everyone, the latter being more difficult to envisage. Refusal of segregation does not mean that everyone must be able to live in the centre. It is a matter of inventing new cities. On that point, city practices in the North and the South have much to teach us. It means not opposing the city of rights to the actual city, basing ourselves on the real city and acknowledging working-class ways of creating the city. There are numerous courses to follow from taking account of the scale of the district in urban generation, of equality of the standards of amenities in districts, of the development of urban services. Several of these courses have even seen the beginnings of implementation in the past before being abandoned through insufficient political backing in comparison with the new rationality.

By highlighting the potential borne by resistance, current practices and intellectual demands, it is a matter of providing a way out of the current crisis.

²³ Lusson J. and Massiah G. (2009), “Les issues stratégiques à la crise globale”, www.rinoceros.org/article8432.html

ALTERNATIVE LOCAL POLICIES

To show some of the opportunities opened up by the crisis, we will highlight local policies.

Local policies are an issue of major contradictions. They can be the arena for trying out alternatives. Local policies are one of the strategic levels of social inclusion policies. They must take account of the constraints resulting from globalization and the world markets, from the development of large regions and from the direction of national policies. They define a coherence between region, population and activities, and they combine in one overall project, development, environment, democracy and conflict prevention approaches. Local communities contribute to the renewal of the political dimension by bringing together all actors in constructing local institutions, which provides a framework for citizen action. At the heart of these choices is the sense of the common good and public interest that must be taken care of by the public services in different ways and at levels varying from one country to another. Their function is to ensure that every citizen, whatever his place of residence and income, has equal access to basic rights. Vectors of social inclusion, elements of social progress and pertinent tools for the fight against social, territorial and other inequalities, public services and goods worldwide are the best means of satisfying essential needs.

Local policies, to the extent that their aim is to fight against social exclusion, are faced with the issue of access to rights for everyone. What characterizes a local social inclusion policy is precisely the way it implements access to rights for everyone, as needed and by giving more to those granted rights who until now had not taken advantage of them, by making them actually effective; which legally allows for the right to amenities and facilities enabling there to be compensation of any local deficit, without risking condemnation for a breach of the principle of equality of public office and its advantages or the reprobation which, strangely, condemns with the same vigour positive and negative discrimination.

Since issues relating to transport, land, employment and the promotion of a local domestic market are pre-eminent, many cities reject the World Trade Organization's (WTO) agreements, particularly that the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) should be applied to their region, as they prefer to have domestic markets, local employment and improvement of everyday life of the local population thanks to bids from public utilities departments. Similarly, the new tools of democracy (participatory budgets, social insertion planning, local Agenda 21, resident citizenship, etc.) will better enable the fight against the rise of discrimination and racism. The debate which will take place over the coming years will inevitably be on alternative local strategies.

The Forum of Local Authorities, created in Porto Alegre at the first World Social Forum, reasserts the role of communes as political players on the new world scene and their will to set up alternatives to current development. This strategic linking between the Social Forum and the Local Authorities Forum for social inclusion conveys the ambition that for six years now has brought Mayors together: to be the players of thinking and

implementation of the new choices for another world, based on cooperation, solidarity, more dynamic and fruitful relations between representative democracy and participatory democracy, a world that builds peace and justice for a shared, sustainable development.

This linking is strategic for local authorities because the implementation of a social inclusion policy requires participation and intervention, which does not exclude debate, with citizens' social movements. It is also strategic for citizens' social movements because the building of local coalitions with municipalities enables the setting up of social dynamics and strengths that can bring about social inclusion policies. The local level can be a testing-ground for social experimentation and for building new methods of cooperation between groups and individuals, thus creating an alternative to the destructive competition of the current economic system. The autonomy of social and citizens' movements in comparison with the different authorities and their capacity to formulate and articulate, on their part, the demands of populations constitute the conditions for building these coalitions.

The challenges for alternative local policies

An alternative local policy must take into account issues of space, time and scale. Let us put forward some preliminary thoughts.

An alternative local policy is defined:

- from the point of view of space, by territoriality; it defines a coherence between population, territory and activities;
- in the linking with other levels of spatialization; it combines local, national, regional and global levels;
- from the point of view of time, by the contradiction between short-term, that of urgency, and long-term, that of action on structural change; this point falls into the definition of a strategic perspective;
- in the linking of the response to needs expressed by the population, the constraint of socio-economic balances, cultural dynamics, and the long-term of ecosystems;
- from the point of view of scale, to the measure of problems which are posed and must not be limited to simple economic improvements;
- in the relation with institutions, that is sometimes summarized by governance it encounters the need for the democratic imperative.

The challenges may be defined from a critical analysis of situations and contradictions which appear, and alternatives sketched through movements, reflection and new practices.

There are four major concerns for alternative local policies:

- The importance of social inequalities, the persistence of social and cultural discrimination and of spatial segregation. It is the fight against inequality and discrimination that will enable a new model of development and a new conception of growth to be constructed.
- The extent of the limitations of the ecosystem with regard to ecological constraints and the rights of future generations. Local mastering of the environment becomes a prime objective for local policies.

- The permanence of North-South inequalities based on domination, and the importance of conflicts and wars. The new urban revolution is first and foremost that of the cities of the South and it characterizes the evolution of the global urban structure.
- Social, economic and ecological insecurity is increased and the need to find answers which are not determined by securitarian, repressive ideologies become a major concern in local policies.

Strategic lines of alternative local policies

Let us propose a structure of alternative local policies around some strategic lines:

- Land policies and transport policies based on challenging spatial segregation
- Public utilities departments' development policies based on access for all to these services and to respect for basic rights
- Local development policies based on local production and local businesses, the local market and local employment
- Policies for the protection of the local environment based on improving local ecosystems and the rights of future generations
- Policies for the production of social housing based on the right to housing and to the city
- Local economy policies, particularly land, based on the link between the production of wealth and redistribution
- Citizen participation policies based on the linking between representative and participatory democracy and on residential citizenship
- Cooperation policies based on international solidarity and involving cities and territories in international action.

Over the past few years, a considerable number of measures and tools have reaffirmed these directions. They are the subject of debate of numerous networks for exchanging experiences, among which are cities whose experiences we have followed:

Agenda 21, participatory budgets (Porto Alegre, Brazil), social insertion planning (Barcelona, Spain), Ecoloc, local economy model (Municipal development programme, twenty African municipalities), "urban consultations" (Latin American Urban Management Programme, over forty municipalities in Latin America), local tax systems linked to simplified land registers (Parakou, Benin), the citizenship of residence, linguistic and cultural vernacular education (Cotacachi, Ecuador), the Network of local communities for the promotion of public utilities departments (Liège, Belgium), the Local town planning and sustainable development plan (Aubervilliers, France), Urban agriculture, etc. At the Forum for responsible globalization held in Lyon in 2006, one idea put forward was "social and environmental responsibility for territories", giving responsibility – beyond the scope of local authorities – to local coalitions grouping together all the actors of a region.

Alternative urban policies highlight a major convergence as compared with dominant representation which restricts social transformation to meetings between businesses and administrations, between economic power and political power. In the new period, the emergence of associations and local communities strengthens citizen power. The alliance

between social movements, which we shall call simply “civil society”, and local institutions, is a strategic alliance.

Transformations of urban policies

Although alternative urban policies are not limited to local policies, they enable certain alternative orientations to be confirmed; all the more so because they are not conceivable without the other levels of decision and intervention. It is the linking of levels and scales, between the local, the national, the large regions and the global which defines the nature of an urban policy. This will be marked by the coherence between the scales. But this linking can also, depending on the situation, give greater importance to one of the levels in relation to others. This is what led to emphasizing local policies, in a situation marked by the limitations of national policies because of the current globalization logic.

In future situations, each of the levels will have its importance. It is at local level that relations between populations and territories will be confirmed and local democracy will be built. Not to forget the sphere of economic activities which are directly called into question by the imperatives of the social, environmental and democratic responsibility of businesses. The national level remains the determining factor and retains the dual legitimacy of redistribution of wealth and international regulation in a global inter-State system. The level of the large regions becomes more precise; it can be the support for a reorganization of globalization and impose itself as the scale of national and regional development and the major networks of infrastructure. The global level remains to be seen and invented. The ecological urgency introduces a new paradigm which can only be perceived at the level of the planet. Urban and spatial thinking must combine the responses to the ecological urgency, to balanced, multipolar geopolitics, to social justice and to respect for liberties. The three challenges correspond to the responses in terms of space – globalization, the environment and democracy.

Postface

2011 brought drastic changes and opened a new historical period, obliging researchers to go deeper into the crisis analysis, to open and confirm new perspectives. The article on “The urban dimension of Mediterranean revolts” (Massiah 2012) will analyse this situation.

From Tunis a new wind blew first to Egypt, then to the whole Mahgreb-Machrek region. It crossed The Mediterranean and reached South Europa. It is now spreading all over the world and has found a new breath by crossing the Atlantic. A new sense of ownership of public space and a new meaning of the city surged from this new cycle of revolutions.

These mobilizations are an answer to the crisis and to the austerity policies which resulted and increased. They show that popular mobilization can open up new paths in parallel and in opposition with authoritarian and conservative trends. They highlight the evolution of social contradictions. They reveal the political culture of a new generation, through the forms of these urban revolutions. Indeed what is emerging from the urban squares is a new generation which wants its place in the public space. This youth is less defined through an age bracket than as a cultural generation which is in line with such a

situation and then transforms it. The political culture of urban squares blends utopia and realism. It directs action towards the unacceptable limits and the pretences of existing authorities, including some democracies. The coming urban revolution can bring renewed values, the values of a social and ecological transition and the values of freedom and democracy.

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